



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

BEACHBOROUGH SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Beachborough School		
DfE Number	825/6002		
EYFS Number	EY361682		
Registered Charity Number	309910		
Telephone Number	01280 700071		
Fax Number	01280 704839		
Email Address	jmb@beachborough.com		
Headmaster	Mr Jonathan Whybrow		
Chair of Governors	Mr Colin Dudgeon		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	333		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (175 boys; 158 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	3	5-11: 220
	3-5 (EYFS):	46	11-13: 64
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	281	
Number of Boarders	Total:	45	
	Flexi:	45	
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Sophie Banks		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	27 Nov 2012 to 30 Nov 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 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. 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.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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 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 governors, observed a sample of the co-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 Sara Wiggins	Reporting Inspector
Mr Mark Albini	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr David Williams	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mr Adrian Lowe-Wheeler	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sue Bennett	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Beachborough School is an independent preparatory school for boys and girls aged 2½ to 13 years. In its time it has been located in various parts of England. Since 1942 it has occupied a 30-acre site at Westbury, close to the Buckinghamshire-Northamptonshire-Oxfordshire borders. Modern buildings enhance a former manor house. It became a charitable trust with a governing body in 1957. Since the previous inspection a sports hall has been built and a theatre opened. Netball courts have been resurfaced and doubled in size. The school has developed a working farm with pigs, sheep and chickens.
- 1.2 The school aims to discover, nurture and develop the potential in each child, building confident, balanced individuals fully prepared for their next school. The school sets out to reward the best, while valuing the efforts of all individuals. Pupils are encouraged to consider the needs, beliefs and cultures of others. The school strives for a balance between work and play.
- 1.3 The school has 333 pupils on roll. It is organised into a pre-preparatory department (pre-prep) which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with 22 full-time and 27 part-time children, and Years 1 and 2, with 67 pupils. There is also a preparatory department for Years 3 to 8 with 217 pupils. From Year 3 many pupils elect to board either weekly, from Monday to Thursday night inclusive, or on a flexible basis with a maximum of 45 pupils being able to be accommodated on any one night.
- 1.4 Entry is broadly non-selective academically. The ability profile of the school is above average, with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average, and some year groups having a notable proportion of pupils with well above average ability. Pupils generally come from English-speaking backgrounds, usually from professional and business families located within a few miles of the school, with very few from a minority ethnic background. Nearly 9 per cent of pupils are American, owing to the proximity of a military base. Twenty-nine pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive support in school. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs. No pupil has been identified as needing support for learning English as an additional language.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery
Kindergarten	Nursery
Reception	Reception

Pre-preparatory Department

School	NC name
Pre-Prep 1	Year 1
Pre-Prep 2	Year 2

Preparatory Department

School	NC name
Form I	Year 3
Form II	Year 4
Form III	Year 5
Form IV	Year 6
Form V	Year 7
Form VI	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils are highly adept in applying their skills in creative and practical subjects. They are thoughtful and hard working and express their ideas with consideration for their audience. The quality of curricular and co-curricular provision is excellent. The broad curriculum and specialist teaching for older pupils, together with the extended school day, provide the pupils with an excellent range of learning experiences and contributes very effectively towards the pupils' development of knowledge, skills and understanding. Music, drama and sport feature strongly across the whole school curriculum. The provision for pupils with SEND is excellent and enables them to fully access the curriculum. The quality of teaching is excellent. Since the previous inspection, teaching has carefully addressed the needs of gifted and talented pupils who are now given the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the arrangements for pastoral care are excellent and strongly meet the school's aims and ethos. Staff know the pupils extremely well and relationships between staff and pupils and the pupils themselves are excellent. The overall quality of welfare, health and safety is sound. The safeguarding of pupils is effective in day-to-day practice, although appointment procedures have revealed weaknesses in implementing the child protection policy. The recruitment of staff has not always been carried out correctly but all staff currently working at the school have been checked with the Criminal Records Bureau, although records are not yet fully up to date. The overall quality of boarding is good. Although outcomes for boarders' personal development and the quality of provision and care for boarders are excellent, the school does not meet the requirements of the National Minimum Standards covering the recruitment of staff.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are sound overall. Processes for self-evaluation to create a clear strategic plan for the future development of the school are underway. As at the previous inspection the checking and recording of staff appointments have not always been carried out thoroughly; all staff at the school have now been checked as required, but recording remains incomplete.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- implement all appropriate safeguarding arrangements [Part 3, paragraph 7.(a) and (b), 8.(a) and (b) under Welfare, health and safety]; and for the same reason National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection;
 - implement all recruitment checks on staff before they begin work [Part 4, paragraphs 19.2(a), 20.2(a) and 22.2 (b) under (Suitability of staff and proprietors)]; and for the same reason National Minimum Standard 14.1.
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, as described above.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop rigorous practices for the monitoring of policies and checks to ensure that they are being implemented correctly, including those for staff recruitment, and for welfare, health and safety.
 2. Use the outcomes of self-evaluation and the monitoring of teaching and learning to strengthen development planning.
 3. In the EYFS, provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their technological skills.

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 is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully fulfils its aim of nurturing and developing the potential in each child and preparing them fully for their next school. Pupils across the school achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curriculum subjects and through co-curricular activities. Pupils are highly adept in applying their skills in creative and practical subjects and show extensive understanding across the curriculum. Pupils are highly articulate and many demonstrate a wide and sophisticated vocabulary for their age, which includes the correct use of technical terms. They listen carefully to instructions as well as the ideas and opinions of their peers. Pupils read with clarity and appreciate a broad range of literature. The content of pupils' writing is of a high standard and the quality of their presentation is excellent. They have developed strong mathematical skills. Throughout the school, pupils are adept at problem solving and capable of clear and logical thought. Pupils conduct investigations and experiments, and work to a high standard in science. Pupils solve problems and think critically; for example, younger pupils carefully considered the component parts of a marble run before constructing it with great precision. Pupils demonstrate high levels of oral and grammatical competence in modern foreign languages. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used competently across the curriculum. Excellent levels of creativity are evident from the outstanding art work to the high standard of musicality, displayed in lessons and clubs. Pupils' achievements in physical education (PE) and games are excellent.
- 3.3 Pupils achieve high standards across a range of academic, sporting and general interest co-curricular activities. They have won considerable success in fixtures and competitions at local, regional and national levels across the range of sports offered by the school. Boys' and girls' hockey teams in particular are highly successful in county championships at both Under-11 and Under-13 levels. Boys and girls perform equally well. Pupils receiving support for SEND achieve strongly because of the additional support they receive.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance in national tests but on the evidence available from lesson observations, work scrutiny, high levels of awards for selective independent schools and interviews with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils follow a broad curriculum and this level of attainment indicates that pupils, including the most able, sustain a good rate of progress in relation to those of similar ability. Pupils with SEND make an equally good rate of progress because of the excellent support they receive in and out of the class. This is evident in the improvement in their reading, spelling and numeracy skills, as well as their high levels of self-esteem.
- 3.5 Pupils are thoughtful and hard working and express their ideas with consideration for their audience. They apply themselves conscientiously and use classroom resources, highly effectively to enhance their learning. Pupils co-operate very positively, they enjoy their learning and respond with enthusiasm.

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

- 3.6 The quality of curricular and co-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.7 The curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities and provides abundant opportunities for pupils to achieve, thus fulfilling its aim to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education. The broad curriculum and specialist teaching for older pupils, together with the extended school day, provide the pupils with an excellent range of learning experiences and contributes very effectively towards the pupils' development of knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum broadly follows the National Curriculum, and older pupils are prepared very well for Common Entrance and scholarship examinations. The additional provision of French throughout the school, Spanish in Years 6 and 7 and Latin from Year 6 strongly enhances pupils' linguistic skills. The use of setting by ability for English and mathematics from Year 3 upwards enables pupils to work at a level commensurate with their attainments. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has been broadened, for example, with ESP (Ethos, Spirituality and Philosophy) replacing religious studies in Years 6, 7 and 8 and food technology being added to the art and technology curriculum.
- 3.8 Music, drama and sport feature strongly across the whole school curriculum. ICT is being carefully developed and is aided by the introduction of electronic tablets for easy use in lessons. The grounds and outdoor learning environment including the woods and the farm are an additional benefit in providing a highly effective outdoor classroom supporting a number of lessons. The highly detailed and extensive personal, social and health (PSHE) programme contributes strongly to pupils' personal development. Subject documentation is appropriate to meet the needs of pupils and is consistent in approach across the school.
- 3.9 The provision for SEND pupils is excellent. Pupils work both in the school's specialist unit, and receive additional support in lessons from learning support assistants and from the excellent resources provided. Consequently, they are able to fully access the curriculum. Clear strategies given in individual support plans alongside regular meetings with staff inform teachers of the needs of SEND pupils and enable them to plan effectively to meet these within classes. Since the previous inspection, provision for the most able has improved. Challenge is provided in lessons and further support is provided through co-curricular activities under Beachborough's Able Children Programme.
- 3.10 An excellent range of co-curricular activities encourages the pupils to develop and extend their interest, abilities and knowledge in many sporting and creative areas and remains a strength of the school. Activities occur before, during and after lessons from touch-typing in The Learning Zone, to judo and gym at lunch or modern and street dance, yoga, ballet and football training with a local club in the evenings. Pupils benefit from the school's extensive links with the local community, including those with local independent and maintained schools. The Buckinghamshire Primary Schools Cross-Country event is held at Beachborough. The choir attends choir festivals and performs locally, for example, with carol singing in Bicester.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.12 Teaching contributes extremely well to the aims of the school being met. The majority of the teaching enables all pupils to learn according to their individual abilities. Since the previous inspection, teaching has carefully met the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils who are now given the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards with pupils receiving appropriate opportunities for extension work. Pupils are given a high level of individual attention and benefit greatly from working in a happy environment where hard work is praised and promoted. The high proportion of excellent lessons promotes very positive outcomes in learning and achievement. Teaching is carefully adapted to support pupils with SEND and meets the requirements of the statements for those pupils who have them. Teaching assistants and individual tuition sessions provide excellent support. Teachers manage classroom behaviour highly effectively.
- 3.13 Most lessons are well paced, thus moving learning forward; pupils participate actively in these lessons and the high quality resources are used well by pupils and staff. The indoor and outdoor settings provide challenging and varied experiences and activities across every area of learning, and are well used. In the very few cases where the teaching is less effective, lessons lack pace and teachers spend too long introducing topics, with less consideration being given to the needs of all pupils. Interactive whiteboards and tablet computers are increasingly used across the school to offer variety in teaching methods and encourage participation in learning. The teachers' excellent subject knowledge often enables pupils to explore the significance of the lesson content and relate it to prior learning and wider social or global issues.
- 3.14 Teaching fosters pupils' interests and incorporates them into the lesson content. As a result, pupils show great enjoyment and enthusiasm. Many lessons provide very exciting opportunities for pupils to think and work independently or collaboratively and creatively, as observed when pupils tested red cabbage indicator on a range of liquids or when pupils composed basic tunes. Useful and evaluative observations are used to ensure thorough planning and establish the next steps for individuals.
- 3.15 Marking of work is regular and provides excellent guidance for individual pupil development. Assessment results are rigorously analysed and stored on a centralised system to enable teachers to identify and address weaknesses and strengths and incorporate findings into their lesson planning. Individual targets are set in subjects, providing useful personal goals for pupils, which they value highly. Self-assessment and peer-assessment are also effectively used to increase pupils' understanding of their achievement and progress whilst contributing strongly to their personal development.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' excellent spiritual development is clearly apparent in every area of school life, strongly meeting the aims of the school. They demonstrate confidence and self-knowledge, as well as an appreciation of life beyond the physical as they engage in varied activities in the wooded grounds and participate thoughtfully in assemblies. Their awareness of beauty and spirituality is demonstrated in the high standards they achieve in the creative arts, as in the pictures based on the pupils visit to an art gallery and the highly inclusive choir groups. The pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are further increased through the regular praise within lessons from peers and adults. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils expressed their strong satisfaction with school life.
- 4.3 Pupils have an extremely well-developed moral sense. They understand right and wrong, display consideration for their peers and adults, and have a deep respect for the codes of good conduct expected of them from the earliest years. In an interview with inspectors, pupils explained the importance of rules and how they are all responsible for others actions. Pupils are strongly aware of those less fortunate than themselves and raise considerable sums for good causes, such as the collecting of pencils and books to be sent to the art school in Botswana. Pupils explore moral issues with interest from the very youngest age in weekly PSHE lessons and the innovative ESP lessons with older children, providing opportunities of thought-provoking philosophy. They are able to articulate their views coherently.
- 4.4 The pupils exhibit an exceptionally high level of social awareness that is developed through excellent opportunities in school. They are able to accept responsibility and show initiative, contributing much to the school and the world beyond. The school council, which is run entirely by pupils, affords them the opportunity to voice their opinions on school life. The stationery shop is run pupils who show a marked maturity in exercising their duties and younger pupils appreciate their overall influence and kindness. In their 'monitoring' role Year 4 pupils help younger pupils by setting high standards of behaviour and aid the organisation of small group activities. Pupils display good political and economic awareness.
- 4.5 The cultural development of pupils is strong. Pupils are highly respectful of each other and there is a harmonious ethos. The short and long stay pupils from abroad feel strongly supported by their peers and as a result they are well integrated into the community. Pupils embrace other religions and cultures in both lessons and co-curricular activities, for example, being able to compare and contrast Hinduism and Christianity. The pupils have an extensive knowledge of western culture strongly aided by their opportunities to travel abroad and their trips out which are used highly effectively to add breath to their curriculum.
- 4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of emotional maturity and personal development, in preparation for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.7 The quality of pastoral care in the school is excellent.
- 4.8 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent strongly meeting the school's aims and ethos. Staff know the pupils extremely well and relationships between staff and pupils and the pupils themselves are excellent. The school has excellent systems to ensure that pastoral issues are very carefully monitored; these include the tutor system, weekly staff meetings that concentrate on the individual academic and welfare needs and action plans for individual pupils. In interviews and in the pre inspection questionnaire pupils of all abilities, including those with statements, were highly positive about the help provided by their teachers and sure that they had a person they could turn to if they have any issues or worries from their tutor to the independent listeners.
- 4.9 The school is extremely effective in promoting good behaviour. The credits system is valued by the pupils and the code of conduct, strongly adhered to, is prominently displayed in all classrooms. Detailed anti-bullying records show that the school's rigorous procedures are carried out as required. Pupils feel that on the rare occasion when bullying occurs that staff are quick to solve any issues. Comprehensive procedures are in place to record both minor and more serious issues and track patterns. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Lunchtime provides a choice of nutritious food and suitable provision is made for pupils with special dietary requirements. The extensive grounds and the strength of the sports programme ensure that there are abundant opportunities for pupils to partake in physical activity. An appropriate accessibility plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND is in place.
- 4.10 Pupils' views are sought and listened to in an effective way. The school council is highly regarded, giving pupils a voice and a budget to carry out their own ideas for school improvement.

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

- 4.11 The overall quality of welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.12 The safeguarding of pupils has regard to official guidance, although, procedures have not always been followed, as was the case at the previous inspection. By the end of the inspection all staff had been checked correctly and references obtained. However, some inaccuracies remained in the recording of these on the school's central register of appointments. The designated child protection officer is well known to teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff and the designated governor have been trained appropriately in safeguarding and the designated officer has higher level training. Close and regularly reinforced relationships are maintained with local welfare agencies. The recording of incidents, is highly efficient and due regard is paid to confidentiality.
- 4.13 Health and safety procedures are appropriate. Risk assessments for the grounds and levels of supervision at play time have been now been reviewed effectively but have yet to be fully implemented. Appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Records and documentation are up to date. Policy and documentation supporting external visits is thorough.
- 4.14 Arrangements for first aid, and for sick or injured pupils, are excellent. Staff are very well informed about individual pupils' needs and conditions, including any pupils with

SEND, and pupils are looked after with great care. Accident reporting procedures are rigorous and records are accurately maintained. The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately, and are suitably archived, thus addressing the concerns of the previous inspection.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.15 The quality of boarding is good overall.
- 4.16 Outcomes for boarders' personal development are excellent. Boarders of all ages are very happy and greatly enjoy their boarding experiences. They develop high levels of self-reliance through their boarding routines, such as learning to keep their belongings tidy and cleaning their shoes. There is a strong sense of community within the boarding house, and relationships between boarders and house staff are excellent. All senior boarders are members of the school council and relish their role by representing the views of younger boarders at meetings. Boarders have daily access to newspapers and confidently articulate their knowledge of events, illustrating their developing awareness of world affairs. Boarders feel safe and extremely well supported. They know who to approach for personal assistance or guidance, including designated adults outside school, which was a prior inspection recommendation. Boarders value the friendships they make and are tolerant towards the diverse needs of their peers, such as supporting those new to boarding through a buddy system. Senior boarders support younger boarders extremely well. Boarders express that an ethos of fairness and equality is paramount within the house. They have an excellent understanding of acceptable behaviour, stressing the importance of 'listening to your conscience'. They say that bullying is uncommon and that rare occurrences are quickly dealt with by staff. Consequently, the school is successful in meeting its aim 'to treat others as they would wish to be treated themselves'. Boarders have excellent opportunities to contribute their thoughts on boarding life through house meetings, recently resulting in an arranged trip to the theatre.
- 4.17 The quality of provision and care is excellent. The high levels of support and guidance that house staff provide have a significant impact on boarders' well-being, ensuring that they are kept safe, fit and healthy. Staff know boarders extremely well and through well-planned induction processes, new boarders quickly settle into house routines. The tutor system and weekly staff meetings foster strong links between the boarding and academic aspects of school life.
- 4.18 Boarders' medical needs are met well by an experienced team. Emergency visits to specialists, such as the dentist, can be arranged should boarders require it. Policies and procedures are thoroughly implemented and include guidance on the use of household remedies and self-medication. The recommendation from the previous inspection relating to the handling of medicines has been fully implemented. Comprehensive medical records ensure that the school has necessary permission for emergency treatment and is fully aware of any specific medical or dietary needs that boarders may have.
- 4.19 Catering staff prepare good quality meals, which boarders enjoy. Menus are varied, nutritious and provide for specific dietary needs. Themed menu days, for example, Independence Day and St David's Day, support boarders' cultural heritage. Before bedtime, older boarders help prepare snacks and drinks, which are immensely enjoyed by all.

- 4.20 A rich breadth of extra-curricular life enables boarders to expand their learning beyond the classroom. During the evening, a range of activities provide good opportunities for boarders to enjoy exercise and fresh air. The balance of boarding life is particularly well defined, enabling boarders sufficient time to relax and follow their own interests.
- 4.21 The boarding accommodation is safe and homely and all areas are of a high standard, having undergone considerable refurbishment since the previous inspection. Dormitories are spacious and vibrantly decorated, each theme sponsored by boarders' prospective senior schools. Boarders have excellent opportunities to bring in cuddly toys from home and personalise communal areas. Bathrooms are clean and well organised. Common rooms are well resourced and boarders describe them as comfortable spaces to socialise with their friends in the evenings. Ample storage is available for boarders' personal belongings and boarding staff ensure that their valuables are secure. Arrangements for boarders' laundry needs are particularly thorough. Boarders have excellent opportunities to contact their families in the evenings. Efficient channels of communication exist between parents and house staff. Parents are warmly welcomed into school, attending events such as sports' matches, plays and concerts.
- 4.22 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are sound. The school has implemented most of the recommendations from the previous inspection, pertaining to health and safety procedures and records for sanctions. A number of other points were identified during the inspection; most were appropriately rectified before it ended, although records were not wholly up to date. All staff who care for boarders are highly experienced and appropriately qualified. Through regular training, staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities for the boarders within their care. Designated persons have undertaken advanced training and have good links with the local authority. Focused priority is given towards boarders' safety. Levels of staff supervision are good and effective registration systems ensure that house staff always know where boarders are. Staff are vigilant in their management of behaviour and anti-bullying procedures. Risk assessments for the boarding provision are meticulously undertaken, including those for off-site excursions. Regular fire drills, including at night, ensure boarders' clear understanding of emergency evacuation procedures. Detailed records signify the efficiency of these measures.
- 4.23 The leadership and management of boarding is sound overall. The enthusiasm and dedication of conscientious house staff is a notable strength of the school. Boarding is an essential part of the school's life and the high quality of provision ensures that the school successfully achieves its aims. However, not all house staff have job descriptions to support their roles and systems of staff review are not fully in place. Weekly boarding meetings with senior leaders aid self-evaluation and planning within boarding, although strategic long term planning is not yet fully developed.
- 4.24 The school's website, together with documentation and handbooks provide comprehensive levels of information for new and current parents. The school values the views of parents, through periodic surveys and face-to-face contact with school leaders. In questionnaires, parents overwhelmingly express how happy their children are and how much they enjoy their boarding experiences. Similarly, boarders comment that they feel safe and extremely well looked after and boarding is 'just like one big happy sleepover'. Inspectors concur with these views.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is sound.
- 5.2 The structures of governance are clear and meet the schools aims. The board takes great care in the appointment of new governors and training opportunities are being developed to ensure that they are well informed about all areas of their work. Lines of communication between governors and senior management are strong with clear reports on all aspects of the school being provided for governors alongside regular communication with the chairman. Governors exercise prudent financial management. All aspects of education and care provided by the school are discussed by the board and the recently formed efficient committee system is strengthening governors' involvement.
- 5.3 Governors have recently embarked on a process of self-evaluation to create a clear strategic plan for the future development of the school, although the impact of this has yet to be felt. Their knowledge of school needs enables them to oversee strong educational provision and wise investment in staff and excellent material resources. They take a keen interest in educational standards and pastoral matters. Recently appointed governors have a particular interest in child protection arrangements and overseeing the central register of appointments. However statutory responsibilities have not always been fulfilled in the past; the monitoring of safe recruitment practice, including recording, has not been sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.4 Governors attend concerts and other school functions regularly. Some governors, particularly those with areas of specific responsibility, make a number of visits to observe the day-to-day running of the school. A staff representative has recently been appointed to further improve this association.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is sound overall.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are effective in providing clear educational direction in line with the aims and ethos of the school. The school's success results from the strong sense of teamwork throughout the committed staff. This is reflected in the pupils' excellent achievements across a broad spectrum of curricular and co-curricular provision. The pupils' high level of personal development is a direct response to the quality of pastoral care afforded to boarders and day pupils alike. Self evaluation has resulted in a whole school development plan which enables the senior management team to have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and to identify areas that need improvement although, as with departmental plans, the development plan lacks sufficient detail to allow implementation to be monitored effectively. The monitoring of learning and teaching takes place through a variety of processes with the best including lesson observation, mutual peer observation and book scrutinies. As the school is aware there is a lack of consistency in approach across departments' practice. Procedures have been recently established to tackle this. A new appraisal system is being trialled and lesson observations have begun to take place across the whole staff. This is starting to enable more opportunities to be identified for professional development. Provision for pupils with SEND is

excellent and since the previous inspection there has been considerable improvement in the provision for those who are gifted and talented. This makes a valuable contribution to pupils' educational progress and development and also to their confidence and well-being.

- 5.7 As at the previous inspection, procedures relating to staff appointments had not always been followed, and although by the end of the inspection all required checks were in place, records were still in the process of being updated. Teaching staff are appropriately trained in welfare, health and safety and safeguarding. The induction of new staff is thorough and this is supported by a comprehensive staff handbook which gives them helpful guidance. Effective policies and procedures are mostly in place and conscientiously implemented by staff.
- 5.8 Links with parents are excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and during interviews the majority of parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of school life. Parents particularly appreciate the warm, family atmosphere and the high quality of the care their children receive. Parents of older children are pleased that homework can be done at school and they find the flexible boarding suits their children very well. The inspectors concur with these views.
- 5.9 Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. New parents receive a particularly warm welcome to the school and all parents are extremely well informed about the school and its activities. Parents of younger pupils talk to teachers at the start and end of the day, and are able to read daily notices and diaries, while all parents receive informative newsletters, a termly journal and an annual review. E-mail contact is valuable. There are regular formal meetings when parents meet teachers. Parents visit the school regularly for events such as sports fixtures, drama productions and concerts. There is a highly active parents association which organises numerous social events. Information provided to parents of pupils and prospective pupils is comprehensive. The school's website is informative, provides access to the required policies and is updated regularly.
- 5.10 Regular reports are clear and informative with the best identifying targets for improvement. Parents are welcomed into the school if a problem arises. Complaints are treated seriously, and where cases occur, these are handled in accordance with the published procedures.

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) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The provision is outstanding in meeting the needs of the range of children in the setting. Teaching is always good and very often it is outstanding; questions challenge and extend the children's thinking and performance, so that they become ready for the next stage of their learning. The activities are appropriate and fun and often initiated by the children. The very well planned educational programmes ensure that children have rich opportunities to listen, talk, make close relationships, develop physical skills and learn both independently and with adult support. Reading is encouraged particularly strongly and writing skills are well provided for. Opportunities for children to understand and use technology are good and this is an area which the school is developing further.
- 6.2 Numerous and useful changes have been made since the previous inspection. Staff implement fully the new curriculum both indoors and outside. Children explore their surroundings and think critically; for example, children in the Reception year counted fallen leaves in the woods and carefully worked out how many more they needed to reach their totals. A new method of assessment is being used in order to improve planning for individuals and all children, including those who need extra support, are catered for extremely effectively.
- 6.3 Staff work with parents and carers to ensure that children settle, and that parents receive appropriate information so that they take an active role in their child's development. Parents are delighted with the warm family atmosphere throughout the EYFS. They particularly appreciate the detailed and frequent information they receive about their children and their work and progress.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.4 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding. The staff work as a close knit team within which the 'key persons' who are skilled and experienced, provide excellent role models for the children. Courtesy, kindness and respect for others are given high priority so that the children of all ages feel happy and safe. They are confident to work and play independently, and they form close relationships with other children and with staff. The youngest children behave extremely well and thoroughly enjoy what they are doing. Older children are mature in their behaviour and feel secure in their surroundings so that they are able to concentrate and respond to challenges. Children understand how to keep themselves safe, the importance of physical exercise and of eating healthily, and also the need to practise good hygiene. They are very well prepared for the transition to their next class. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. Clear emphasis is placed on ensuring that children move confidently from one year group to the next.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 6.5 Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is very well supported by governance that is sound overall. Staff ensure the care of the children is a priority in a warm, friendly and safe environment. Staff have clear understanding of child protection measures and health and safety requirements, and appropriate training has taken place. In the past, procedures have not always been implemented correctly, but all now meet requirements, apart from a few recording details.
- 6.6 Policies are updated regularly and schemes of work have been adapted to the new EYFS guidance. Senior staff carry out detailed appraisals which result in clear targets and further appropriate training for staff in the teaching and development of young children. The setting has effective systems for evaluation in place and is aware of areas for improvement. Displays and resources create a warm, welcoming environment. There is close liaison between staff and parents who are kept informed as to how they can help their children. Local agencies are active in their support for the setting.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.7 The overall quality and standards in the EYFS are good. The rich, caring environment ensures that all children including those with additional needs, make rapid progress in relation to their ability and needs. The younger children are confident, friendly and socially mature. They express themselves with good levels of clarity and are happy to try new activities. For example in a sports session, they practised balancing along an uneven line of humps and were delighted to succeed and jump down at the end. Children in the Nursery start to recognise emotions on the faces of puppets and to describe whether they themselves are happy or sad and why. In the Kindergarten children learn to name colours and two-dimensional shapes correctly. They know about germs and the need for good hygiene and which food is good for them. In Reception the older children have a thorough knowledge of simple phonics and start to use them to build short words, recording them in a clear, legible script.
- 6.8 The children's personal and emotional development is outstanding. The youngest children join in activities happily, are eager to talk about what they are doing, share resources and start to play with other children. By the end of Reception, children are confident and have mature attitudes to work and play. They form close relationships with adults and other children, and are kind and thoughtful. Behaviour is exceptionally high in all rooms.
- 6.9 However, although children's welfare is strongly attended to by caring staff, insufficient rigour has been applied to staff recruitment. The development plan which is part of the main school development plan is of good quality, though only for one year at present.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

6.10 In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those responsible for the registered provision must:

- implement all appropriate safeguarding arrangements Safeguarding and Child protection in the EYFS statutory requirements 3.4;
- implement all recruitment checks on staff before they begin work EYFS statutory requirements Suitable People in the EYFS 3.11.

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