



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ROOKWOOD SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Rookwood School

Full Name of School	Rookwood School
DfE Number	850/6011
Registered Charity Number	758856
Address	Rookwood School Weyhill Road Andover Hampshire SP10 3AL
Telephone Number	01264 325900
Fax Number	01264 325909
Email Address	office@rookwood.hants.sch.uk
Acting Head	Mr David Bown
Chairman of Trustees	Mr Kevin Knight
Age Range	3 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	301
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (165 boys; 136 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 29 5-11: 91 11-16: 181
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 286
Number of Boarders	Total: 15 Full: 15 Weekly: 0
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Melanie Brickell
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	29 Sep 2015 to 02 Oct 2015

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. 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 2012 and the previous ISI interim inspection was in March 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. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

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 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

Mr John Dunston	Reporting Inspector
Mr Andrew Hampton	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mr Anton Kok	Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mrs Lynn Maggs-Wellings	Team Inspector (Headmistress, ISA school)
Mrs Jean Gray	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Jane Morgan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
(d) The quality of boarding	13
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
(a) The quality of governance	15
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	16

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Rookwood School is a day and boarding school for pupils aged 3 to 16. The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, and to encourage all pupils to perform to the best of their ability. It seeks to provide a safe, happy and relaxed atmosphere in which pupils develop self-discipline and self-esteem. It sets out to instil the values of care, consideration and courtesy in pupils and to teach them to respect those with differing views or opinions. The school has a Christian ethos and welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. The school is a charitable trust governed by a board of six trustees, whose work is supported by two committees that focus respectively on finance and boarding.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1934 in Andover as a girls' school, moving to its current location near the town centre in 1946. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is situated in a separate building and accommodates children on a full-time or part-time basis. The first boys were admitted to the prep school in 1950 and to the senior school in 2003. The school was originally housed in the Highfield building and has since expanded its facilities, most recently to include a sports hall and additional classrooms. The boarding house consists of two adjoining properties, one for boys and one for girls, located a short walk from the main school site. The acting head took up this role in September 2015 and a new head has been appointed to take up post from January 2016.
- 1.3 The school is divided into three sections: Rookery (EYFS and pre-prep Years 1 and 2), Paddocks (prep school Years 3 to 6) and Highfield (senior school Years 7 to 11). Of the 301 pupils on roll, 29 are in the EYFS, 91 are aged 5 to 11 and 181 are aged 11 to 16. Just over half of the pupils are boys. There are 15 full boarders and 286 day pupils. Most pupils come from professional, farming or services backgrounds within the local area and are of white British ethnic origin. A few international pupils have parents in the armed forces based in Andover. The ability profile of pupils in the prep and senior schools is above the national average. Most pupils have ability that is in line with or above the national average. Thirty-six pupils have been identified by the school as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), twenty-nine of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. Three pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs. Nine pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom six receive support for their English.
- 1.4 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 school is successful in achieving its aims of setting high expectations and encouraging pupils to achieve their best both in and out of class. Children in the EYFS show enthusiasm and make excellent progress, in many cases exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Throughout the school, pupils show good understanding and enjoy their learning, demonstrating excellent literacy and numeracy skills in the prep school. They participate with success in the performing arts and in a wide range of creative and sporting activities both locally and nationally. Examination results over time and evidence gathered during the inspection show that pupils' attainment is good at GCSE. Their progress in the pre-prep and prep school is excellent. Pupils' attitudes are positive and their behaviour is exemplary. They work well both independently and co-operatively. The wide-ranging curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including in the EYFS, although children in the Nursery have limited access to outdoor areas. Provision and support for pupils with SEND or EAL are good. The range of extra-curricular activities is limited. The quality of teaching is good overall, and excellent in the EYFS. More able pupils in the prep school receive particularly appropriate challenge, though this is more limited in the senior school. Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. Marking in the senior school does not always follow the school's clear policy.
- 2.2 The pupils show an excellent standard of personal development throughout the school, including in the EYFS. Pupils understand what is meant by fundamental British values and put them into practice in their school life. They show concern for the environment and appreciate non-material aspects of life. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and are proud of their school, contributing much through positions of responsibility. They respect different faiths and cultural backgrounds. They benefit from excellent pastoral care that offers support and a secure environment, and are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils have opportunities to express their views. The quality of boarding is excellent in respect of both accommodation and care, including welfare, health and safety, and the day-to-day leadership of boarding is excellent.
- 2.3 The school meets all regulatory requirements and standards. Recruitment checks in the past have not always been rigorously implemented, but meticulous procedures are now in place. Effective leadership and management are in place in all sections, which set out the shared vision for the education of pupils. Governors support the school well, though they have less strategic oversight, including of the EYFS and boarding. In response to previous inspection recommendations, information and communication technology (ICT) provision has been widely expanded both in the school and in the boarding house; the school has introduced a greater variety of teaching methods, although provision for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging; and communication between the boarding house and the school has been improved. Parents show overwhelming support for the school and its educational and pastoral provision. Pupils raised some concerns in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire about the fairness of sanctions, some work not being interesting, and their views not being listened to. Inspection evidence did not support these views. Pupils enjoy being at the school, and feel that they make good progress in their work and receive help and support from their teachers.

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. Ensure consistent practice in the implementation of marking and assessment policies in the senior school.
 2. Expand the range of extra-curricular activities available.
 3. Strengthen governors' strategic oversight of all areas of the school, including boarding and the EYFS.
 4. Improve access to the outdoor learning environment in the EYFS for Nursery children.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 In the EYFS, children enjoy their learning and participate enthusiastically in all activities and areas of the curriculum, making excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Their ability to concentrate and to engage in focused activities is exceptional. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children achieve at least the expected levels of development, with many exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Children in Reception count confidently to 50 and are developing their skills of estimation and early addition. They use their knowledge of initial sounds to read texts and to write simple sentences. They are keen to practise their skills in their child-initiated learning. Children in the Nursery quickly adapt to class routines and are happy, well-settled individuals. Their listening skills and ability to follow instructions are well developed and they readily engage in both independent and collaborative activities, showing creativity, inquisitiveness, perseverance and enthusiasm. Children with specific learning needs are given appropriate support within the classroom, including from specialist teaching and external agencies when necessary. Parents are fully involved. The daily communication and continuous liaison between staff within the EYFS and in Years 1 and 2 ensure the smooth transition of children to the next stage of their education. This is further enhanced by more formal handover meetings at the end of one school year and the beginning of the next.
- 3.3 Throughout, pupils are well educated, in line with the school's aim to encourage them to perform to the best of their ability. They have good subject knowledge and understanding, and show considerable creative and physical skills. They demonstrate strong collaborative learning skills and enjoy the opportunity to work with their peers. Pupils in all year groups, including the pre-prep and prep school, are articulate and demonstrate good literacy skills. For example, prep school pupils demonstrated excellent analytical skills in an English lesson when selecting relevant characteristics from an autobiographical text. Pupils of all ages show well-developed reasoning and numeracy skills, especially in science and mathematics lessons.
- 3.4 Pupils show good levels of creativity in art and in music, frequently gaining merit and distinction awards in external music and drama examinations. They achieve regular success in local public speaking and national writing competitions, and several pupils play in county youth or jazz orchestras. In 2013, pupils won their sections of a local Young Musician of the Year competition and in 2014, individual success was achieved in winning the national Rotary Young Photographer of the Year competition. Pupils of all ages engage enthusiastically in sports competitions, achieving success locally in cross-country and athletics, playing with professional teams in football and rugby, and participating at international level in gymnastics.
- 3.5 In the prep school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available it is judged to be good. The following analysis for the senior school uses national data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools. During this period, almost 40 per cent of results were at A* or A, and almost all grades were at A* to C. In 2015, results were broadly similar. At the age of 16,

pupils proceed mostly to the local sixth-form colleges of their choice. Those leaving at the age of 11 go on to local selective grammar schools.

- 3.6 The level of attainment indicates that pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, make progress overall that is appropriate in relation to pupils of similar abilities, as a consequence of teaching designed to meet their needs. During the inspection, it was evident through lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils that more able pupils make excellent progress in the prep school and good progress in the senior school. In the prep school, appropriately challenging tasks are consistently provided for more able pupils, but this is more limited in the senior school. In responses to pre-inspection questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents and most pupils reported satisfaction with the progress made, a view reflected during the inspection.
- 3.7 In all parts of the school, pupils show highly positive attitudes to their work and activities. They are focused in their learning and they speak about it with enthusiasm, as in a Year 8 mathematics lesson. Their behaviour is exemplary. They organise their work well and settle to it quickly. They work well independently and in groups, and co-operate very effectively with each other and with their teachers, for example as seen in a Year 7 biology lesson.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 In the EYFS, the carefully planned educational programmes provide appropriate coverage in all seven areas of learning, with a suitable balance of child-initiated and adult-led tasks and activities. In response to a previous inspection recommendation, children in the Nursery now use computers competently, following instructions and using the mouse skilfully. The outdoor environment has been developed to enable Reception children to have greater access to outdoor resources and to facilitate movement between the classroom and the outside area, thus meeting in part a previous inspection recommendation. However, opportunities for Nursery children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor areas are more limited. Specialist teaching enhances the curriculum provision with lessons in French, music, physical education and dance. Children in Reception confidently greet the teacher in French, saying their name and age, counting to ten, and naming colours and animals, with exemplary accents. Currently, there are no extra-curricular activities for EYFS children, although lunchtime football becomes an option in the spring and summer terms. Rigorous systems for planning and for tracking children's progress ensure that all learning and development needs are met through a range of focused activities, as well as the continuous provision of resources to consolidate skills and promote creative and critical thinking. For example, Nursery children enjoyed exploring the concept of 'over and under' by building bridges following the story of *Rosie's Walk*, and Reception children chose their own materials to create plates of healthy foods.
- 3.10 Throughout the school, the curriculum successfully meets the pupils' needs and supports the aim to broaden their educational experience. In doing so, it reflects established views of British values. The prep school curriculum covers a broad range of subjects, including drama. Personal, health social and economic education (PHSEE) is taught using a reflective approach to encourage high level thinking and questioning skills through philosophical enquiry. Linguistic skills are enhanced by the continued teaching of French. In the senior school, a wide range of subjects is

studied from Years 7 to 9, including French and German, and pupils can choose from a broad range of options at GCSE. Pupils are able to study combined science or separate sciences in Years 10 and 11. As well as GCSE mathematics, an additional mathematics qualification and GCSE statistics are also offered to more able pupils.

- 3.11 The curriculum provision for pupils of all ages with SEND or EAL is good. Valuable individual support is provided for pupils who need extra help. A stimulating programme is in place for more able, gifted and talented pupils of all ages which includes, for example, participation in national team competitions, the UK Maths Challenge, public speaking, essay writing and collaborative learning.
- 3.12 Since the previous inspection, a comprehensive PHSEE programme has been introduced into the senior school which includes a series of external speakers supported by specialist teachers. This provides a strong foundation for pupils' personal development. Pupils in Year 9 benefit from a work taster day and Year 10 pupils undertake a week's work experience as part of the extensive careers programme. The school organises careers conventions both in-house and at local schools for Year 11 pupils.
- 3.13 The curriculum is strengthened by educational trips both locally and further afield, including residential visits. For example, pupils in Years 7 and 8 visit Normandy, combining work in history and French. Year 10 pupils visit the World War 1 battlefields and Year 6 pupils experience outdoor activities and camping. Year 11 pupils take part in geography fieldwork activities in preparation for GCSE coursework. Throughout the prep school and in specific areas of the senior school the curriculum is well supported by the use of hand-held electronic devices, thus helping to meet the previous inspection recommendation for greater access to ICT.
- 3.14 A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided to pupils at lunch breaks but only a few are offered after school. The introduction of an archery club has led to pupil representation at regional competitions. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme has seen considerable expansion in recent years, and pupils now regularly achieve the silver level in Year 11. The library has expanded its provision since the previous inspection.
- 3.15 The school has good links within the local and international community. Both prep and senior schools visit a local food bank as part of their fund-raising work with local charities during various religious festivals. The school is currently working with the local authority, which is seeking accreditation for Andover as a Dementia-friendly town. The school has a strong link with a school in Sri Lanka.
- 3.16 Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire appreciate the range of subjects and areas of experience offered to their children. A very small minority of parents felt that sporting and extra-curricular activities in the senior school are limited. Inspection evidence supports this view.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 In the EYFS the quality of teaching is excellent. The well-qualified and experienced teaching team is committed to ensuring that all children enjoy positive learning experiences that promote rapid progress. Through continuous observations, staff know the children extremely well and tailor activities to meet their individual needs and interests. They have high expectations and foster an ethos of joyful learning through their own enthusiasm and dedication. Targeted questioning provides appropriate challenges and ensures that all children experience success and a sense of achievement. This, together with praise and encouragement, develops children's self-confidence and encourages them to attempt their challenges and take risks in their learning.
- 3.19 Throughout the school, teaching reflects the aim to encourage pupils to perform to the best of their ability in all spheres of activity. Teaching is non-partisan, lively and interactive. Teachers act as facilitators within a purposeful, well-disciplined environment. Classroom activities are designed to ensure that all pupils learn and achieve successfully. Appropriate challenge for the more able is particularly evident in the pre-prep and prep school. Lessons throughout the school are well planned. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and use a variety of resources effectively. The use by pupils of tablet computers is particularly effective and enhances their learning. In the senior school teaching at times relies excessively on photocopied worksheets that often lack suitable challenge.
- 3.20 Teaching in the pre-prep and prep school supports those with SEND effectively, and the deployment and management of learning support assistants enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. In the senior school, the needs of pupils with SEND are not always met in lessons. In the pre-prep and prep school, lesson planning is a notably excellent feature, resulting in lessons that are well structured and that foster pupils' learning and progress. In the senior school, there is less evidence of planning that is designed consistently to challenge more able pupils. Throughout the school, teachers are aware of the needs of pupils with an EHC plan or a statement of special educational needs and ensure that work is appropriately adapted for them.
- 3.21 In the senior school, teaching makes excellent use of ICT resources in order to provide clear and easily understandable material to pupils, reflecting progress against previous inspection findings. Much effective collaborative work is incorporated into lessons, and pupils are often encouraged to share and present their work to the class, which they do with confidence and flair. The best teaching in the senior school promotes strong independent learning. For example, in a Year 7 biology lesson, pupils were appropriately challenged by demanding questions. In a Year 8 PHSEE lesson, pupils developed their own, often profound, philosophical questions with guidance but only a little intervention.
- 3.22 Assessment and marking in the prep school are rigorous. Reports to parents are detailed and give helpful advice for further improvement. Constructive comments are given and targets are set on a regular basis. The school has an assessment and marking policy although this is not implemented sufficiently consistently in the senior school. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but additional comments designed to help them to improve are not always provided.

- 3.23 Relationships between pupils of all ages and teachers are excellent. Teaching encourages excellent behaviour in lessons through approaches that have pace and relevance, and are, at their most effective, challenging for all pupils. Excellent opportunities for group work are often provided in the senior school, but there is less focus on independent learning. In the prep school, teaching that promotes both group work and independent learning is excellent.
- 3.24 The school has responded positively to the previous inspection recommendation for there to be greater variety in teaching methods. Teaching throughout the school now offers a greater diversity of approaches. The school has introduced a virtual learning environment, enabling pupils to send messages to teachers, and teachers to set homework and upload resources for pupils. Parents also benefit from involvement in this online platform. Although its use is not yet fully exploited, it is already effective and helpful in enriching learning for pupils.

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 The school takes active steps to promote pupils' development, including coverage of the particular values that contribute to British society. In the EYFS, the children's personal development is excellent. Behaviour is exemplary throughout the setting; sharing, taking turns and co-operation are the norm in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children have a mature respect for adults and each other, and show considerable empathy, kindness and consideration. Throughout the year, opportunities are taken to develop children's understanding of other faiths and cultures through the celebration of a range of festivals. The concept of democracy is promoted through voting systems for daily activities and children learn about the concept of following the choice of the majority. Together with Years 1 and 2, children in Reception attend an assembly each morning which provides a focus for a range of personal and social issues to be addressed, as well as an opportunity for the celebration of their own achievements and those of others. Children thrive on roles of responsibility, which build their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- 4.3 Pupils understand and reflect the fundamental values of modern British society. In the prep school, pupils learn about individual liberty and elect form captains democratically. During the inspection, they discussed the recent Scottish parliamentary election and its reporting in the media. The senior school council provides an excellent forum for discussion at which voting is formally undertaken on a range of issues. Leadership, tolerance and community spirit are reflected richly through democratic processes. Senior school pupils participate in the UK Youth Parliament.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Their values are significantly influenced by the school's Christian ethos. They have an emotionally mature attitude to the world around them and show a genuine love of nature. Pupils of all ages enjoy planting bulbs and plants in the school grounds and the excitement of seeing them grow and flourish, sometimes taking harvested vegetables home for dinner. They have a strong environmental conscience, prep school pupils conscientiously carrying out their 'eco-challenge' responsibilities. Pupils have good self-awareness, appreciating non-material aspects of life by engaging in higher level thinking through philosophy lessons. The tree of life mosaic in the prep school is an expression of community collaboration. Pupils appreciate art, music and literature and the enrichment these can provide.
- 4.5 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of the school rules and of right and wrong, including a knowledge of how the law of England operates in society. Behaviour is of a high standard; pupils are courteous and kind. Having developed a strong moral sense, they clearly understand the importance of fairness and equality. Senior school pupils have the opportunity to discuss ethical environmental issues. The 'Good Egg' award, presented for outstanding acts of caring and friendship, is highly valued. Pupils' personal qualities of self-discipline and self-esteem are widely evident. They are polite and are proud of their school.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. Positions of responsibility are accepted with pride and carried out with commitment and loyalty. Socially confident, pupils

demonstrate mutual support for others, taking responsibility for the well-being and happiness of those around them. They have a suitable knowledge of the public services and institutions of England. They enjoy each other's company when sharing lunch together or engaging in recreational activity. Older pupils are kind and caring towards younger pupils, working co-operatively to the mutual benefit of all. Charity fund raising is a strong feature of school life. Harvest contributions are sent to a local food bank and support is given to a local charity that organises days out for families living with serious illnesses. The boarders have produced a cook book to raise money for Help for Heroes, and the whole school supports a charity providing education, intervention and enrichment to vulnerable children.

- 4.7 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They understand and respect people's different backgrounds and recognise importance in living in harmony regardless of culture, faith or personal characteristics. Visits by pupils and visitors to the school support the understanding of other faiths and cultures; diversity and difference are valued. Parents come into school to share information about different cultural festivals related to their religion or heritage, enhanced by projects on Indian dance and Aboriginal art. Pupils also appreciate the achievements of Western culture and traditions, through celebrations of harvest, Easter, Christmas and Remembrance Day.
- 4.8 In their questionnaire responses, parents felt that pupils have excellent standards of personal development by the time they leave the school, preparing them well to undertake the next stage in their education.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Excellent staff ratios in the EYFS ensure that children are extremely well cared for in a bright, warm, welcoming and nurturing environment. Children form positive relationships with all staff members, the key person roles being effectively used to further develop strong bonds. Children are given many opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings. Class rules and sensitive adult intervention encourage children to think about the consequences of their actions and to consider the needs of others. Lunches and snacks provided by the school are nutritious and encourage children to make healthy choices. Reception children have an excellent understanding of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of drinking water and taking exercise. Children are independent in managing their hygiene and personal needs, supported appropriately by staff when necessary.
- 4.11 The pastoral care arrangements enable children to feel safe and well looked after, a view overwhelmingly expressed by parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- 4.12 Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent, and clearly understood pastoral systems are in place to enable staff to respond promptly if concerns arise. Senior pupils mentor younger pupils and benefit from a recently introduced programme of safeguarding training. Able and gifted pupils and those with SEND or EAL receive strong support and are fully involved in the life of the school.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise and to develop healthy eating habits. The school serves wholesome, nutritious meals, with vegetarian options and

allergen information available, and pupils are consulted about food through the food committee.

- 4.14 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour at all times. It deals promptly and constructively with the very rare incidents of bullying and pupils feel that they always have someone to turn to if a concern arises. Pupils did not report any incidence of cyber-bullying. A small minority of pupils said in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that teachers are inconsistent in the way they gave sanctions; a few also commented on inconsistency in giving rewards. Inspectors looked at records and discussed the matter with pupils and staff. They found that there was little evidence to suggest that these concerns are widely shared or are substantial. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils said that the school does not take sufficient notice of their opinions. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Inspectors found, for example, that the school seeks the views of pupils through a lively and thriving school council: an example of its influence is the range of food served, which has broadened since the matter was raised by pupils. Pupils demonstrate a sense of occasion and respect in their behaviour in whole-school assemblies and when hearing Grace after lunch. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.15 Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced measures to alert pupils to the potential dangers of digital communication and social networking. The PHSEE programme has been reorganised to address evolving issues such as the risks of radicalisation and the promotion of British values. Form tutors, effectively supported by senior management, know the pupils extremely well and encourage them to speak openly about any such issues that cause concern or about which they may be unsure.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 The welfare, health and safety of children in the EYFS are given high priority. All staff are aware of safeguarding procedures, and are rigorous in their supervision of children and their adherence to health and safety routines. As children move around the school campus, for example, staff conduct frequent head counts and remind children of safety routines. Staff receive appropriate training in child protection, first aid and food hygiene. Staffing levels reflect the required ratios and some staff have appropriate paediatric first-aid training. Risk assessments are in place and undertaken for both school and off-site activities, as well as for specific areas within the EYFS, and these are regularly reviewed. Arrangements for the arrival and collection of children at the end of the day are thorough and ensure their safe handover, as well as providing an opportunity for communication between teachers and parents.
- 4.18 Appropriate measures are in place across the school to reduce risk from fire and other hazards and these are reviewed regularly by an external consultant. Equipment is checked, fire drills are held and recorded, and appropriate training of staff takes place. Risk assessments are carried out for all school activities both on and off site, and detailed records are kept.
- 4.19 Appropriate safeguarding measures have regard to official guidance and are effectively implemented. Staff receive regular training and the designated child protection officers ensure that the induction programme for new staff meets current

requirements. A new programme of safeguarding training for prefects has recently been introduced. The single central register of appointments is well maintained. On isolated occasions in the past, medical checks were not always obtained prior to appointment, as required. Arrangements are now secure, and as a result, no staff take up employment until all checks are in place.

- 4.20 Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety have due regard to the nature of the school site. Pupils who are injured or feel unwell during the day are cared for in a centrally located medical centre. The security of medicines is appropriately managed and detailed records are kept. Procedures are in place to promote the health and safety of pupils with SEND. The school has, and implements, an effective policy for the provision of first aid. The many trained first aiders are readily identified on notices around the school, and a first-aid co-ordinator oversees provision for medical help when needed. Pupils of all ages have access to a counsellor should the need arise.
- 4.21 The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years. Registration of pupils is undertaken in an orderly and efficient manner and any absences are followed up quickly, according to clear procedures.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.22 The quality of boarding education is excellent.
- 4.23 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are courteous, confident and tolerant, reflecting the ethos that everyone counts and is included and supported. In questionnaire responses, an overwhelming majority of parents expressed their appreciation of all aspects of the boarding experience.
- 4.24 A family atmosphere exists across all year groups, from Years 5 to 11. Boarders are proud of being part of their community and are actively encouraged to make a positive contribution. A thorough induction procedure helps them to become fully integrated into the life of the houses. The homely environment gives them the confidence to express their ideas at house meetings, and to help plan their weekend activities. Qualified boarding staff give extra help with homework to pupils with SEND or EAL. The heads of house are valued both by staff and pupils for helping to build the mutual trust and respect that exist amongst boarders and between boarders and boarding staff. Boarders of all ages are given responsibilities. They say that they have many people to whom they can turn for help and advice. Helpline numbers and details of the independent listener are displayed on notice boards. Pupils have access to news and current affairs through newspapers, television and the internet.
- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are housed in two adjacent buildings a short walk from the school. Boarding accommodation is comfortable. Rooms are shared by between two and four boarders. They are bright and cheerful, warm, well lit and ventilated, and boarders are able to personalise their own space. They all have lockable storage space, but few see the need to use them. The numerous bath, shower and toilet facilities afford appropriate privacy. Supervised homework is mainly completed at school or in the boarding house; senior pupils can work in their rooms. Following the previous inspection recommendation, ICT facilities for boarders have been improved. Laundry is

organised in the house, and a high standard of tidiness and cleanliness is maintained throughout.

- 4.26 In pupil questionnaire responses, a large majority said that their food is good. The negative response from a small minority about the availability of snacks was not reflected at any time during the inspection. Inspectors found that suitable snacks are available after school and in the evening, with the older boarders being able to make hot drinks in the house kitchen. Drinking water is suitably labelled. Weekday lunch is eaten in the school dining hall, but all other meals are prepared by the house staff and taken in the boarding house. House meals are relaxed and inclusive social events, and table manners are impeccable. Food is plentiful, nutritious and varied, catering, where necessary, for special diets and allergies. Pupils make suggestions for the menus through a food council.
- 4.27 Boarders are well cared for if they are ill. Separate medical accommodation exists in the houses for boys and girls. Boarders are registered at a local surgery, to which they are taken if necessary. Appointments at a local dentist and optician can be arranged if the need arises. Rigorous procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of homely remedies and prescription drugs. Pupils' confidentiality is respected and senior pupils are allowed to self-medicate in accordance with a detailed protocol.
- 4.28 The safety of boarders is given a high priority. Risk assessments are regularly updated and acted upon. Fire precautions are in place, and drills are regularly undertaken and effectively assessed. Pupils are aware of the complaints policy. Accurate pocket money records are kept, and pupils can buy daily necessities when they are taken to local shops.
- 4.29 Pupils appreciate the freedom of the large garden. In the evenings there is a variety of activities for them to enjoy such as visits to the sports hall, quizzes, and the swimming pool in the summer. There are also comfortable places for pupils to be alone and read or just to reflect. This balanced lifestyle contributes significantly to their mental well-being.
- 4.30 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. Boarders feel safe in their boarding house. Staff are thoroughly trained in safeguarding and implement the policy and procedures. The anti-bullying policy is clear and implemented appropriately. Pupils live together in an atmosphere where good behaviour is promoted, and encouraged with rewards, such as a competition for the tidiest dormitories. Few sanctions have to be applied. Boarders say that there are few incidents of bullying and when they occur they are dealt with promptly.
- 4.31 The resident members of staff have suitably separate accommodation, but can all be accessed easily at night in case of emergency. Resident students give extra help and support with evening and weekend activities. Visitor access to the houses is carefully controlled and monitored. Younger pupils are driven to and from the main school in a minibus, with older pupils follow safe procedures for walking between the house and school at specific times.
- 4.32 The effectiveness of leadership and management within the boarding provision is excellent. A clear statement of boarding principles and practice is wholeheartedly adhered to by the committed and dedicated boarding staff. One of the trustees, who has been trained on the necessity of compliance with requirements, visits the house and has tea with the pupils at least once a term. Records are well maintained in the houses, and monitored by the head. Job descriptions for the staff are in place. The

housemistress appraises other staff annually, and identifies training needs. An appraisal scheme exists for senior house staff, but it is not regularly implemented. There is an effective programme of induction for new members of staff. Regular formal meetings take place for the boarding staff, but most information about the care of the pupils is shared by the use of email and a house diary. Very good lines of communication exist between the boarding and academic staff, reflecting a recommendation from the previous boarding inspection. Academic information is available for all concerned on the school intranet, and the housemistress regularly visits the pre-prep, and prep and senior schools to share information about pupils.

- 4.33 An aim of the school development plan is to strengthen the links between the boarding houses and the school. However, as yet none of the boarding staff are members of the senior leadership team or the trustees' boarding committee, so are not regularly involved in the strategic planning of the place of boarding within the life of the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Through termly reports from the head of the pre-prep and presentations at meetings, the trustees are kept informed of EYFS developments. Currently, no trustee has specific responsibility for the Early Years but all trustees visit the department and consider EYFS issues as part of whole-school strategic and development planning.
- 5.3 Governance strongly supports the aims and vision of the school. The members of the governing body bring a range of experience and extensive knowledge of the school to their role, and a number are parents of current or former pupils, or are former members of staff. Committees take specific responsibility for finance and boarding. Trustees regularly visit the school, for example to see performances of music or drama and to spend time with pupils, and in addition spend an annual day at the school visiting lessons and activities, and developing further their understanding of the school's work. Trustees are well known by staff and pupils, and demonstrate genuine care for the school. Training of trustees, including in safeguarding, takes place regularly.
- 5.4 Meetings of trustees are held twice a term, at which they receive reports from the head and senior staff. Detailed minutes are kept as part of the process of ensuring that the implementation of policies is appropriately monitored. No mechanism exists for regular self-review of the effectiveness of governance. Trustees maintain effective oversight of financial matters and contribute to the school's strategic development. They understand their role and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding the welfare of pupils, although monitoring of the appointments procedure and of the single central register of appointments has been insufficiently rigorous in the past. Governors carry out an annual review of safeguarding policies and the effectiveness of their implementation.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.6 Senior managers in the EYFS are effective in monitoring the educational programmes and understand their responsibilities in ensuring that statutory requirements are met. Staff receive appropriate training in all areas of regulatory compliance and are aware of the importance of keeping up to date with current changes in legislation. Whole-school training days, attendance at local authority courses and informal cluster group meetings with local schools provide further opportunities for professional development, and systems for appraisal and supervision are firmly established. The EYFS development plan reflects the inherent self-evaluative practice within the department and highlights areas for continued focus. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed and continue to be a feature of future planning. Communication and links with parents are a strength of the setting. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in discussions with inspectors, parents particularly highlighted the family atmosphere, the availability of staff, the happy environment and the joy of learning which is fostered. Before their children join the school, parents have many opportunities to visit the school with them and value the information provided on its website. Written reports in the autumn and summer terms, together with termly meetings for Nursery parents and twice-yearly meetings for those with children in the Reception class, keep parents well informed of their children's progress. The recently introduced online learning journal enables parents to share the day-to-day experiences and achievements of their children, as well as to make their own contributions.
- 5.7 The senior leadership team has set out a strong vision for providing excellent educational opportunities for all pupils. It ensures that the school is a compassionate place where pupils and their well-being are given the highest priority. There is an emphasis on collaboration as a guiding principle of management, as a result of which the school has instilled a strong sense of loyalty and commitment amongst staff. Teachers in the pre-prep and prep school work as a cohesive and co-operative team, ensuring that systems are firmly in place to monitor teaching and learning in order to support pupils' achievements.
- 5.8 Senior leaders set the direction of education in the school in accordance with its aim to instil in pupils the values of care and consideration for others and of both co-operative and individual working. These values are embodied routinely in the approach of teachers and pastoral staff. The school development plan, which is drawn up in consultation with the governing body, describes the school's current position effectively and sets out clear priorities for the future. The plan contains ambitious strategic targets and areas for development which are focused on teaching and learning. Reflecting the interim nature of the current leadership, detail on timescales, cost implications, and the assigning of accountability and responsibilities for the realisation of future plans have not yet been determined. The strategic leadership of boarding, beyond the excellent day-to-day leadership and management of boarding provision, is not yet sufficiently developed to ensure the fulfilment of the school's stated aim to develop and expand boarding.
- 5.9 The good quality of leadership and management is evident in the consistent reflection of the school's ethos and values by staff and pupils. A strong sense of collaboration characterises the effective administration of academic departments and pastoral sections of the pre-prep, and prep and senior schools, which are

overseen by the senior leadership team. The current structure of the leadership of departments in the senior school is under review by the head and trustees.

- 5.10 The senior leadership team works closely with staff through a school improvement group to set priorities for achieving high standards of teaching through constructive advice and support. This encourages teachers to work towards common goals in teaching methods to promote the best possible learning performance from pupils. Departmental handbooks and schemes of work are comprehensive and provide appropriate guidance, although in the senior school the consistent application of marking and assessment policies is not effectively monitored. A wide range of training opportunities exists both for individual staff and through whole-staff development events. The school has recently adopted an online communication and tracking platform that is used for professional development and to enable senior managers to monitor individual training needs and achievements. In addition, a new appraisal scheme has recently been introduced which challenges teachers to set personal targets and to monitor their own progress.
- 5.11 Appointments follow established procedures designed to secure high quality staff. A high priority is placed on safeguarding. Safeguarding training is provided regularly both for all staff and in the extensive induction programme for new staff. Recruitment checks in the past have not always been rigorously implemented, but meticulous procedures are now in place. The single central register of appointments is appropriately maintained.
- 5.12 In the pre-prep, and prep and senior schools, the senior leadership team has responded positively to previous inspection recommendations by implementing significant developments in the provision and use of ICT which have led to a greater variety of teaching methods, although sufficient challenge for more able pupils is not consistently provided. In the boarding house, ICT provision has also been significantly expanded, and there is considerably improved communication between boarding and school staff in all matters concerning the boarders.
- 5.13 The school has excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. Throughout the school, detailed written progress reports are sent to parents at the end of the autumn and summer terms. Additionally, an overview of grades in each subject area is sent to parents of pupils in the pre-prep, and prep and senior schools at the end of the spring term. Reports are informative and contain comments on achievements, with specific targets for further improvement. Any concerns are handled with care and in accordance with the school's published complaints policy.
- 5.14 The weekly newsletter, *Rooknews*, is compiled by pupils in the senior school and published on the school's website. It keeps parents informed of current and future events and activities, as well as providing an opportunity for a range of contributions by pupils and items of general interest, including, for example, recipes and book reviews. The prep school also publishes an attractive and informative weekly newsletter. Discrete booklets for each section of the school provide helpful information about school routines, staffing arrangements and reminders of the expectations placed on pupils regarding their behaviour. Parents are also briefed on how to make full use of home/school liaison arrangements, on the administration of medication and on forthcoming school trips. The school provides a forum giving further opportunities for parents to communicate with the senior leadership team. The active parents' association, Friends of Rookwood, arranges social events for both pupils and parents, and raises funds for additional educational resources and facilities.

- 5.15 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were overwhelmingly positive in their comments on all areas and aspects of the school's provision. They were full of praise for the care and support their children receive, the progress they make and their standards of behaviour. They feel that the school is well led and managed, and would readily recommend it to other parents. Parents appreciate the opportunities they have to be involved with the school, and value the high level of communication and availability of information.

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