



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

YARLET SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Yarlet School

Full Name of School	Yarlet School		
DfE Number	860/6000		
EYFS Number	EY332876		
Registered Charity Number	528618		
Address	Yarlet School Yarlet Stafford Staffordshire ST18 9SU		
Telephone Number	01785 286568		
Fax Number	01785 286569		
Email Address	info@yarletschool.org		
Headmaster	Mr Ian Raybould		
Chair of Governors	Mr Robert Montgomerie		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	154		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	15	5-11: 77
	3-5 (EYFS):	32	11-13: 30
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	129	
Number of Boarders	Total:	25	
	Full:	0	Weekly: 25
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Diana Green		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	22 May 2012 to 25 May 2012		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2009.

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) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and/or disabilities).

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning corporal punishment.

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 Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

Under Government arrangements, the inspection of boarding became an integrated part of ISI inspections from 1 September 2011. 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in February 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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.

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 pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' 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 the governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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 Linda Donowho

Mr William Trelawny-Vernon

Mr Paul Spillane

Mrs Gillian Bilbo

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Yarlet School is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from two to thirteen; pupils may board from the age of seven. It was founded in 1873 as a preparatory school for boys in a Victorian house near Stafford, which forms the central area of the school today. The school became a charitable educational trust with a board of governors in 1970 and became fully co-educational in 1994. The Pre-Prep, for pupils between the ages of two and seven, opened in 1993. Since the previous inspection in 2009, a new headmaster has been appointed. In 2010, the Nursery, Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms were relocated and refurbished, and in 2011, the Reception classroom was renovated and extended. They are accommodated in modern, purpose-built buildings and a new administrative area has been added to the main school building.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection there were 154 pupils on roll, of whom 87 were boys and 67 girls. Of these, 47 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), some of whom attend part-time. Boarding arrangements are flexible and beds are available two nights a week for pupils from Years 3 to 8. At the time of the inspection, 25 pupils were boarding and most pupils use this facility at some time during the year.
- 1.3 The school does not select pupils on the basis of academic ability. The ability profile of the school is above the national average overall, with a fairly wide spread and some variation between year groups. and around a fifth having ability that is well above average. The majority of pupils are of white British origin and no pupils have English as an additional language. Most pupils come from professional or business families, and live within easy commuting distance of the school. The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist learning support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide an environment where pupils are safe and extremely well cared for and nurtured, whilst promoting and recognising exemplary behaviour, and enabling its pupils to achieve to the best of their ability in all areas of school life. It seeks to offer an extensive and high quality extra-curricular programme with particular strengths in sport and music, which includes opportunities for pupils to learn by making contributions in the community.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school from Reception to Year 8 and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery groups of the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery (ages 2 to 3)
Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 3 to 4)

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school, including the EYFS, standards are high and pupils make good progress. The pupils develop highly effectively in their knowledge, understanding and skills across a good range of subjects and activities. Achievements are particularly notable in music, mathematics, science and literacy. This is due to the pupils' enthusiastic attitudes, their impeccable behaviour and their exemplary relationships with one another and their teachers. The pupils' success is promoted by excellent teaching. Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are good and used effectively across the curriculum, but further achievement is limited by lack of resources for pupils, including those in the EYFS. Very strong support is given to those pupils with SEND and to the more able pupils. A feeling of mutual respect and trust pervades the school, and enables it to fulfil its aim to provide a safe and stimulating environment where all pupils can achieve to the best of their ability in all areas of school life, whatever their starting point. As a result, pupils are extremely well prepared for their future lives.
- 2.2 Excellent pastoral care and arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety, including those boarding, underpin the success of the school in fulfilling its aims and ensure each pupil's excellent personal development. Pupils are unfailingly polite to visitors and treat their peers and staff with great respect. Their care for one another is embedded in all aspects of school life. Pupils have clear insight into their own culture but their knowledge of other cultures is less well developed. Their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves shows in their positive approach to charitable giving.
- 2.3 The aims of the school are fulfilled and fostered by the governing body, which supports the academic progress and personal development of the pupils highly successfully. Governors have a clear oversight of the school, informed by the reports from senior leaders and through the regular meetings of the sub-committees. Leadership is excellent, providing a clear vision for the school, with a strong emphasis on teaching and learning. The role of the subject leaders has developed well since the previous inspection to enable them to have clear oversight of their subjects; however, this does not include the regular monitoring of teaching and sharing of good practice. Links with parents are excellent. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, they were extremely positive about all aspects of the school's educational and pastoral provision, and inspectors agree with these views.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that ICT is used more widely across the curriculum.
2. Ensure that subject leaders monitor the teaching of their subject across the school and promote the sharing of good practice.
3. In the EYFS, include teaching assistants in staff meetings, planning and professional development review.
4. In the EYFS, ensure that records of individual children's' progress are shared with their parents consistently.

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 The pupils' success in academic work and the wider curriculum ensures that the school's aims are fulfilled. Throughout the school, pupils show high levels of knowledge and understanding, and well-developed skills. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEND, apply their literacy and numeracy skills well across all subjects. They read intelligently and write fluently for a variety of purposes and audiences. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are of a high quality for their ages. They are articulate and their questioning skills are well developed. Many pupils enjoy debate and discussion around a subject, and they exhibit strong powers of reasoning and logical thought, as seen in a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson, where older pupils acted as agony aunts. Pupils show a strong grasp of mathematical concepts. They are keen problem solvers and enjoy the many opportunities they are given to engage in this activity, particularly in mathematics and science, where they demonstrate high levels of success. The use of ICT is competent, both in school as an integral part of the curriculum, and as an aid in homework and research. However, the pupils' achievement in school is hampered by the limited resources available.
- 3.3 In Years 7 and 8, the pupils perform very successfully in Common Entrance examinations. Recent scholarships to senior schools have included several academic, art, music, drama and sports awards, reflecting the school's aim to provide an extensive and high quality extra-curricular programme that is particularly strong in sport and music, and includes opportunities for pupils to learn by making contributions in the community.
- 3.4 The school values its pupils' achievement of excellence in a broad range of skills, including musical events, drama productions and sporting activities. Achievements in music are particularly notable, with pupils being chosen to sing with regional professional groups and some gaining membership of national choral ensembles. The accomplished senior choir performs at various religious and secular venues during the year. A large number of pupils have gained success in graded music examinations and the high quality of the school orchestra is a testament to the high achievement of many pupils. The school celebrates a number of achievements in sports by individuals and groups. An inclusive approach enables all pupils to represent their school and both boys and girls enjoy success in inter-school sports matches. Pupils achieve places in county sports teams for cricket, football and swimming.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observations of lessons, scrutiny of work and discussions with individual pupils confirms this judgement. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability.
- 3.6 Less able pupils and those with SEND make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported. They are withdrawn from lessons for individual work, and supported in class by their teacher or classroom assistants. More able pupils and

those with particular talents are consistently challenged in lessons through enrichment tasks, so enabling them to achieve exceptionally well.

- 3.7 The pupils' success in academic work and other areas of the curriculum owes much to their excellent, positive attitudes to their schoolwork. Their exemplary behaviour consistently promotes learning both in the classroom and around the school.

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

- 3.8 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The scope and variety of the curriculum and the extra-curricular provision give pupils experience in a wide range of subjects and activities. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced an effective programme of PSHE, carefully monitored across the school, which meets the recommendation of that report. The curriculum is suitable for all ages, needs and abilities. It is effective in promoting the pupils' excellent standards of learning and personal development, whilst providing a range of creative, linguistic and technological experiences with a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and science. All pupils learn Spanish in Years 1 and 2, and French from Year 3, while Latin is taught from Year 5.
- 3.10 Curriculum planning is thorough within each year group and subject, and meets the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. Lesson plans are detailed and show separate tasks for pupils of differing abilities. Subject leaders and the senior leadership team meet regularly to discuss planning and curriculum coverage. However, links between subjects and opportunities for cross-curricular work are limited.
- 3.11 Curricular support for pupils with SEND is excellent. Clear targets are set in individual education plans which allow these pupils' needs to be met in individual and group lessons and with appropriate support in mainstream lessons. Both pupils with SEND and more able pupils value the intervention and support given.
- 3.12 Throughout the school, many pupils benefit from frequent educational visits, both residential and non-residential, which enrich the academic curriculum. These range from visits to the local pottery museum, the National Space Centre, Roman remains in Chester and local buildings of interest. Trips further afield take them to Wales and France.
- 3.13 The pupils' experience is enhanced by many links with the local community. The school strongly supports a local hospice, and visits and talks, such as from a police officer, a doctor and a representative of the Royal British Legion, broaden the pupils' horizons and their appreciation of the wider world.
- 3.14 Extra-curricular activities during the working week focus mainly on music and sport. Music is an extra-curricular strength of the school, with many pupils participating as singers and instrumentalists. Groups regularly visit the theatre, and all pupils within each age group participate in productions, such as the older pupils' most recent performance of *Oh! What a Lovely War*.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 The school's aim to provide teaching that enables pupils to reach their full potential is fully supported. It encourages them to strive to the best of their abilities, enabling them to work independently, reflect thoughtfully, and contribute openly and confidently when developing and exchanging ideas. As a result, all pupils make good progress. Lessons are carefully planned and, at their best, swiftly engage the pupils, who respond to assignments with enthusiasm.
- 3.17 A wide variety of teaching methods is employed, enabling all pupils to think independently and enjoy their lessons. All teachers have good knowledge of their subjects which they share with their pupils. Central to the most effective teaching is communication of a true passion for the subject. The best teaching includes clear objectives and explanation, and is characterised by good pace and challenge. The use of open-ended questions helps pupils to extend their thinking and practical skills and adds additional momentum to their learning. In a small amount of less effective teaching, expectations are lower and questions are less stimulating; consequently, the pupils' progress is hindered.
- 3.18 Teaching meets the needs of pupils of different abilities extremely well, enabling them to acquire new knowledge, make progress, increase their understanding and develop their skills. The more able pupils and those with SEND are supported most effectively in lessons, enabling them to make excellent progress. Teaching plans build very well on the regular assessment of the pupils' previous attainment and this information is used to identify those who are achieving well in relation to their ability and those who require support. Changes in pupils' attainment over time are tracked effectively, further supporting pupils' progress.
- 3.19 Praise and encouragement are given consistently, and strong, positive relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that pupils feel well supported and able to seek advice. The pupils comment that their teachers help them to learn and provide individual support.
- 3.20 Marking and feedback are encouraging and supportive to pupils and, at their best, identify clear steps and targets for improvement through evaluative comment. The resources available are used to particularly good effect to engage the pupils and increase their enjoyment of learning, but limited use is made of ICT due to the lack of resources.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school most successfully achieves its aim to provide frequent opportunities for the pupils' personal development. The standards reported at the previous inspection have improved markedly.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Confident and self-aware, pupils appreciate non-material aspects of life, and are emotionally mature for their age. They communicate their interests with passion. Through the effective delivery of religious studies and PSHE, pupils gain insight into world religions and are given opportunities for discussion. Pre-Prep pupils developed insight into world religions by experiencing meditation as part of a Buddhist celebration of light. The inclusiveness of the recent poetry reading competition provided an excellent opportunity to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- 4.4 Moral awareness is excellent. The pupils develop strong values and principles, and acknowledge the need for a code of behaviour and for school rules. They respond well to these and consider them fair. Pupils empathise strongly with the needs of those less fortunate than themselves, and benefit from the link with a local special school where they offer their help and support. Through an ecological initiative for schools, they develop good awareness of environmental issues.
- 4.5 The pupils develop extremely well socially. The pupils' behaviour is courteous, engaging and lively. They conduct themselves very well around the school. They are able to accept responsibility and show initiative, contributing much to the school. Throughout the school, pupils show high levels of co-operative skills, working and playing together most harmoniously. The pupils regard the school as a 'big family' where people are polite and take great care of one another. Their skills and experience are strongly advanced through opportunities for membership of the school council, through helping to run events such as match teas and through positions of responsibility such as being a prefect. Merit badges are worn with great pride by the pupils and underline the school's aim to value exemplary behaviour. The pupils have raised funds for communities in Africa and India, and in doing so increased their understanding of the needs of others.
- 4.6 Cultural development is good and the pupils develop thoughtfulness and understanding. Their knowledge and experience of cultures other than their own are limited. Their awareness is enhanced by wall displays, such as on Buddhist enlightenment, residential expeditions, for example the annual trip to France, and visitors to the school, such as a Spanish performing arts group. Year 5 pupils benefited from learning about the symbolism of a Jewish wedding service. Further opportunities to raise awareness of cultural differences are limited.

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

- 4.7 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 In accordance with the school's aim to foster a family atmosphere, this happy, considerate community supports its pupils through comprehensive pastoral arrangements that are universally supported.
- 4.9 All staff share responsibility for pastoral care, which they exercise conscientiously and sympathetically. The example of the senior leadership team's compassionate approach ensures that pupils are extremely well cared for, supported and guided. Consideration of individual pupils is a standard agenda item at staff meetings and relevant information about them is carefully stored in records. Outstandingly positive relationships between staff and pupils and an 'open door' policy ensure that pupils feel comfortable talking to staff, whom they regard as being very approachable. Parents praised the high quality of pastoral care in their responses to pre-inspection questionnaires. Inspection evidence fully supports this view.
- 4.10 Pupils feel particularly well represented by the school council, which meets weekly. Pupils feel valued and have a voice within their school community.
- 4.11 Strong friendships exist amongst pupils; the older ones are notably helpful towards the younger ones. The school has excellent systems to promote good behaviour. Various reward systems celebrate both academic and personal achievement. Bullying is not tolerated and the school's approach includes a variety of measures to raise awareness. Pupils say that bullying is not a matter of concern: they are confident that any instances would be dealt with fairly and effectively. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 The school encourages pupils to stay fit and healthy. There is a busy programme of exercise and sport. The lunch menus are healthy, however of limited variety and choice.

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

- 4.13 The quality of provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Clear procedures for safeguarding pupils and eliminating discrimination are implemented highly effectively and with due regard to official guidance. All staff receive appropriate training in child protection. The school works closely with the local safeguarding children board and two members of staff are trainers in safeguarding.
- 4.15 The school provides very well for sick or injured pupils. The medical room is situated next to the boarding accommodation and consequently a pupil who is feeling unwell can rest, under supervision, in a dormitory. The administration of medicines is appropriately recorded and all formal procedures regarding medical treatment are appropriately followed, in accordance with consent given by parents. Any medical needs of pupils are made known to all staff. An abundant number of staff are trained in first aid.
- 4.16 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are highly effective and cover all aspects of the life of the school. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire practices are held regularly and fire protection measures are in order, with regular monitoring of electrical equipment through portable

appliance testing. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken, where appropriate, for activities in and out of school. In the PSHE programme and ICT lessons, pupils are alerted to 'e-safety' issues. All use of the school computer network is monitored. The health and safety committee meets termly; it is chaired by the governor with specific responsibility for these aspects of school life, who reports to the full governing body.

- 4.17 Admission and attendance registers are accurately completed and appropriately archived.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is excellent.

4.19 Outcomes for the boarders are excellent. Their personal development is successfully promoted by the boarding experience and is apparent in the spirit of friendly co-operation. Those who are going on to board at their next school say that they find the experience valuable in terms of developing maturity, self-reliance and self-confidence. The pupils get on extremely well with one another and with the boarding staff. They know that there is a wide range of staff and other adults whom they can approach with matters of personal concern. Members of staff are easily accessible, and pupils affirm that they are kind and helpful. Boarding prefects, closely monitored, are expected to set a good example and to report any matters of concern, which they do with maturity and sensitivity. Pupils do not identify bullying or harassment of any kind as an issue, and they are confident that any instances would be dealt with swiftly, sensitively and fairly.

4.20 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are very well looked after, and the boarding provision is effective in supporting their individual needs and helping them to keep safe, fit and healthy. There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders, whose introduction to boarding is generally straightforward as they are already well accustomed to the life of the school, and they board only for one or two nights at a time. Provision for laundry and to ensure specialist medical attention for boarders is effectively managed between school and home for those who only board occasionally. Arrangements for boarders who are unwell are excellent. Policies regarding confidentiality and the administration of medication are appropriate and are scrupulously observed. Regular fire practices take place, including after the pupils have gone to bed. Boarders are able to obtain necessary personal and stationery items from the school. Arrangements are in place for any valuable possessions to be looked after by house staff.

4.21 Boarding accommodation is of a good standard overall. The dormitories are clean and bright. The fabric, furniture, fixtures and fittings are maintained to a uniformly high standard, and this quality of maintenance is repaid by the care the pupils take of their accommodation. The lavatories and washrooms are sufficient and well maintained. Pupils may personalise their own spaces with posters, photographs and items from home. They may telephone home whenever they wish. Through the school council or informally, pupils may express opinions about boarding: they are sympathetically listened to and a number of their suggestions have been adopted. This meets the recommendation of the previous boarding inspection. The boarders' three main meals are nutritious and sufficient in quality, but limited in choice. The boarders' suppers and breakfasts are civilised, companionable occasions. The school communicates effectively with parents, who say that the boarding staff are

helpful and responsive, dealing promptly and effectively with matters of interest or concern. When they have finished their academic work, boarders benefit from the good programme of recreational activities, indoors and outdoors, and often away from the school, which they say they enjoy very much. Some of the programme is devised by the pupils themselves, in conjunction with the boarding staff. The operation of boarding successfully blends institutional requirements with informal homeliness.

- 4.22 The leadership and management of boarding are excellent. All boarding staff are very well supported by designated people, training and links with the local authority. Boarding priorities are clear and boarding is extremely well run, in accordance with the aims of the school. Boarding is incorporated into the school's five-year development plan. All of the recommendations made in the Ofsted report of 2009 have been met. Arrangements for the safeguarding and welfare of boarders are highly effective and include checks on the suitability of staff. The boarding accommodation is situated on the upper floors of the main building and access is suitably controlled. Boarders are at all times under the supervision of suitably qualified and experienced staff, all of whom have received appropriate training. The comprehensive boarding handbook ensures a uniformly high standard of professionalism and care, in conjunction with frequent communication amongst boarding staff.
- 4.23 The boarders thoroughly enjoy their experience. In their questionnaire responses, parents unanimously expressed satisfaction with all aspects of the boarding provision, and inspection evidence supports these views.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Highly effective governance enables the school to meet its aims, maintain standards and plan for improvements. Governors are strongly committed to the school, its pupils and staff, and to its continuing development. They are fully aware of their responsibilities, ensuring effective oversight, with a common resolve, and they largely ensure, through financial planning, that the school's accommodation and human and material resources are of a high quality, supporting the pupils' high academic achievement and excellent personal development. However, ICT resources are limited.
- 5.3 The structures of governance are clear, and the inclusion of governors who are parents of current pupils provides strong ties to the school community. Meetings of the full board and committees are regular and clearly minuted. Individual governors provide a wide variety of specialisms to the board, including legal, financial and educational expertise. Educational standards are effectively monitored through the academic committee through discussion of school assessment data and the pupils' achievements. The thorough understanding and involvement of the governing body enable it to provide excellent guidance and direction for development.
- 5.4 The governors keep in close touch with parents, and have recently given presentations to parents on their role as governors. Relationships between governors and staff are strong and provide the school leaders with much appreciated help, advice and, where appropriate, challenge, while recognising their operational autonomy. Their support is greatly valued by staff, as is their involvement in school life.
- 5.5 Governors review all school policies regularly, and effectively discharge their responsibilities for health and safety. The governors have undertaken an appropriate annual report and review of safeguarding policies and procedures; individual governors have specific interests, such as for child protection or health and safety, and the EYFS, and as a result these areas are well considered.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.7 Since the previous inspection, the leadership and management of the school have become significantly stronger and are driving the school forwards. This has enabled the school to introduce a range of innovations over recent years, allowing it to build on the existing good quality of education and of pastoral care, and to ensure the excellent academic achievement and personal development of the pupils.
- 5.8 The senior leadership team has been augmented and restructured; members now have clear responsibilities and formally meet on a regular basis. Senior leaders give the school a very clear sense of purpose and resolve. Lines of leadership take overall accountability for all aspects of the school's work and have ensured that the family atmosphere continues to welcome pupils into the life of the school.

- 5.9 The senior leadership team has developed a clear focus on improvement, through careful self-evaluation. Areas for improvement are now set out in strategic planning and this is communicated to the wider school community. The initial development plan did not involve whole-school consultation and involvement, and the senior leadership team have now instituted systems to ensure that the imminent new development plan is the result of a consultative process and a shared vision.
- 5.10 In response to the previous inspection, subject leaders monitor the planning and progression of their subjects across the school, produce clear subject policies and long-term plans, and collate the work of teachers in producing medium-term plans, with the result that most planning is of a high standard. They communicate regularly with their colleagues but as yet do not have opportunities to monitor teaching and consistency and ensure that best practice is shared in individual subjects. The monitoring process, including lesson observations and monitoring of pupils' work, is undertaken mostly by the senior leadership team as part of a rigorous appraisal system that identifies staff strengths and areas for professional development.
- 5.11 The senior leadership team is highly effective in the discharge of its duties with regard to implementing policies and safeguarding children, resulting in high standards of pastoral care, and health and safety. The required checks on staff and governors are carried out and suitably recorded.
- 5.12 Staff are well qualified and deployed effectively to give the support required to meet the needs of pupils. They receive regular training in areas highlighted from their appraisals and in the necessary areas of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and show high levels of care and concern for pupils. A comprehensive staff handbook gives them useful guidance, and good induction arrangements ensure that new appointees are well informed of school routines and safeguarding arrangements. Effective policies and procedures cover all aspects of school life; they are conscientiously implemented by staff, who are exceedingly hard working and strongly committed to the pupils in their care.
- 5.13 The school promotes excellent links with parents. The required information for parents of current and prospective pupils is available on the school's website and regular newsletters provide feedback on school events.
- 5.14 The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed their satisfaction with the education provided for their children. In particular, they commented on the quality of care and the progress their children have made in all areas of school life. Inspection evidence supports these views.
- 5.15 The school operates an 'open door' policy and parents are encouraged to contact the school directly should they have any concerns. In the Pre-Prep, the opportunity to deliver their children to the classroom provides parents with a key daily link with the teachers. The school has an appropriate complaints policy that is operated effectively, and when concerns are raised, takes these seriously and deals with them appropriately.
- 5.16 Throughout the school, information about pupils' academic achievement and progress, and their personal development, is clearly set out in well-produced and detailed reports. Clear targets are outlined which enable parents and pupils to identify the next stage in learning. Written reports are supplemented by parents' evenings.

- 5.17 High quality publications provide information about each stage of the school for parents of current and prospective pupils. Parents are invited to meet their children's new teacher each year and to receive details of the forthcoming curriculum.
- 5.18 Parents have very good opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They are invited to special assemblies in the chapel when their children's form is participating. They attend concerts and plays, accompany the pupils on outings and are involved in all aspects of school life. The fund-raising committee organises many events, such as the summer ball, informal walking and tennis groups, and the parents' choir. It supports the school by providing for special projects, such as the planned Jubilee Garden.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is outstanding. The setting fulfils its aim of creating an environment in which all children are happy and secure, and are challenged to achieve their personal best in all areas of school life. The setting has successfully implemented the recommendation of the previous inspection, and the vision of the senior leadership team demonstrates clear capacity to sustain existing high standards.

6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. Rigorous implementation of policies and procedures ensures that children are safeguarded and that their individual needs are fully met. Adults have a strong commitment to equality and diversity. The management of the setting has a secure understanding of the principles of the EYFS and demonstrates clear and ambitious vision, founded on well-informed self-evaluation and careful planning. Teaching assistants effectively support each class; they attend training courses but do not receive a professional review, and they do not currently attend staff meetings within the department, or participate in the setting's self-evaluation. Relations with parents are excellent. Regular reports and parents' meetings keep parents informed of their children's progress, but access to the children's learning records is not consistent across the setting.

6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.3 Provision is outstanding. Staff know the children very well and daily contact with parents ensures that individual needs are fully met. Focused observations, meticulously matched to the Early Learning Goals, are used to assess individual progress and identify the next steps for learning. Careful planning ensures an effective balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Each class has a secure outdoor area that is purposefully used to provide free flow of activities and promote independent learning: continuous provision makes full use of these areas. Opportunities for imaginative play are linked to current topics. Specialist teaching enhances the curriculum in physical education, ballet, music, drama, tennis, swimming and musical activities. Carefully maintained resources are used creatively to meet the needs of the curriculum, but limited resources restrict the children's progress in ICT. Parents appreciate the flexibility of before- and after-school care and children enjoy the structured opportunities to play with their friends and have tea.

6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.4 Outcomes for children are outstanding. From different starting points, children of all ages learn and develop exceptionally well and by the end of Reception, they achieve all or nearly all of the Early Learning Goals. Children respond to the high expectations of behaviour in the school, and the independence displayed when choosing activities or working in small groups is a distinctive feature of the setting. Nursery children enjoy practising mark making, and are learning to write their names and to recognise some of the numbers from one to ten. Older Nursery children are confident to work with numbers to ten and most can add using apparatus. In Reception, most children are working with numbers to 20 and can apply their developing phonic knowledge and punctuation skills to write simple accounts. Skilful questioning promotes critical thinking skills, and older Nursery children were able to explain that the string must be taught for sound to be transmitted between two paper cups. Children show an enthusiasm for use of technology such as computers and cameras, however this is limited by lack of resources. Children understand that physical exercise and healthy eating, together with personal hygiene, are essential for a healthy lifestyle and they have a strong awareness of personal safety.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.5 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.