



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ALL HALLOWS SCHOOL

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All Hallows School

Full Name of School	All Hallows School		
DfE Number	933/6019		
Registered Charity Number	722996		
Address	All Hallows School Cranmore Hall East Cranmore Shepton Mallet Somerset BA4 4SF		
Telephone Number	01749 881600		
Fax Number	01749 881614		
Email Address	info@allhallowsschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr Ian Murphy		
Chair of Governors	Mr Neil Howlett		
Age Range	3 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	318		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (170 boys; 148 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 201
	3-5 (EYFS):	19	11-18: 98
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	258	
Number of Boarders	Total:	60	
	Full:	60	Weekly: 0
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr Kevin Hannah		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	10 Jun 2014 to 13 Jun 2014		

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 November 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, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, 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.

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. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Jane Chesterfield	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Barbara Knight	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, IAPS school)
Mr Peter Mulhern	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)
Mr Chris Ward	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Anne Longton	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Deborah Buckenham	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 All Hallows Preparatory School is a day and boarding school for girls and boys situated in the countryside near Shepton Mallet in Somerset. The school is a registered charity owned by All Hallows Trust Ltd and is overseen by a board of governors. It was founded in Sussex in 1938 as a Roman Catholic boarding school for boys and moved to its present site in 1946. It became co-educational in 1972 and maintains the ethos of its foundation.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a secure and happy environment where pupils will develop the inner confidence necessary to flourish in a rapidly changing world; to challenge and stretch them in order to build their ability to thrive as adults in the future, to awaken them spiritually and emotionally, making sure that their minds are broadened and their perspectives widened, and to encourage learning, independence of thought and the nurturing of self-belief, skill and wisdom.
- 1.3 The school educates pupils aged from three to thirteen years, offering Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in its Nursery and Reception classes. The Nursery opened in January 2014. Pupils have the opportunity to board from the age of seven.
- 1.4 Currently there are 318 pupils on roll, of whom 19 are in the EYFS. Sixty pupils board on a full-time basis, and others make use of the school's flexi-boarding facilities. The results of standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above the national average. Pupils come from mainly professional, business, creative or military backgrounds, while the families of boarding pupils are predominantly of Spanish origin.
- 1.5 Twenty-nine pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), twelve of whom receive support. Sixty pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and forty-four receive additional support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational need.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is extremely successful in meeting its aims of providing a secure and happy environment where pupils develop the inner confidence necessary to flourish in a rapidly changing world. From the EYFS onwards, pupils' achievement is excellent and they reach high standards in both their academic work and their extra-curricular pursuits. This is in response to an excellent, wide ranging and imaginative curriculum, many exciting opportunities outside the classroom and excellent teaching which is frequently dynamic and inspiring. Occasionally a lack of pace in lessons means that pupils do not learn as rapidly as they might, and inconsistencies in marking in some subjects means that pupils are not always clear on how to improve their work.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are confident, courteous and loyal, with a strong sense of spirituality, a keen awareness of right and wrong, and a lively interest in other cultures. They are very well cared for and supported, and very careful attention is given to their welfare, health and safety. Relationships at all levels are excellent and procedures for safeguarding pupils are very secure. Boarding is an excellent experience for pupils and flexi-boarding options are popular with many day pupils.
- 2.3 Governors fulfil their roles extremely effectively, ensuring clear oversight, and that requirements for safer recruitment are fully met. Leadership and management are excellent. Those with leadership responsibilities at all levels have a clear understanding of their roles and play their part in school improvement. Systems for assessment and planning, and for monitoring and evaluation, are well established throughout most of the school. In the EYFS, with its newly opened Nursery, they are in the process of being re-developed. Parents of children in all parts of the school are very happy with everything the school has to offer. They feel that they are kept very well informed and involved in the life of the school, and that their children are nurtured and able to thrive in its supportive family atmosphere.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 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 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Increase consistency in teaching by ensuring that all lessons are well paced and by sharing the school's best practice in marking across all subjects.
 2. In the EYFS, develop a thorough baseline assessment and systems for ongoing assessment, planning and self-evaluation.

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' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is extremely successful in meeting its aim of challenging and stretching its pupils in order to build their ability to thrive as adults in the future. Pupils of all ages listen attentively in class and express their ideas clearly and confidently. They are able to explain their thinking and offer rational reasons for their thought processes. They read with understanding and their high quality written work shows that they are able to write for a wide variety of purposes, knowing how to use the correct type of language and sentence structure. There has been significant improvement in the pupils' levels of literacy since the previous inspection, enabled by increased time allocated to writing in the curriculum.
- 3.3 Pupils relish the many opportunities they have to work independently and achieve high standards in their creative artwork, music and drama. Their workbooks show that they are able to use their well-honed mathematical skills across the curriculum, and are competent in using information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance their work in a range of subjects. Pupils achieve highly outside the classroom and in their extra-curricular pursuits, with significant success apparent in many sports, including hockey, rugby, cricket, athletics and tennis.
- 3.4 In the EYFS, children of all ages are articulate and enthusiastic learners. The emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills ensures children reach high standards in these areas. All make excellent progress from their starting points, including those with SEND or those with EAL. Children in both Nursery and Reception have well-developed listening skills and follow instructions well. Reception children can all read simple text easily, and some make progress well beyond expectations for their age. Children in the Nursery are confident in counting up to 20, while those in Reception can carry out simple addition and subtraction.
- 3.5 EYFS children are active and creative learners. They enjoyed the beach role-play area linked with their seaside topic, experimenting with the feel of chunks of ice. They also made their own play dough independently, tried kneading it and shared it out with others, using cutters confidently.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be judged against achievement in national tests, but based on the work in their books and in lessons, their levels of attainment are judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils consistently gain places at their first choice of senior school, and many with scholarships. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND in particular make excellent progress thanks to the quality of the support they receive. Pupils with EAL who stay at the school on a long-term basis make similar progress to their peers. More able, gifted and talented pupils make good progress because the curriculum is exciting and they are well challenged by their teachers.
- 3.7 In all year groups, pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They are always keen to answer questions, ready to co-operate with others in group work, and happy to support pupils who are new to the school. They settle quickly to their tasks and persevere with them until they are completed. They develop excellent work habits to take with them to their next school.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 In the EYFS, the broad educational programmes children experience give them many opportunities to develop a range of skills and to express their ideas with confidence and much enjoyment. Activities are planned to meet the needs of all children, whatever their needs or abilities.
- 3.10 The curriculum from Year 1 to Year 5 is based on a thematic-based scheme, and along with mathematics and English covers all the required areas of learning, making a good contribution to the pupils' achievement. The Year 6 curriculum also successfully adopts a thematic approach, and learning is then appropriately based on preparation for the Common Entrance examination in Years 7 and 8. Provision for pupils with SEND is excellent, and their needs are carefully planned for, including by the school's learning support unit. The needs of all pupils, including the able, gifted and talented, are met through developing higher order thinking skills. Guidance on this is given in the school's comprehensive policy for higher order thinking.
- 3.11 The needs of pupils with EAL are monitored well. Provision is tailored to meet these needs, based on an initial assessment on entry and with consideration of previous school reports. These pupils benefit from some teaching sessions outside their timetabled lessons. All staff are required to plan teaching to enable all pupils to have full access to the curriculum. Through the carefully structured physical, social, health and citizenship (PSHCE) programme, pupils are enabled to develop a strong moral code, recognise the importance of being kind to one another and showing empathy towards others.
- 3.12 The academic curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of daily extra-curricular activities, which provide excellent opportunities for the pupils' personal, social, physical and creative development. The school's extensive and well-attended Saturday enrichment programme for Years 6 to 8 promotes an individual, creative and all-round approach to learning. Pupils can get involved with topics as diverse as farm management, performing arts, an outward bound challenge and music production with renowned musicians.
- 3.13 There is an extensive environmental programme which takes place in the woodland classrooms and is closely linked to topic work. The woodland classrooms provide an excellent location for activities including building hibernation homes for mini-beasts in the Reception class, studying water filtration in Year 3 and creating a river system in Year 5. The school has gained a national award in recognition of its work to promote environmental sustainability.
- 3.14 The school is well resourced, and the curriculum is enhanced by the use of ICT in most subjects. Older pupils produced calendars in geography, and were encouraged to use a range of ICT skills to present their field trip project on a coastal area. Pupils are able to make their own choices about their use of ICT; younger pupils spontaneously decided to record their activities in one lesson by taking a photograph.
- 3.15 Access to art, music and drama within the timetable and as part of the enrichment programme promotes and develops the pupils' creativity. This was exemplified in drama rehearsals for the end of term play given by older pupils, and in the pottery piggy banks made in the EYFS. There are many curriculum linked trips, residential

visits and visiting speakers, which enhance the core curriculum for all pupils. Excellent opportunities for physical education and games, both within and beyond the curriculum, ensure that pupils excel in these areas.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching across the school is sensitive to the needs of individuals, and takes an all-round view of the pupils' education.
- 3.18 In the EYFS, high expectations enthuse, engage and motivate the children very effectively to develop their skills. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities places an emphasis on children making independent choices sensibly. The setting is very well resourced, and staff organise resources so that children can access them easily.
- 3.19 The pupils in Years 4 and 5 are set by ability in mathematics and spelling to help ensure that teaching meets their needs. From Year 6, pupils are set by ability based on the scholarship criteria of the Common Entrance examinations. Pupils' learning and attitudes to learning are rigorously monitored and those pupils who require additional help are supported very effectively by their class teachers and by the school's learning support unit. Pupils receive appropriate and timely feedback on their progress and next steps in their learning. Individual educational plans and targets are set and reviewed by class teachers.
- 3.20 Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. Where teaching is most successful, pace is brisk and pupils are given clear time constraints with regards to completing tasks. Pace and time management is inconsistent in some teaching, and this slows down the pupils' learning. Occasionally ICT resources are not used well enough in lessons, and this limits the amount of work pupils produce.
- 3.21 Younger pupils in Year 4 and below commented that staff give verbal and written feedback on how to improve their work and set them targets. Inspectors judged this to be effective. Pupils from Year 5 onwards feel that they have opportunities to develop their skills and interests through independent research and project work. In this age group, the quality and frequency of marking varies between, and within, academic departments whilst in the junior department, marking is of a very good standard. Where marking is most effective for example, in senior geography, mathematics and English, there is good dialogue between teacher and pupil and targets are set and reviewed. Less effective marking is cursory and gives no indication of how pupils may improve.
- 3.22 Planning is comprehensive and cross-curricular links are made through the topics studied, enabling pupils to make connections with everyday life and where they live as well as learning to consider issues from other peoples' perspectives. In some subjects there is an over use of uninspiring worksheets, and teachers do not insist that pupils present their work neatly. There is good evidence of work being effectively matched to pupils' different needs to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum and that all have opportunities to succeed.
- 3.23 There are opportunities in much teaching for pupils to work collaboratively in pairs or a group, supporting one another's learning. The use of learning objectives and success criteria at the start of lessons promotes understanding of learning and ensure pupils have a focus for the lesson. Some pupils felt that the homework set

for them does not help them in their studies, but inspectors found that homework is appropriate for the age groups of the 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 meets its aim in providing a secure and happy environment where the pupils flourish spiritually and emotionally. Pupils are confident, polite and friendly, and demonstrate a mature sense of self-awareness. From an early age they discuss what it means to be a friend and understand the importance of being considerate towards each other.
- 4.3 Children in the EYFS co-operate well, share and take turns at appropriate times. They all enjoy coming to school and are confident when playing and talking with adults. They are very well prepared for transition into the next class.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual and moral awareness is excellent. Pupils of all ages enjoy school and feel a part of the family Christian community. They value the strong Christian ethos together with the underlying Catholic principles throughout the school which underpin their moral awareness and their understanding of right and wrong. Pupils enjoy visiting the school chapel and benefit from the spiritual and moral development this enables, through a weekly whole-school Mass, year group assemblies and weekly prayers. Pupils' spiritual development is enriched by regular outdoor educational opportunities through the woodland classrooms.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is excellent. They respond positively to the opportunities to take on roles of responsibility as prefects, house captains and sports captains and by providing support to younger children, which they do with care and compassion. They understand their responsibility to help those less fortunate than themselves. This has been extended beyond the classroom through developing links with a partner school in Kenya, and a whole-school fund-raising project.
- 4.6 Pupils enjoy the strong sense of community and have a clear understanding of what it means to be a good citizen. Supportive peer work was evident in the enthusiastic participation in rehearsals by Year 7 pupils for their music and drama production. Pupils join in whole-heartedly with the wide extra-curricular programme, team-building activities and extensive team game opportunities.
- 4.7 Pupils have excellent cultural awareness. The introduction of the topic-based curriculum from Year 1 to Year 5 has helped pupils to develop further their strong global awareness and a respect of other faiths and cultures. The overseas boarders are well integrated and other pupils are interested in finding out more about their countries and customs.
- 4.8 By the time they leave the school, the pupils' personal development is excellent.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Staff know the pupils well, and the warm relationships between staff and pupils are apparent across the whole school community. Pupils of all ages get on extremely well with one another and support others in the daily life of the school. The pastoral development of all pupils is recorded using the detailed school online system which allows all staff to monitor individual pupil needs and to provide support and guidance.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of each child and close attention is paid to their personal development. They promote excellent behaviour and co-operation, and ensure that children are happy and feel secure in a warm, calm and welcoming setting. Children know who their key person is and understand how to stay safe, for example not walking around with tools in their hands.
- 4.12 Comprehensive policies and procedures support the pastoral structure across the school. The whole-school approach towards encouraging positive behaviour and the emphasis placed on showing kindness and compassion towards others effectively guard against bullying, aided by effective policy, and any incidences are dealt with swiftly. In interviews and conversations with inspectors, pupils expressed that they felt supported by staff and that systems such as 'talk time' every break and 'are you worried' signs mean that they know exactly who to turn to if they have a concern. Pupils commented that they find teachers very helpful and caring. The pupils benefit from the school's in-house educational psychology service where needed.
- 4.13 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a large majority of the pupils were highly supportive of the school. A small minority felt that rewards and sanctions are not awarded fairly or that their opinions are not sought. Inspectors investigated these points, but found that systems for rewards and sanctions are well defined, and that channels for communication are clearly established. Pupils in discussion said that they feel that they have plenty of opportunities to express their opinions through form tutors as well as the school council. Reception class children are invited to offer their suggestions and ideas on sticky notepads, including a request for more dinosaurs for example.
- 4.14 Through the school's broad PSHCE policy, the healthy living week and science lessons, pupils are taught about healthy eating habits and the importance of exercise. Pupils participate regularly in sport and games, from the EYFS onwards. Nursery children enjoy swimming lessons, demonstrating confidence in the water and making excellent progress in swimming widths of the pool. Pupils are encouraged to develop an interest in exercise through the wide range of physical activities available through the curriculum and the extra-curricular programme.
- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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 Thorough and rigorous systems and checks are in place for safeguarding pupils throughout the school, including in the EYFS, and all staff receive the relevant training so that they have a good knowledge of school procedures. These

procedures are carefully recorded and updated regularly. Secure arrangements are implemented to ensure the safer recruitment of employees, and a record of the necessary checks is recorded appropriately in the school's central register of appointments.

- 4.18 All staff with specific responsibilities for welfare, health and safety receive additional training to support their role. Detailed risk assessments are carried out and monitored effectively. Since the previous inspection, risk assessments for EYFS outings have been amended so that they now fully meet requirements.
- 4.19 The school provides a safe environment for its pupils and secure arrangements reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Fire practices are carried out regularly to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors, as well as annual fire checks to ensure that all arrangements are compliant. All electrical equipment is tested annually and a record is stored and accurately maintained.
- 4.20 Pupils who are sick or injured are well cared for in the school's sick bay, which is suitably equipped and staffed. The school's admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored electronically for the previous three years.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The school has been successful in maintaining high quality and standards since the previous inspection. It encourages boarders to become independent and confident, whilst allowing their personal development to flourish. The school's Christian ethos is supported throughout daily life in the boarding house, and also supports the school's clear boarding principles.
- 4.23 Boarders who live locally and those from overseas integrate positively, irrespective of age or gender. This is encouraged by the weekly whole house activity nights, daily evening prayers and regular boarding meetings. The boarders speak positively about these events and say that they provide extra opportunities for siblings to have quality time together. Boarders are able to express their views regarding the running of the boarding house, with staff respecting their opinions and trying to accommodate their requests, if appropriate. The senior boarders are supportive to the younger boarders and provide good role models.
- 4.24 Boarding provision is excellent. Boarders report that they find the staff approachable and caring. They feel confident that there is always someone to provide guidance and they believe that their individual needs are always met. Boarders feel that they settle quickly and that the induction process encourages this. New boarders are supported by a peer mentor and a house parent. A choice of contact numbers is readily displayed for boarders to use and the independent listener, fluent in Spanish, is familiar to the boarders.
- 4.25 The boarders' emotional and physical well-being is a priority and achieved by a united approach from the boarding, pastoral and nursing staff, through daily staff liaison and weekly child-centred meetings. The medical unit is easily accessible by the boarders. Trained nursing staff oversee the care of sick or injured boarders assisted by appropriately trained boarding staff. Individual care plans are effective. Appropriate policies are implemented effectively and all documentation is accurately maintained. Confidentiality is respected and approached appropriately. The medical unit allows for overnight care of a boarder and the school's policy now

ensures that pupils are fully supervised at all times by a member of staff of the appropriate gender in the unit overnight. Boarders can contact the duty staff at night by using the duty phone, placed on each landing. The school doctor visits once weekly and is available at other times.

- 4.26 The nutritional needs of the boarders are well met. The eating areas and kitchens are centrally placed in the main school, allowing for easy access by the boarders. Boarders choose their food, monitored by kitchen staff. Snacks are offered at frequent intervals and fruit is always available to the pupils. A minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food provided or felt that the snack options were not sufficient but the inspectors found that food is of a high quality and snacks are suitable. Catering staff regularly liaise with parents and boarders to accommodate any special dietary requirements. Drinking water is freely available.
- 4.27 The boarders are offered a wide range of activities such as barbecues followed by a choice of team games or to swim in the open air pool. Boarders have regular involvement in local fund raising, delivering produce from the harvest festival locally, singing at a nearby cathedral and supporting a local carnival as well as visits to local attractions and outdoor education activities. In their annual school questionnaire, boarders requested to have more free time to relax, and their timetable has been adjusted to allow for this. Suitable opportunities exist for quiet time. Boarders may access the weekly young persons' newspapers available in the boarding areas and on occasions watch the national news. A few boarders felt that their belongings are not safe, but policies and procedures for ensuring the safe-keeping of personal items are appropriately implemented.
- 4.28 The boarding areas and dormitories are comfortable, secure, spacious, light and well-maintained; most can be personalised by boarders. Questionnaire evidence from a few parents raised concerns about the condition of the boarding accommodation, but this was found to be clean, bright and in good condition during the inspection. Some bathrooms have been improved by new shower areas and all provide appropriate privacy. Laundry arrangements are efficient.
- 4.29 Boarders are encouraged weekly to write letters home and may access their personal mobile phones each evening. A few boarders felt that it is not easy to contact family and friends but a video link option is available at least twice a week and parents can call the duty phone at any time.
- 4.30 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. All staff demonstrate an understanding and awareness of current policy and training logs are complete. Safer recruitment training procedures and appropriate policies are in place. The school has developed strong links with local agencies. The boarders report that there are no bullying concerns and feel that staff approach discipline issues consistently and fairly. The boarding house is secure and frequent roll-calls, registrations and generous staff ratios contribute to ensuring the safety of the boarders. Fire drills and maintenance of equipment are regularly carried out and documented accordingly.
- 4.31 Leadership and management are excellent and the boarding house runs smoothly, supporting the school's boarding aims and principles. This is evident in the outcome of happy and contented boarders and parents. The structure of the boarding staffing allows for continual monitoring of the boarders' welfare and safety and for the development of any new initiatives. Weekly boarding staff and child-centred meetings further support effective communication with the teaching and pastoral

staff. All staff follow a suitable induction and appraisal process and have the opportunity to access regular in-house and external training.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors discharge their responsibilities extremely thoroughly and effectively, ensuring that the school meets its aims very successfully. They have a clear oversight of standards and finance, and they spend money wisely on human and learning resources. Since the previous inspection they have invested heavily in ICT equipment, meeting the recommendation of that inspection, to ensure that pupils are able to use the latest technologies in their studies across the curriculum and develop the skills they need for the modern world.
- 5.3 Through regular meetings and headmaster's reports, the committee structure and individual governors' responsibilities, governors have an informed understanding of the work of the school and a firm grasp of its priorities for the future. They support the school efficiently and provide challenge to senior staff to justify their decision making. The role of safeguarding governor is well established, and those of EYFS and boarding governors are developing well. Governors undertake regular training, including in safeguarding and safer recruitment. They have a wide range of relevant and useful professional skills and expertise. They share the school's ethos and values, and have a clearly defined vision for the roles of senior staff.
- 5.4 The governing body is successful in ensuring that the school is fully compliant with all applicable regulations, especially in regard to safeguarding. The single central record is particularly well kept and regularly monitored by governors. They fulfil their statutory obligation to review the safeguarding policy annually in a full governing body meeting.

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

- 5.5 The quality of the leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, is excellent.
- 5.6 The aims of the school are shared by the senior leadership team and they provide a clear educational direction for the staff, parents and pupils. Leadership roles are clearly defined, and leaders are highly effective in carrying out their responsibilities, especially in regard to the implementation of policies and the safeguarding of pupils.
- 5.7 High staffing levels ensure the pupils are looked after and cared for well. In particular, teaching assistants in classes help to support the high standard of education and the pupils' personal development. Strengths and areas for development are recognised within departments and a regular programme of work scrutiny, lesson observations and data tracking are systematic and effective in identifying these.
- 5.8 The school's development plan is directly related to clear and incisive self-evaluation. Both self-evaluation and planning are regularly reviewed by the senior leadership team, governors and heads of departments at the school. Since the previous inspection progress has been made to refine the development plan and related documents which meets the recommendation of that inspection. The senior

leadership team ensures that staff are fully involved in the process of self-evaluation. The development planning process now includes specific references to targets, costings, personnel involvement, timescales and success criteria. Subject leaders play a full and active role in the leadership and management of staff within their departments; they undertake annual self-evaluation and use monitoring logs to inform this process. Support and coaching is evident through a performance management programme, and initiatives such as appraisal and peer observations have also been introduced.

- 5.9 In the EYFS, there is a clear vision for the future and desire for improvement, but detailed systems for planning, assessment and self-evaluation are not yet fully established, particularly in the recently opened Nursery. Although initial assessments are made of children's starting points, including contributions from parents, a detailed baseline assessment for those starting in Nursery is not yet in place.
- 5.10 Much attention has been paid to recruiting high quality staff throughout the school, and a thorough induction process is in place to monitor the progress of new staff and to ensure they are suitably trained for their roles, particularly with regard to safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. There are appropriate arrangements for staff supervision in the EYFS, providing suitable support.
- 5.11 Links with parents from the EYFS onwards are excellent. The school has developed this partnership extremely well. Parents indicate that they are highly satisfied with all aspects of the school. They are particularly pleased with provision for individual needs, the challenge and the pastoral care the children receive. Nursery and Reception staff work effectively to involve parents with their children's learning, and make sure that any additional support necessary for children is sought from external agencies.
- 5.12 Information flows freely from the school in a variety of ways. Classroom teachers send out a weekly e-mail containing information about pupils' achievements and reminders about events in the week to follow. Regular newsletters are sent out by senior staff. The school is proud of its open door policy which is effective. Senior staff are readily available at the beginning and the end of the day. Parents may e-mail staff at any time and are happy that any concerns however small are dealt with promptly. They are confident the staff know the individual children very well.
- 5.13 New parents are provided with a range of information through the prospectus, handbooks, open days and tours of the school. Taster days and nights in the boarding house are on offer for all prospective pupils, and current pupils have the chance to sample boarding. Various material is available on the website, including required information.
- 5.14 Reports, which are sent out twice a year, are of good quality, containing details of work covered, effort grades and achievement grades, as well as guidance as to how pupils can improve their work.
- 5.15 Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school through the friends' association. There is at least one class representative for each year group who disseminates information and reminders about events. They organise fund-raising and social activities to support the school and charities. Parents regularly receive invitations to concerts, plays and chapel services. A grandparents' day was successful, with grandparents shown around school by their grandchildren.

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