



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BISHOPSGATE SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Bishopsgate School

Full Name of School	<b>Bishopsgate School</b>
DfE Number	<b>936/6024</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1060511</b>
Address	<b>Bishopsgate School Bishopsgate Road Englefield Green Egham Surrey TW20 0YJ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01784 432109</b>
Fax Number	<b>01784 430460</b>
Email Address	<a href="mailto:admissions@bishopsgate.surrey.sch.uk"><u>admissions@bishopsgate.surrey.sch.uk</u></a>
Head	<b>Mr Andrew Cowell</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Andrew Tae</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>357</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (211 boys; 146 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): <b>75</b> 5-13: <b>282</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>357</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>14</b>
	Full: <b>0</b> Flexi : <b>14</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Judy Naylor</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>07 May 2013 to 10 May 2013</b>

## 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 2008.

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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 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 Elaine Brook	Reporting Inspector
Ms Susan Dilley	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Adrian Lowe-Wheeler	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Martin Watson	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC Junior & Society of Heads)
Ms Deborah Mills	Coordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>2</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d) The quality of boarding	10
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Bishopsgate School is a day and weekly boarding school for boys and girls aged between three and thirteen. It was established in 1996 following the merger of two local preparatory schools. Set in twenty acres of land and located close to Windsor Great Park, it is a registered charity, administered by a board of governors and managed as one school. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is exempt from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. It is an integral part of the Lower School, which includes Years 1 and 2. The Upper School comprises Years 3 to 8. As at the time of the previous inspection, the school has no permanent boarders, but up to fourteen pupils can board for three nights per week on a flexible basis.
- 1.2 The school's aims are to provide a first-class education through a broad and balanced curriculum which prepares pupils for life in the twenty-first century. A particular emphasis is placed upon enabling pupils to discover the things they would like to be good at and helping them to enjoy challenge.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, 357 pupils were on roll, of whom 75 were in the EYFS. There were 77 pupils in Years 1 and 2, together with 205 in Years 3 to 8. The overall ability of the pupils is above the national average, with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average; few have below average ability. The majority of pupils come from families whose parents work in business or the professions and live within a twenty-mile radius of the school. A small number of pupils are of minority ethnic origin. Most pupils go on to a wide range of day and boarding schools at the end of Year 8, or transfer to the local maintained school. A minority leave at the end of Year 6 to attend schools where the entrance age is eleven.
- 1.4 Twenty-two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom three receive additional help with their learning of English. No pupil has a statement of special educational need but 31 pupils have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disability (SEND), of whom 14 receive specialist tuition.
- 1.5 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 Throughout the school, standards are high and the quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent. Pupils are extremely well educated, fully meeting the school's aim to prepare pupils for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. From the EYFS onwards, pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. They make very good progress and reach high standards of attainment in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Those pupils with SEND as well as those with special gifts and talents make rapid progress because of the carefully structured support they receive. The curriculum is broad and balanced, well suited to the ages and abilities of the pupils. The over-emphasis given to sport and the lack of design and technology noted at the time of the previous inspection has been corrected, as has the need to challenge the most able. However, the short length of some lessons makes it difficult for pupils to fully engage with the subject matter. A high proportion of the teaching was of excellent quality and no lesson was judged unsatisfactory. Planning in the main school is meticulous and a wide variety of teaching strategies motivates and enthuses pupils. In the EYFS, planning is not sufficiently consistent across the whole setting with the result that the youngest children are not always offered sufficient challenge. Systems to track pupils' progress have been well developed since the previous inspection and are now a strength of the school.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent from the EYFS right through to Year 8. Rigorous pastoral care systems and arrangements for the safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of all pupils are in place and carefully implemented. The sense of community is very strong, with pupils of all ages thriving in a happy and harmonious environment. The small number of boarders benefit from their experience and are happy and safe. The recommendations in the OFSTED boarding report were to revise the child protection policy and to improve the guidelines for the use of the internet. These have been fully met. The recommendation to improve the toilet and washroom facilities has largely been implemented; however shower facilities, although adequate, still need updating. The recent reorganisation of the evening routine has facilitated greater privacy for the boarders in the washrooms.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. Governors have effective oversight into the workings of the school. They provide support, challenge and, through the detailed strategic development plan and prudent financial management, have enabled investment in high quality facilities and resources. Senior leaders give clear educational direction at all levels, including the EYFS. However, monitoring of boarding provision is insufficiently thorough with the result that standards, although good, do not match the levels of excellence found elsewhere. Concerns raised by parents are investigated in line with published procedures and receive an appropriate response. Links with parents are excellent; parents appreciate the high standards of education and care that their children receive.



## **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 2011.

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Review the length of some lessons so that pupils have the time to engage effectively with the subject matter.
  2. Enable all staff members in the EYFS to plan together as one cohesive unit.
  3. Ensure that standards within boarding mirror the high standards found elsewhere across the school.

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

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are extremely well educated in line with the school's aim to offer a first class education in order that the pupils can be the best that they can be. Encouragement, support and enjoyment characterise the school's approach to learning and in response pupils thrive and grow in confidence.
- 3.3 From the EYFS onwards, pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curricular and extra-curricular activities. They are highly articulate, listen carefully and are able to reason and debate in response to challenging issues. Younger pupils read confidently, with expression and understanding. Older pupils write very well and are able to work independently to research topics, frequently using advanced computer skills to explore themes and deepen their understanding. Pupils' numeracy skills are equally strong; they can work effectively both individually and co-operatively. Pupils' creative skills are advanced, as evidenced by the excellent artwork on display, which includes large steel sculptures designed and built during an art weekend. Their achievements in the performing arts are excellent, and include top music scholarships to senior schools and high grades in external examinations in music, public speaking and ballet.
- 3.4 The individual and group achievements of pupils outside the classroom are significant. The extremely wide range of opportunities enables pupils to explore new interests and extend their abilities so that they participate successfully at a high level, as in the case of two pupils who presently compete in gymnastics both nationally and internationally. For the past two years, talented pupils have gained a sports' scholarship to the senior school of their choice, whilst others have been enabled to compete in a diverse range of activities which include rock climbing, trampolining, rowing, judo and chess.
- 3.5 The school identifies carefully those pupils with special talents and abilities as well as those with SEND. Their progress is efficiently tracked and appropriate measures taken to ensure that they achieve well, according to their individual aptitudes or needs, in all areas of school life. The very small number of pupils who have EAL make excellent progress as a result of the high quality support programme. There is no difference in the achievements of different ethnic groups.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from lesson observations, work scrutiny and interviews with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to pupils of similar ability. A number of parents in the EYFS felt that insufficient challenge was offered to the very youngest children. Inspectors supported this view but found that by the end of their final year in Reception, very good progress was being made. Early literacy skills are particularly advanced, with the majority of pupils having a good grasp of letter sounds and many being able to read simple texts. By the time they start Year 1, pupils are happy, active learners, able to work independently, think critically and be creative. This very good progress is maintained throughout the school. An overwhelming majority of parents were very pleased with the progress being made by their children. Inspectors do not agree with the view from a few parents that the more able pupils did not make sufficient progress to receive academic scholarships, judging that the school has effective systems in place to

enable pupils with particular gifts in academic work, sport or the creative subjects to be identified and supported to realise their potential.

- 3.7 From the EYFS upwards, pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Their generally exemplary behaviour in the classroom strongly supports their overall achievement. Children in the EYFS showed advanced skills when sharing and taking turns. They are keen to join in the many different activities offered and in Reception class, their academic progress is considerable because they are encouraged to reason, consider options and make informed choices. From Year 1 onwards, pupils listen attentively and display enthusiasm and perseverance, taking great pride in producing work of a very high standard.

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

- 3.8 The quality of the curriculum is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum is extremely well suited to the pupils' ages and abilities and strongly supports the school's aim to prepare pupils for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It offers a suitably wide range of subjects, making a significant contribution to pupils' achievements. Since the previous inspection, a review of the curricular provision has resulted in a better balance of time for subjects, thus addressing the recommendation to correct the over-emphasis given to games and to introduce more formal teaching of design and technology. The short length of some sessions, however, does not allow pupils sufficient time to engage deeply with the theme of the lesson. Pupils speak enthusiastically of the Building Learning Power programme (BLP) which has the four key elements of resilience, collaboration, reflection and resourcefulness deeply embedded in curriculum planning, supporting well the school's commitment to enable pupils to discover the things they would like to be good at and help them to enjoy challenge.
- 3.10 Close communication between subject leaders and senior management ensures the continuity of learning provision throughout the school. Highly effective cross-curricular links, particularly with information and communication technology (ICT), are successfully being developed across many departments.
- 3.11 In the EYFS, provision is good, with elements that are excellent, meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences has an excellent balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities taking place both inside and outside the classroom. These include the opportunity to explore, think critically and be creative, challenging the most able and supporting those with SEND. However, these exciting opportunities are not consistent across the setting. Provision includes lessons given by specialist teachers in music, ballet, French and physical education, which enrich the curriculum, as seen in a music lesson which delighted and fully engaged children by allowing them active, energetic participation. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 receive a suitably wide curriculum, delivered largely by class teachers, which provides an excellent framework for learning. Specialist teaching increases as pupils mature so that pupils in Years 7 and 8 are well prepared for the transition to senior school. Provision for the teaching of design and technology has greatly improved since the previous inspection and is now a strength of the school. The library provides excellent opportunities for pupils to research beyond the taught curriculum whilst offering a quiet haven during breaks for pupils to enjoy reading.

- 3.12 Systems to identify and support pupils with SEND and provide challenge for the most able have greatly improved since the previous inspection. Pupils' needs are carefully analysed and the collected information is well used to inform curriculum planning. The most able receive additional challenges to match their abilities. The excellent programme of enrichment lectures provided for Years 7 and 8 allows pupils to engage critically with external speakers who are all experts in their own fields and include politicians, media personnel and members of the forces.
- 3.13 The excellent range of extra-curricular activities gives all pupils access to sporting, creative and academic pursuits. An exceptionally wide ranging programme reflects the pupils' diverse needs and interests and include martial arts, basketball, rowing, gymnastics, rambling, debating, science philosophy, Mandarin, Spanish, film club, dance and food technology. The curriculum is further enriched by educational visits to galleries, museums and other places related to the pupils' learning. These include trips abroad which encourage pupils' independence. They speak with great enthusiasm about a recent residential trip to France and the choir's trip to Holland.
- 3.14 Pupils benefit from the good links which the school has with the local community. These range from entertaining the elderly living locally, hosting sporting tournaments or holiday activity clubs to visits to local charities.

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

- 3.15 The overall quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 Highly effective teaching strongly promotes pupils' progress and supports the school's aim to inspire all pupils with the desire to achieve the highest standards possible for them as individuals. Pupils of all ages and abilities are enabled to acquire knowledge and skills which facilitate learning and high achievement.
- 3.17 In the EYFS, teaching is always good, with much being of excellent quality, so that pupils are motivated to participate enthusiastically in a wide range of experiences. Teaching from specialists in music and dance is of particularly high quality, contributing significantly to the children's enjoyment and learning. Planning for the older children is excellent but is not consistent across the whole setting. In the best activities observed, experiences were provided based on thorough and accurate assessment of children's prior learning, well matched to their needs, and outcomes carefully documented to inform future planning.
- 3.18 From Year 1, a particular strength of the teaching is meticulous planning and assessment, which includes the setting of precise targets for each pupil's progress. Lessons take account of the needs of all pupils, including those who require additional support or higher level work. Clear learning objectives are evident within subject documentation and lesson plans. Marking is thorough and includes diagnostic comments so that pupils know what they need to do in order to improve. The practice in Year 4 of requesting a response by pupils to comments from teachers creates a sense of partnership, enabling an understanding of how grades can be improved. Monitoring and assessment systems are thorough and much improved since the previous inspection.
- 3.19 A wide range of teaching methods is employed to stimulate the pupils' interest, encourage curiosity and present challenge. An appropriate balance between individual and class work encourages the pupils to work independently or cooperatively as required. Pupils state that they feel well supported and valued. Praise, encouragement and rewards are well deployed to boost pupil confidence.

High expectations of both attitude and behaviour are the norm so that overall, a calm and purposeful atmosphere exists. The excellent subject knowledge of the teachers combined with their passion and enthusiasm for their subject, consistently engages the pupils. Excellent facilities and resources are well used to support teaching and learning. ICT is embedded across the curriculum, interactive whiteboards are widely used and the library is well used to aid research and the acquisition of new knowledge.

- 3.20 Children of all abilities are enabled to learn effectively. The learning support department provide teachers with excellent information for pupils with SEND. Detailed individual educational plans assist planning by focusing on the specific needs of each child. Targeted assistance supports less able pupils extremely well within the classroom setting while individual teaching of pupils with SEND or EAL is of very high quality. Teaching of more able pupils including those who are gifted and talented has significantly developed since the previous inspection. In general, teachers are fully aware of the needs of these pupils and they are extended through varied and challenging activities within and outside of lesson time. Teaching assistants are well distributed to further support or extend pupils. The enrichment programme and a wide range of cultural and educational visits broadens and stimulates a love of learning. Independent learning opportunities and research based projects are well established in many subjects and activities so that pupils in all sections of the school demonstrate advanced thinking and reasoning skills.

## **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 spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The inclusive ethos prevalent in the school is called 'the Bishopsgate way' by pupils and staff, who fully commit to its principles. Within this close-knit and caring community, pupils grow in confidence and self-assurance so that by the time they leave, their personal development is excellent. Exceptionally harmonious relationships are evident between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves. The school's 'Building Learning Power' programme is central to their development as it encourages all pupils to take risks, accept challenges and become more independent, thereby fully meeting the school's aim to prepare children for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Pupils have a strong sense of self-esteem as a result of the recognition they receive for their successes, both in class and in assemblies.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Their engagement with the non-material aspects of life is clear through the reflective atmosphere in assemblies as well as in their celebration of creativity in music and the arts. Pupils from the EYFS onwards are supported in their spiritual development by opportunities to explore the natural world all around them and enhanced by outstanding extra-curricular opportunities such as participation in the local chapel choir which is regularly attended by members of the royal family.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral awareness is extremely strong. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and respect the school's behaviour code. Mutual respect is implicit in the school's high expectations of its pupils. They respond by behaving courteously and considerately towards one another, understanding the need to maintain an ordered environment. Pupils are aware of the need for sanctions if they do not conform to community rules, but they stress that this rarely happens because every pupil knows what is expected of them both in school and in the wider community.
- 4.5 The social awareness of pupils is excellent. As they progress through the school, there are appropriate opportunities to take on added responsibilities, which they carry out with great diligence. The introduction of the student leadership programme for Years 7 and 8 is valued by all. Pupils apply for leadership positions such as being a prefect or a monitor, meet weekly to be mentored or guided by the staff member leading the initiative and receive a regular appraisal of their performance as a school leader. The school council is well established, allowing pupils to air their views and to effect change, thus enabling a growing understanding of public institutions, the law and the fundamental values of democracy. All pupils, including those in the EYFS, gain an understanding of the needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves through extensive fund-raising. Charities selected for the school's support can be suggested by individuals or classes and are then agreed by the whole school. All pupils fully engage with initiatives to raise funds for a wide range of charities both nationally and abroad, often hosting events which are largely pupil-led. As they research charities and institutions, they reinforce their social, political and economic awareness very effectively, showing during pupil interviews a growing maturity in their understanding of human rights.
- 4.6 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent and tolerance and harmony are integral to the community. They have respect for their own culture through the

extensive programme of music, drama and art which includes visits to theatres, art galleries and museums whilst their experience of Western culture is enhanced by residential trips abroad. In the EYFS, children learn about cultures very different from their own through celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year. From Year 1 onwards, pupils develop an increasing understanding of other faiths and cultures. The candle holders made by the boarders and displayed in their common room in recognition of the Diwali celebration demonstrate how knowledge gained during the school day influences their behaviour elsewhere.

- 4.7 Children in the EYFS are prepared well for transition to the main school. By the time they leave the school, older pupils demonstrate excellent personal development and maturity. They show themselves to be confident and sensible young citizens, ready to tackle the challenges of the next stage of their education and to continue to contribute to society as a whole.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The high quality of the pastoral care strongly supports the school's aim to be a caring community, respectful of the unique value of each member of the school community. Staff provide excellent support and guidance for pupils.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, the key person ensures that each child is happy, settled and well supervised. Children readily share any concerns with all staff, who respond patiently and sympathetically, ensuring fair play for all. Children learn to take turns, work co-operatively within a group and talk through options and choices before making a decision. They are encouraged to be 'kind friends' who listen to one another carefully. Given gentle encouragement, they manage their personal hygiene independently and know that they must wash their hands before eating. They learn to be independent, putting on their coats and shoes to play outdoors and cutting up fruit for their snacks. Children know that they are expected to behave politely and courteously and their relationships with one another are generally exemplary.
- 4.11 From Year 1, relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are excellent. The well organised pastoral structure caters effectively for pupils' individual needs. Regular staff meetings and careful recording of any concerns ensure that staff can support and guide pupils in an informed manner. The clear classroom displays detailing the values of resilience, resourcefulness, reflection and relationships reinforce positive behaviour. Pupils are confident to go to their teachers if they need help. In their responses to the questionnaires, a small number of pupils felt that teachers are unfair in the way that they give rewards and sanctions, but no evidence was found to support these concerns.
- 4.12 Healthy attitudes to nutrition and exercise are evident from pupils' ready participation in a wide range of sport and exercise opportunities. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the food provided by the school, which is prepared and served in hygienic conditions. Staff join the pupils in the dining room and the atmosphere is cordial and relaxed, with good manners being encouraged.
- 4.13 The school's disciplinary approach emphasises the encouragement of good behaviour, with a clear set of rules which is understood and considered fair by pupils, and where relationships are very strong. The school's policy is clear that bullying is not tolerated and pupils say they feel safe in school.

- 4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.15 The school council is valued highly by pupils who recognise that it provides a formal opportunity to express their views. Pupils acknowledge that the council has been effective in initiating change since a number of actions has resulted from meetings, such as an improvement in the variety of snacks offered.

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

- 4.16 The school's arrangements for the pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.17 The policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, including children in the EYFS, are comprehensive and accurately reflect current practice. All staff receive regular training and understand the critical importance of their role in keeping all pupils safe. Checks required to ensure the suitability of staff are rigorous and meticulously recorded. In interviews and in their responses to the questionnaire, pupils say they are happy and secure. All benefit from the warm, family environment.
- 4.18 All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards are in place. Fire prevention systems are rigorously monitored and regularly reviewed. Regular fire practices are held and staff receive appropriate training. Excellent risk assessments for all aspects of school life, including activities both on and off site, are in place.
- 4.19 An annual health and safety audit is carried out and any recommendations are implemented. The well established health and safety committee includes a governor, members of the management, catering and medical personnel, ensuring that any concerns raised are speedily addressed.
- 4.20 Pupils who are ill or injured or have SEND receive excellent care. A large number of staff are qualified in first aid and children in the EYFS are well cared for when they are unwell by staff who have received training appropriate to their setting. The school matron rigorously oversees arrangements for all pupils, including those in the EYFS, who are sick or have identified medical conditions.
- 4.21 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years. Thorough systems to follow up unexplained absences are followed meticulously.

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

- 4.22 The quality of boarding is good overall.
- 4.23 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Although the number of boarders is small and boarding is flexible in character their personal development is clearly enriched by their boarding experience. They are confident, articulate, independent, honest and thoughtful members of their community. Boarders show a deep understanding of the differing needs of their peers and can communicate with adults in a self-assured, courteous manner.
- 4.24 The boarders thrive on the close-knit nature of the small boarding community and are keen to contribute to the running of the house, intuitively carrying out household tasks together, which enhance the distinctive 'family feel' of the boarding environment. This sense of family extends to the caring relationships evident between boarders, with habitual kindness and thoughtfulness being shown towards the younger children from more experienced boarders.



- 4.25 A relaxed atmosphere of fun and friendship pervades the house with lively, yet supportive, relationships between boarders engendering a secure and agreeable environment. Similarly, the relationships between the pupils and each member of the dedicated and caring house staff confirm the excellent level of respect prevalent throughout the community. Boarders feel they have a range of staff to whom they could turn if they needed help, as well as being confident in the support of their boarding peers.
- 4.26 The quality of the boarding provision and care is good. Boarders are well cared for and feel safe. House staff see pastoral care as a priority and take great interest in each boarder's well-being. Links between the day and boarding staff are a strong feature of the setting, with regular meetings in which information is shared between academic and pastoral staff. Health and safety responsibilities are taken extremely seriously, as seen in the comprehensive risk assessments and the speed with which maintenance matters concerning safety are resolved. Boarders who are unwell or injured are cared for by an experienced matron in a well equipped medical centre and they have access to health professionals outside of the school.
- 4.27 Boarders enjoy a plentiful and varied diet; the food is nutritious and much enjoyed. Great care is taken to ensure that special dietary requirements are met for those boarders who have particular needs. The opportunity to give feedback about their views on catering, both informally by speaking with the approachable catering staff and more formally through an anonymous suggestion box has resulted in menu changes and fresh ideas being implemented. The introduction of a pre-bedtime snack and drink has improved provision.
- 4.28 During the three evenings on which boarding is available, good use is made of the school's grounds. After taking part in the varied extra-curricular programme and supervised prep sessions, boarders enjoy the freedom to choose whether they want to participate in an organised activity or to have free time, playing with their friends. In conversation and in their response to the questionnaire, boarders indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to be more independent in recognition of their growing maturity.
- 4.29 Boarding accommodation is comfortably furnished and recreational areas are appropriately equipped. There is little encouragement to personalise sleeping areas since bed spaces are frequently changed according to the number of boarders who have requested accommodation for that particular night. The overall atmosphere, however, is homely and welcoming. All areas of the house are kept exceptionally clean and tidy.
- 4.30 The recommendation in the previous ISI inspection report of 2008 and in the more recent OFSTED report of 2011 to improve the toilet and washroom facilities has largely been implemented, with new flooring in place to improve the quality of the environment. However, shower facilities, although adequate, still need updating. The recent reorganisation of the evening routine has facilitated appropriate privacy for the boarders in the washrooms.
- 4.31 Boarders are able to contact their family freely, either by using their own mobile phones or by using the school telephone, in private. Open lines of communication between school and parents exist and feedback from the parental survey consistently suggests that they are very satisfied with the boarding experience. Boarders are able to use the computers to send emails to family and friends. The recommendation in the previous report regarding the use of the internet has been

fully met and systems to protect children from cyber-bullying and potentially harmful material are rigorous but not intrusive.

- 4.32 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. The recommendation in the previous inspection report to revise the child protection policy has been met in full. Boarders' welfare, health and safety are a high priority in boarding as elsewhere in the school. Safeguarding policies are thorough and safer recruitment procedures are effective. All boarding staff have received enhanced child protection training and have first aid qualifications. The positive behaviour of the boarders contributes to the safe and secure atmosphere in the house and boarders reported there have been no incidents of bullying.
- 4.33 There are comprehensive risk assessments in place to protect the children from danger and an effective system to ensure that maintenance issues are resolved swiftly.
- 4.34 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is sound. This reflects the interim nature of the leadership of boarding at present. A clear statement of the aims of boarding is well known to pupils, staff and parents. All policies meet requirements. Records are well kept and detail the individual needs of each boarder. However, there has been no formal training for staff or managers in boarding practice, although they have received induction and informal in-house support from experienced and qualified members of staff. Senior managers understand the need to fully incorporate specific reference to boarding within the school's established appraisal system, in order to provide professional development for all staff involved in boarding.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of the governance of the school is excellent.
- 5.2 Supportive and considered governance provides an excellent framework for the continued development of the school, fully in line with its aims to provide a first-class education. Governors, many of whom have long-standing links with the school and are familiar with its ethos, bring to their role a wide range of specialist skills which ensure continuing high educational standards, excellent financial planning and significant investment in staff, accommodation and resources. This represents an improved position since the previous inspection.
- 5.3 Governors are fully involved in the strategic planning process and work together with staff and senior managers to provide challenge and stimulus for growth and improvement. They are very sensitive to the need to maintain careful separation between governance and management. Communication between governors and the very experienced senior leaders in the school is frequent. They are made fully aware of any concerns or issues as they arise; an effective response is then planned and agreed, with the responsibility for effective implementation being delegated to senior managers where appropriate. The well established framework of five committees ensures that the work of the school is rigorously monitored and reviewed and all improvements or development needs identified and reported to the full governing body. A named governor has good oversight of the EYFS and another governor spends at least one day per week hearing the younger children read, dropping in on lessons to support older pupils, or being fully briefed on any pastoral issues. Governors have a thorough understanding of the school's needs and are able to support senior managers to implement effective solutions to any emergent issues. However, the oversight of boarding provision is insufficiently thorough, with the result that standards are not as high in this area.
- 5.4 Governors are well aware of their legal responsibilities and discharge them carefully. They rigorously review the school's policies and practice with regard to the safeguarding of children and to the appointment of all staff, including those in the EYFS.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management at all levels are highly successful in ensuring that the school achieves its aims to enable the pupils, including those children in the EYFS, to be the best that they can be, thereby promoting excellent standards of achievement, personal development and care. Carefully formulated policies which reflect the school's ethos are fully implemented from the EYFS upwards for the benefit of the pupils. The welfare, health and safety of all pupils is given a high priority by senior management.
- 5.7 Strong leadership sets a clear educational direction for the school. Since the previous inspection, the leadership team has been restructured. Roles and

responsibilities are clearly defined, with each senior member contributing new ideas and initiatives which they know will be given serious consideration. Members of the leadership team work extremely well together, with complementary skills, which enables pupils to mature in a warm and caring environment, characterised by high expectations. The pastoral and academic tracking system, reviewed in response to the recommendation in the previous inspection, is an excellent example of the collegiate approach of senior managers, who are working together to produce a programme which utilises data and input from teachers to monitor pupils' progress, thereby raising achievement even further. The management of the EYFS is overseen by the head of lower school. However, planning systems are not well co-ordinated across all of the EYFS classes. From Year 1 onwards, the management is excellent, with the result that pupils achieve highly and develop as confident, articulate young people by the time they move on to their next school. Management of the boarding section of the school, however, is less successful. Insufficient investment in appropriate staff training and facilities has resulted in standards which do not reflect the excellence found in all other areas of school life.

- 5.8 Subject leaders are encouraged to contribute to the excellent school improvement plan and play a critical role in setting new priorities for continued improvement. All development is carefully monitored by senior leaders who ensure that targets are aspirational, but also able to be realised and their impact evaluated. Staff involved in the education and care of all children, including those in EYFS, are challenged to reflect upon pupils' achievement during the preceding year and construct a development plan for their department which has the continuing improvement of teaching and learning at its heart. Much work has gone into developing subject documentation, which ensures that pupils' learning is now continuous across the school.
- 5.9 New staff are well supported through the careful induction process. The detailed appraisal programme focuses on the professional development needs of the academic staff and contributes effectively to the very high standards of pupils' achievements. All staff, including the EYFS, teaching, administrative, catering and domestic teams, receive regularly updated training in the safeguarding of children.
- 5.10 The administration of the school is highly efficient. Financial management is careful and thorough, with the result that significant investment has been made in new and improved facilities, offering pupils of all ages a stimulating environment in which they thrive.
- 5.11 The school's excellent relationship with parents is based on genuine care for and knowledge of the pupils and their families. Concerns are handled speedily and carefully. An open-door policy operates and senior managers greet children cheerfully as they arrive, setting the tone for the day. Any concerns about pupils are registered on the excellent pastoral and academic tracking system which has been developed by the school during the past two years. Complaints are dealt with in accordance with the complaints procedure.
- 5.12 Parents are actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They are well informed about progress at regular parents' consultation evenings and are invited to induction evenings at the start of each academic year to meet the teachers and to learn about their programme of study. During the inspection week, a parents' forum meeting took place to help Lower School parents understand their child's journey through Bishopsgate School. Excellent support is given at key transitional

points, with parents being well advised by managers to choose an appropriate senior school for their child.

- 5.13 Both current and prospective parents are provided with a wealth of information about the school, on the website, through the welcome pack, annual magazine and DVD or by the weekly newsletter from the headmaster and emails from heads of year groups. They have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and to support their children's learning by attending parent forum meetings, celebration assemblies, fixtures, concerts and dance exhibitions and by participating in the ski trip and music tour. A parent representative for each class organises social events, ensuring that new parents meet other parents in their child's year group. The social committee organises many events for parents and families.
- 5.14 The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were highly supportive of the education provided by the school. Prior to the inspection, senior managers had taken on board comments from a number of parents who were unhappy with information they were given about the progress of their children and this concern was reflected in their response to the parental questionnaire. The school's response was to form a working party of parents and teachers to consider a new system of reporting to parents, which would provide more helpful information on progress. The resulting reporting system was still being trialled at the time of the inspection but inspectors judge that the new style reports are helpful, transparent and very informative, giving a clear overview of progress and outlining targets for future improvement.

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