



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
SHERBORNE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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## Sherborne Preparatory School

Full Name of School	<b>Sherborne Preparatory School</b>
DfE Number	<b>835/6026</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1071494</b>
Address	<b>Sherborne Preparatory School Acreman Street Sherborne Dorset DT9 3NY</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01935 812097</b>
Email Address	<b><a href="mailto:pj@sherborneprep.org">pj@sherborneprep.org</a></b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Nick Folland</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Phil Jones</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>226</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (141 boys; 85 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 39    5-11: 122 11-13:            65</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>Total:            195</b>
Number of Boarders	<b>Total:            31 Full:              28    Weekly: 3</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Heidi Berry</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys and Girls</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>01 Dec 2015 to 04 Dec 2015</b>

## PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in October 2013 and the previous ISI intermediate inspection was in November 2010.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is**

**'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Diane Gardiner	Reporting Inspector
Mr Kit Thompson	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Kerry Lord	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sally Cunliffe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Sherborne Preparatory School aims to ensure that pupils are well grounded and develop an understanding of their place and responsibilities in the wider world. It aspires to foster the best possible work ethic and encourage its pupils to discover and develop their own personalities and talents. Through the achievement of these aims, the school seeks to encourage pupils to see their education as a staging post to lifelong learning, discovery and achievement. The school endeavours to welcome parents into a partnership that embraces trust, understanding, a shared vision and mutual support.
- 1.2 Situated in 12 acres of grounds, close to the centre of Sherborne in Dorset, the school provides an education for day pupils from the ages of 3 to 13. Pupils can board from the age of 7. The school was founded in 1858 by the headmaster of Sherborne School and moved to its current site in 1885, when it became a fully independent boys' day and boarding school. The age range was extended in 1993 and girls were admitted 3 years later. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children up to the age of 5, was introduced in 2002. The school is a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection a new headmaster has been appointed. A learning resource centre consisting of a new information and communication technology (ICT) facility, space for specialist teaching and a library has been provided. Provision for modern foreign language teaching has been extended, including the development of a language website.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 226 pupils on the roll, 141 of whom were boys, and 85 girls. The EYFS consisted of 39 children, of whom 25 attend part time. There were 19 pupils in Years 1 and 2, 103 in Years 3 to 6, and 65 in Years 7 and 8. Netherton House provides accommodation for 7 full-time girl boarders and Acreman House for 31 full-time boy boarders. Additionally, 3 pupils board on a weekly basis, and other day pupils have the opportunity to board on a flexible basis.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a range of cultural backgrounds, although the majority are from white British professional families who live within a 20-mile radius of the school. Their ability profile is above the national average. The school has identified 48 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 32 receive specialist support. Also, 1 pupil has a statement of special education needs. No pupils have an education, health and care plan. English as an additional language (EAL) is spoken by 15 pupils, of whom 13 are boarders; 14 of these receive support for their acquisition of language.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and extra-curricular achievements is excellent and successfully fulfils the school's aims. Across all age groups and abilities, pupils enjoy their learning and develop into well-rounded young people. Outstanding levels of knowledge, understanding and skills are developed across a wide range of academic, creative and sporting subjects. The excellent academic curriculum is extremely well supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. This provides an environment in which pupils can progress rapidly, enjoy their learning and develop a depth of understanding that prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. The structure of the school day provides limited time for staff and pupils to reflect upon their learning. Teaching of excellent quality, characterised by rapid pace, high expectations and excellent relationships, contributes effectively to the overall development of the pupils whatever their ability or need. The use of ICT across the curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection, meeting one of the recommendations from the previous report. The school intends to further develop the use of ICT.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. The caring, supportive atmosphere allows pupils to learn about the spiritual moral, social and cultural aspects of life extremely well. Children in the EYFS benefit from a nurturing environment. Pupils develop a strong understanding of British institutions and values through a well-structured personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) curriculum, visits and opportunities to debate a broad range of challenging subjects. Pupils benefit from excellent pastoral care that ensures that they all feel safe and well supported. Arrangements for pupils' welfare, including those for safeguarding and their health and safety are excellent, as is the quality of the boarding provision. Boarders enjoy a friendly and caring environment. All parents feel that the boarding experience contributes strongly to the personal development of their children.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. The governors are well informed about the running of the school, including the EYFS. They visit frequently and use their broad range of expertise to provide support and challenge for its future development. The structure of the leadership team is under review to ensure that leaders have sufficient time to monitor standards, so that the school can continue to meet its challenging aims. Good progress has been made against the recommendations from the previous inspection. The significant improvements made since the previous inspection are an indication of the level of commitment of senior leaders to the development process and the establishment of strong relationships with parents. The results of the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive, parents felt that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Structure the school day in order to ensure that pupils and staff have sufficient time to reflect and move between lessons.
  2. Ensure that middle and senior management staff have sufficient time within their weekly schedules to monitor the teaching and learning effectively, and implementation of policies throughout the school, including the EYFS.
  3. Further develop the use of ICT across the curriculum in all sections of the school.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Children in the EYFS achieve well and make good progress relative to their starting points. Well-focused activities, which meet children's needs, are accompanied by effective teaching and adult support. This enables all children, including the more able and those with SEND and EAL, to make good progress. Most children reach the expected levels of development typical of their age and some exceed them. Children with EAL are supported in their language development and rapidly achieve fluency in English. For the younger children stimulating activities, such as exploring the texture of and cutting up coloured pasta, develop strong language and motor skills. Older children are beginning to recognise common words and can write simple sentences independently, using their increasing knowledge of the sounds that letters represent to make good attempts at challenging words, for example when writing letters to Father Christmas. They can count and recognise numbers confidently and are becoming familiar with some coins. Older children can also perform simple addition and some can do practical subtraction. All children gain confidence and skill as they speak and sing to an audience of parents and grandparents during the many school productions.
- 3.3 Pupils throughout the school develop a breadth of knowledge which they apply highly effectively in their lessons and activities, in accordance with the school's aims. Their learning skills are well developed and demonstrate a deep understanding of the areas under discussion. Pupils express their ideas and opinions articulately, often extending their learning through personal research. Their ability to write in depth and analyse their subject matter was obvious in their preparation work for a school debating event, which addressed highly challenging subjects. Pupils use numbers effectively and apply their excellent reasoning skills to solve problems. Older pupils showed outstanding investigative skills in science. Pupils can use ICT effectively to support their learning during timetabled lessons and also within some other subject areas.
- 3.4 Pupils' achievements outside the classroom are excellent. Pupils participate successfully in a wide range of competitive sports, both individually and in teams. A few reach international level; particular success has been achieved in the biathlon and in swimming. Approximately four-fifths of pupils play a musical instrument and display confidence in forming ensembles of their own to entertain a wider audience. Pupils' artistic skills are extremely well developed and they often use their free time to take on projects to enhance their learning. A particular strength of the school is their success in debating, both within the school and in local and regional competitions.
- 3.5 The attainment of the pupils cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests. Evidence from the work observed in lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' books, along with results of the school's assessments, indicates a level of achievement that is excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils are notably successful in their entrance examinations to highly selective senior schools and consistently gain places at their preferred choice, with many receiving academic, art, music and sport scholarships.

- 3.6 The high level of attainment indicates that pupils make progress that is at least good, and sometimes excellent, in relation to those of similar ability nationally. Those with SEND or a statement of special educational needs make excellent progress due to the extremely well-organised and high-quality support that they receive. Levels of progress for pupils with EAL are exceptional. These pupils maintain their native language skills, often leaving the school with high grades at GCSE in their mother tongue, as well as making rapid progress in English. More able pupils also make excellent progress, as they receive regular opportunities to challenge their thinking and learning. They often choose to extend their learning beyond the classroom.
- 3.7 Pupils have an enthusiastic approach to learning which allows them to approach each new experience positively. They work well both individually and co-operatively and show themselves to be confident, capable and articulate young people whose desire to take their own learning forward promotes high levels of success. Parents' and pupils' questionnaire responses expressed high levels of satisfaction for pupils' achievement. Pupils move on to their next schools with well-developed skills for learning and a set of experiences that ensure they are well-rounded individuals who have developed an excellent foundation for future success.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 In the EYFS, well-qualified enthusiastic staff, including specialist teachers in sport, dance and music, provides an excellent range of indoor and outdoor activities. These develop children's experience, skills and achievements across all the required areas of learning. A well-planned balance of child and adult-initiated activities ensures that the interests and needs of every child are effectively met, including those with SEND or EAL. Activities and games that support the learning objectives of the educational programmes are available for children to access independently, such as the popular shop game that enables them to reinforce their knowledge of counting and coins.
- 3.10 Pupils across the school benefit from a wide range of subjects which enhance their overall learning and development and support the aims of the school. The curriculum covers all required areas, most notably providing a broad range of modern foreign languages (MFL) including Italian, Mandarin, German, Spanish and French. Additionally, Latin is taught in Years 6 to 8 and scholarship candidates take a course in ancient Greek following their examinations. Since the previous inspection, PSHEE is now timetabled as a discrete subject, including modules on financial management and emotional well-being. The school has devised its own skills-based curriculum for the humanities. The new curriculum has allowed pupils to make links across several areas to develop skills and understanding of national and international issues.
- 3.11 All pupils participate in a wide range of sports and physical activity. The school actively promotes the values that underpin British society through its PSHEE provision, through curriculum planning in other subjects such as MFL and religious studies (RS), and through other school-wide initiatives. This excellent provision is suitable for all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL. A carefully planned and co-ordinated programme of support for pupils with SEND or EAL ensures that their wide range of different needs are very well met. More able pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities for challenge and extension in lessons, such as through individual research projects. The school achieves a good balance when

political views are discussed and ensures that visiting speakers provide a balance of different approaches and opinions. Regular visits by groups of pupils from different backgrounds and cultures, who attend the school for one or two terms, successfully develop the pupils' awareness and tolerance for equality and diversity.

- 3.12 To meet a recommendation from the previous inspection, the school has invested in a range of equipment to support the integration of ICT into the curriculum and consequently enhance teaching and learning. The implementation of this equipment is still at an early stage, but good progress has been made. All subjects are allocated appropriate teaching time, but the length and number of lessons can lead to extremely busy days with little room for pause and reflection. Senior managers are currently considering ways to address this.
- 3.13 An extensive programme of visiting speakers and visits off-site provides excellent support for the curriculum. Residential trips to Brenscombe and Paris promote pupils' personal development, as well as building on their prior learning. Effective links with the community include the development of a language learning website that is shared with a range of local pupils, artistic links with many local schools through joint exhibitions, and a strong connection with the local abbey that draws a large number of choristers from the school. The RS department is also building links with a local imam, with the aim of enhancing the PSHEE curriculum.
- 3.14 Extra-curricular opportunities are excellent and involve a broad range of cultural, artistic, sporting and intellectual activities, which the school takes great care to make inclusive. Such is the popularity of the provision that over 90% of pupils opt to come in to school on Saturday morning, when over 30 activities are on offer including a programme of lectures for pupils and parents. Parents and pupils were highly positive in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses regarding the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, knowledgeable staff provide a range of activities that respond to children's interests and learning styles. Adults make effective use of both formal and informal assessment systems to track children's progress and ensure that all, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able are appropriately supported or extended and challenged in their learning. Staff are skilful at identifying the means to engage children and promote excellent learning, such as was observed when a story featuring a komodo dragon was used to reinforce children's understanding of coins. Good-quality resources are used effectively to interest children and inspire enthusiasm. Adults use children's own suggestions about Christmas and its traditions to provide a range of activities that develop skills of counting, painting, performance, and an appreciation of cultures other than their own as they explore the celebration of Christmas around the world.
- 3.17 Throughout the school, a significant proportion of teaching is of the highest quality. An engaging enthusiasm is apparent in much of the teaching, which promotes endeavour and interest in the pupils. Teaching is successful in achieving the school's aims and is a major factor in the outstanding achievement of the pupils. Teacher's high expectations of their pupils' work are evident throughout almost all lessons. Relationships are highly positive between pupils and teachers; pupils are comfortable asking and answering questions and do so with genuine interest. The

classroom atmosphere is notable for equality, respect and tolerance. This provides an environment where political and religious issues are approached and discussed in a non-partisan way, and where pupils learn to respect the views of others as well as expressing their own ideas.

- 3.18 Teaching is well planned and shows a strong understanding of the pupils' needs. A growing culture of self-evaluation amongst teachers can be seen in the frequent lesson observations by peers, heads of department, senior managers and governors. This is welcomed by all and has a significant impact on the quality of the teaching. The use of resources, including those which are ICT based, supports stimulating approaches to learning. In their questionnaires responses, a small minority of pupils and parents felt that homework is not always balanced in terms of time or content. Inspection evidence found that homework is set in accordance with the school's policy and is a positive and well-balanced reinforcement and extension of classwork.
- 3.19 A consistent framework for assessment and monitoring is now in place, in line with a recommendation of the previous inspection. New tracking systems are available to all staff, which inform teachers' planning and promote pupils' progress. Marking and feedback is thorough and productively focused on guiding improvement, ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development.
- 3.20 Teachers have a strong knowledge of their subjects and keep up to date with new developments. A particular strength of the school is how teachers demonstrate the relevance of their subject to the outside world. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson more able pupils were challenged to work out where mirrors would need to be placed in order to enable cars to move safely across a blind junction.
- 3.21 Thorough systems are in place for identification and support of the more able pupils and those with SEND, EAL, or a statement of special educational needs. Regular training is provided to support staff, and there has been improvement in the way that more able pupils have been catered for since the previous inspection. Many instances were noted where more able pupils were encouraged to contribute their insights in lessons and provided opportunities to extend their learning. Provision for pupils with EAL is extremely well organised, ensuring that they are able to participate and contribute fully in lessons. The responses of both parents and pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate a highly positive view of the quality of teaching.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Children in the EYFS co-operate, share and readily accept suggestions for solving disputes, such as using a sand timer to allocate time for a favoured activity. Even the youngest relish the responsibility of assuming the role of leader for the day; ticking off a visual checklist while assessing that the outdoor area is ready for use, with the gates closed and the hamsters safely caged. All the children become familiar with other areas of the school as they enjoy lunch in the dining hall, where they see other adults and pupils. Reception children join the older pupils in assemblies and productions, so that they can see clearly their pathway through the school and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The Nursery children enjoy their morning in the Reception classroom. They begin to have an understanding of British social values as they discuss ideas for activities and have their ideas accepted and put into practice.
- 4.3 All pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They demonstrate a strong sense of self-esteem. They are able to articulate a deep awareness of non-material aspects of their life, developed through a structured assembly programme, regular services at the local abbey and their many opportunities to debate in lessons. This was reflected in older pupils' artwork, which highlighted the dangers of materialism. Pupils are self-confident and emotionally mature for their age.
- 4.4 Pupils develop excellent moral awareness and have a strong sense of justice and of right and wrong. They are extremely respectful of each other. Pupils are polite and proud of their school. The school council, eco-committee and debating clubs are a sample of the forums where pupils can voice their opinions and ideas or raise concerns about the needs of others. At appropriate stages, pupils develop a strong awareness of the need for rules and a respect for English civil and criminal law. They develop an excellent understanding of those less fortunate than themselves in the local and wider community through a range of fund-raising activities in aid of local and international children's charities.
- 4.5 The social development of the pupils is outstanding. All Year 8 pupils have positions of responsibility, which they approach with maturity. Pupils are highly articulate and engage supportively with each other and with their teachers. They greet each other, staff and visitors to the school politely and courteously. The pupils' awareness of citizenship and English public institutions is excellent and they understand that they all have a role to play in their community. They appreciate both the school's own values and also the values espoused by wider British society. Pupils recognise that communities should be inclusive and tolerant of difference in all respects, including those found in different faiths and cultures. They understand the concept of democracy through their participation in the school council.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent, in keeping with the school's aim to enable them to understand their place and responsibilities in the wider world. They successfully develop an appreciation for, and understanding of, their own British culture and traditions. This is enhanced by an annual expedition day, where all pupils visit a site of historic importance. The broad range of languages at the school, termly visits by pupils from other countries, and wide-ranging opportunities to explore other faiths and cultures through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities

ensures that pupils develop a deep understanding and appreciation of the cultural achievements of the wider world.

- 4.7 By the time they leave the school, pupils are confident and capable young people who know their strengths, in line with the aims of the school. They are aware that they can make a contribution to their environment and how to make a difference in the wider world, and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Every child in the EYFS has a key person who ensures that they are making the best possible progress. Warm, positive relationships with adults build the confidence for the children to develop socially. Careful attention is paid to individual needs and interests. The children behave extremely well; they are confident that the adults will look after and keep them safe. They are encouraged and praised for making healthy choices regarding exercise and food, and for healthy habits such as cleaning their teeth.
- 4.10 Throughout the school a well-structured system of pastoral care, which values and promotes the well-being of all pupils, is highly effective. Relationships are warm, friendly and inclusive; levels of trust remain high. Pastoral issues are discussed at a weekly staff meeting, which is devoted exclusively to pupils' care and welfare. Staff ensure that they know their pupils very well and are there to anticipate and respond to any issues that may arise. The 'secret tutors', chosen by individual pupils as the adult that they would turn to if they had a concern, add another effective layer of support.
- 4.11 Good behaviour is actively promoted and a holistic consideration of individuals, with an emphasis on kindness, perseverance, awareness, generosity, honesty and independence, results in polite and happy pupils. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils felt that sanctions are not applied fairly. Inspection evidence, gained from pupil interviews and a review of the relevant records, does not support this view. The use of both rewards and sanctions follows the school's published policy. Any incidents of challenging behaviour are logged and monitored effectively so as to minimise chances of escalation. A few parents expressed concerns about the way that the school deals with bullying. Inspection evidence gained from scrutiny of records, policies examined, and discussions with both pupils and staff does not support this view. Bullying is taken extremely seriously and great efforts are made to stress the unacceptability of this rare behaviour, and it is addressed robustly.
- 4.12 Pupils have numerous opportunities for regular exercise and the school ensures that they are aware of the need for healthy eating. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not listen or respond to their views. The inspection found that pupils have many opportunities to express their views, for example through weekly school council meetings and daily form time. Pupil representatives attend the governors' health and safety committee, and so have a direct input into the safe running of the school.
- 4.13 The school has a detailed plan to improve educational access for those with SEND.

#### **4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 All staff in the EYFS take the promotion of children's welfare extremely seriously and meticulous attention is paid to all safeguarding requirements. Staff regularly assess children's well-being and engagement, as well as academic progress. Regular attendance is encouraged. Displays celebrate diversity and allow children to see people in non-gender-specific roles, such as female builders and male dancers. The emphasis on social development and reflection is an effective strategy to enable the children to resist radicalisation and extremism in their futures.
- 4.16 The school has a robust and thorough approach to safeguarding and provides high-quality training for all members of staff. The designated safeguarding leaders have undertaken the required training, and all other staff are trained appropriately and receive termly updates. All staff are currently training in recognising the dangers of extremism. Strong links are present with local safeguarding agencies, and the school is a training venue for the local safeguarding board. Recruitment procedures are carefully followed in all cases and recorded appropriately in the single central register of appointments. This addresses the regulatory failing identified during a previous inspection.
- 4.17 Arrangements for reducing risks from fire are comprehensive, with all appropriate maintenance checks and monitoring in place. Fire drills are carried out regularly and are properly logged, with any weaknesses in procedure addressed. Risk assessments are carefully carried out and logged centrally, and any inconsistencies in their implementation are actively identified and remedied. The premises benefit from a conscientious maintenance programme. All electrical appliance testing is carried out meticulously and any material issues are remedied swiftly. Detailed records are held, and audit trails are followed to ensure that materials and equipment are fit for purpose.
- 4.18 First-aid provision is very well organised and overseen, with timely and competent treatment available for all pupils and staff. A large number of staff are trained in first aid and many have received higher-level paediatric training, resulting in excellent coverage. First aid and medical records are kept securely on a central database. Arrangements for sick or injured pupils are appropriate and provide all required elements.
- 4.19 The admission register and attendance records are properly maintained and stored.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent and their personal development is clearly promoted by their boarding experience. Behaviour is held in high expectation, and boarders are self-assured and thoughtful in their dealings with each other and adults. They enjoy the boarding experience, in an environment in which they feel well cared for and supported. Excellent social skills are developed through house life and the communal dining arrangements. The professional and caring house staff forge strong relationships with boarders. Those with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported by staff, and additional help is available outside teaching hours. The school council is proactive in listening to the views and ideas of boarders. Boarders can pass on their suggestions through their house representative and feedback is prompt. The boarders' strong awareness of events in the wider world is achieved through the provision of newspapers, the internet and the rich extra-curricular programme of weekend lectures. The positive relationships between boarders from different backgrounds lead to a sensitive appreciation of different cultures. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, boarders unanimously said that they enjoy boarding. Parents' highly positive questionnaire responses concurred with this and also expressed that they felt the boarding experience successfully promotes personal development, ensuring that their children are well prepared for life in their next school.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Both boarding houses offer a full, weekly or occasional boarding system for Years 3 to 8. Boarders share dormitories according to year groups. Pastoral care is strong; the boarding team is highly committed and boarders are confident in knowing that they have someone to whom they can turn for help. The contact numbers of outside agencies are clearly displayed on notice boards and in the detailed boarding handbooks. In addition, the independent listener takes a weekly assembly and is available for informal chats. Boarding staff show an interest and pride in boarders' achievements and are keen to support them in furthering and widening their skills. New boarders are made to feel very welcome and are helped to settle in through an extensive induction process. They are assigned a 'buddy' who will help them through the first few weeks.
- 4.23 Boarding houses are clean, comfortable and well maintained. Both have been made to feel very homely, with appropriate décor. The girls' house has benefited from recent refurbishment and the boys' house is scheduled for this in the near future. Washrooms provide suitable privacy. The common rooms are well furnished and equipped with televisions, DVD players and a plentiful supply of board games and other recreational pursuits. The laundry service is efficient and boarders take some responsibility for organising themselves, an essential skill for later in life. The provision for securing valuables is good. House staff store mobile telephones and valuables securely, and systems to dispense pocket money are efficient. Boarders can purchase personal items easily from the local shops. Contact with parents and carers is straightforward; boarders can use either their personal mobile telephones or email.
- 4.24 A small minority of boarders felt that the balance of activities at free times in the evenings and at weekends was not to their liking. However, most boarders speak with enthusiasm about the extensive range of activities on offer to them. They can participate in sport, the creative arts, and educational and recreational excursions.

These activities are designed to broaden their outlook, develop their skills and provide relaxation time away from their academic work.

- 4.25 The medical provision is good. Trained staff are on hand twenty-four hours a day. The sick bay is adequately equipped and separate areas in each of the houses ensure that boarders who are too ill to attend school can be looked after. Boarders report that they are always well cared for. Medical policies and protocols are followed appropriately, including those for the storage, recording and administration of medications. Unannounced fire drills during the night hours are standard practice and records are accurately maintained. All necessary plant and electrical checks are completed annually.
- 4.26 All catering is done in house and the food is served cafeteria-style in the large, airy dining room. The meals are balanced, nutritious, and sufficient in quality and quantity. The published six-week menu cycle offers suitable choice. Staff and boarders eat together, which enhances the family atmosphere and allows monitoring of what each child is eating. Birthdays are celebrated with a special cake. Suitable provision is made for special dietary needs. A minority of boarders in their questionnaire responses felt that the food was not good and they were not happy with the provision of snacks outside mealtimes. The inspection found that plentiful snacks are available during the evenings and also deemed meals, following a sample of several, to be satisfactory.
- 4.27 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Clear procedures and practices ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed well at all levels. All of the National Minimum Standards for are met. Staff recruitment procedures are meticulous. Regularly reviewed risk assessments are in place. All boarding staff receive relevant training in safeguarding and are confident in responding in accordance with procedures should a child-protection issue arise. Access to boarding houses is securely controlled. Arrangements for tracking the whereabouts of boarders at any time are secure. Staffing levels are high and each house has at least two house staff in residence overnight. The behaviour of boarders is exemplary; rules are clear and understood. Boarders report that bullying, including cyberbullying, incidents are rare and dealt with quickly and effectively. Stringent monitoring ensures safe internet use. Suitable protocols are in place for searching boarders and their possessions, if required. Staff know the procedures to follow if a boarder was to go missing. Boarders speak very positively about the care they receive and feel that the boarding house is a safe environment. Should they have any concerns, they are confident about how to report them and that they will be taken seriously.
- 4.28 A strong and capable team is highly focused upon the boarding provision and runs boarding efficiently, meeting a recommendation from the previous inspection report. The school is highly successful in its boarding aim to provide stimulating and challenging opportunities for each individual to develop fully and benefit from their boarding experience. A dedicated team of tutors, assistants and matrons support the house staff in providing a caring and supportive environment, which nurtures the boarders and creates a homely place in which they can live and flourish. The school is committed to providing high levels of training to support staff in their work. Senior boarding staff meet weekly as part of the pastoral team to review and discuss issues. Information about boarders' welfare and their academic progress is shared effectively and any developing trends are addressed quickly. Boarding policies are reviewed annually and properly implemented. Parents of boarders are kept well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They are encouraged to

attend school events and sports matches, and are always made to feel very welcome.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is structured to provide highly effective oversight of all sections of the school, including the EYFS. Strong levels of commitment and the effective use of the broad range of expertise represented on the board ensure that governors monitor the running of the school efficiently and understand the needs of its staff, pupils and parents. They successfully fulfil their responsibilities by setting ambitious educational targets and providing effective financial resources. Since the previous inspection the school has provided significant levels of investment in provision for ICT, refurbishment of boarding accommodation and opportunities for specialist teaching in a wider range of modern foreign languages.
- 5.3 Governors are regular and welcome visitors to the school. They have excellent relationships with senior leaders and staff, and also fulfil specific roles to support boarding, the EYFS and safeguarding. A number of committees meet regularly and provide frequent reports to update the full board in areas such as matters of regulatory compliance, educational standards and strategic planning. Governors have high expectations and their detailed knowledge of the school ensures that they are able to offer constructive support and challenge.
- 5.4 Governors undertake a range of training to ensure that they manage their responsibilities for monitoring statutory requirements effectively. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety and child protection are taken extremely seriously. All governors receive detailed termly reports on safeguarding matters, which inform the annual review of safeguarding procedures by the full board.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership and management of the EYFS is highly committed to ensuring that the school is a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment for all the children and their families. All staff share an ambitious vision for the setting. Priorities for improvement have been identified through an effective and frequent system of self-evaluation that continually monitors the provision, supported by the professional expertise of local authority advisors. Leaders mentor and support staff through effective systems of supervision and appraisal. Professional development is encouraged, including linking with other local nurseries to share practice and experience. Leaders actively promote equality, diversity and British values, and an awareness of the importance of the 'Golden Rules' that govern the setting.
- 5.7 At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management are effective in achieving the aims of the school and developing an environment where pupils see education as a staging post to lifelong learning and into which parents are welcomed into a partnership which embraces trust, understanding and a shared vision. Across the different levels of responsibility the senior and middle management of the school are effective. The aims of the school and the welfare of the pupils are central to

everything that they do. In particular, senior and middle management successfully monitor the important areas of safeguarding, safe recruitment and welfare, health and safety. A review of the time available for managers to carry out their roles effectively is being undertaken and clarifications of managers' roles have been developed. This represents good progress in meeting a recommendation from the previous inspection. The overall structure of the senior leadership is currently under review, following the arrival of a new headmaster at the beginning of the school year. This includes the aim of ensuring that leaders have additional time to carry out their monitoring roles as effectively as possible.

- 5.8 A shared vision and passion for providing a broad range of educational experience ensure that senior leaders, ably supported by the governors, provide clear educational direction and support. Senior leaders are totally committed to providing an excellent educational experience for every pupil. This can be observed in the pupils' excellent personal development and high levels of achievement, leading to entry to senior schools of their choice often with scholarships and other awards.
- 5.9 Policies and procedures are monitored and evaluated regularly to ensure that their implementation is secure. The current development plan is reaching the end of its 3-year life and a new plan for future improvement is developing, based upon input from senior leaders, subject co-ordinators and other key staff. Leaders have already identified and prioritised the most important targets.
- 5.10 The leadership and management have been successful in recruiting high-quality staff who understand the ethos of the school and embrace the aim of providing pupils with a range of experiences which support their personal development and engender a love of learning. Arrangements and training for staff and governors with regard to safeguarding, safe recruitment and for welfare, health and safety are meticulous, and comprehensive records are kept and monitored. The school has reviewed the security arrangements, which meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. A broad range of regular in-service training, a system of staff appraisal and opportunities for professional development are significant factors in the success of the school. The monitoring of teaching, peer coaching and work-scrutiny systems are now fully embedded in the school, supporting overall standards and ongoing professional development of staff.
- 5.11 Since the previous inspection, improvements have been successfully introduced in many areas. Provision for modern foreign languages has been extended. A new cross-curricular approach has been developed to enable pupils to make essential links between different areas of their learning, enabling them to understand the significance and role of British values in our society. In meeting all of the recommendations from the previous inspections, the school has invested in an infrastructure for ICT to provide resources and support for pupils and staff to enhance learning across the curriculum. A new school management system records data to inform teachers' planning and allow effective monitoring of the welfare of the pupils. At all levels, management has a strong focus on provision for boarders.
- 5.12 The leaders and staff of the EYFS work closely with parents and welcome parental involvement through such means as handbooks, contact books and notice boards. The school regularly seeks the views of parents through questionnaires and responds to any suggestions. Communication within the EYFS is greatly aided by the recently introduced electronic monitoring system that links observations made on tablet computers to assessments. These observations and links can be shared

almost immediately with parents, so that they can participate and respond to their children's activities and progress.

- 5.13 Questionnaire responses show that the parents feel that their children are happy, safe and well looked after. Parents also appreciate the excellent standards of behaviour and the curriculum provision. Those who met with inspectors spoke particularly highly of the quality, speed and informative nature of communications with the school through the distribution of newsletters and blogs. They particularly valued the ease and the friendly, helpful, personal contact when calling or emailing both academic and administrative staff.
- 5.14 As a child begins their education at the school, the whole family is welcomed into the community and strong and constructive relationships are rapidly established. The popular, well-supported Saturday morning activities programme allows parents excellent opportunities to study alongside their children subjects such as Italian and art. Nativities, plays and preparations for the end of term Christmas service were observed during the week of the inspection, and are examples of the many events that allow parents to appreciate and celebrate their children's achievements.
- 5.15 The parent association organises a programme of social events that is much appreciated, particularly by those families newly arrived in the area. They contribute to the school by organising a wide variety of social, sporting, and other events, such as the Christmas fair. These also raise funds both for external charities and the school for the benefit of pupils.
- 5.16 A small minority of parents felt that they do not receive sufficient information about their children's progress. Samples of the reports provided over the course of each academic year were scrutinised as part of the inspection and were deemed to be detailed and thoughtful, providing parents considerable information about their children's achievements and suggestions about how their learning might progress. The school website publishes all of the required information for current and prospective parents, as well as providing a secure portal to access specific information.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**