



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
BRIGHTON COLLEGE PREP SCHOOL**

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Brighton College Prep School

The pre-prep and the senior school were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	Brighton College Prep School		
DfE Number	846/6015		
Registered Charity Number	307061		
Address	Brighton College Prep School Walpole Lodge 2 Walpole Road Brighton East Sussex BN2 0EU		
Telephone Number	01273 704210		
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Email Address	paprep@brightoncollege.net		
Head	Mr Harry Hastings		
Chair of Governors	Lord Skidelsky		
Age Range	8 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	300		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (157 boys; 143 girls)		
Numbers by Age	7-11	180	11-13 120
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	300	
Inspection Dates	21 Apr 2015 to 24 Apr 2015		

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 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

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', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the representative/governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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

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Reporting Inspector

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Brighton College was formed in 1845 as a Church of England foundation, with an integral junior school. The school moved to its present site adjacent to the main campus, about a mile from the city centre, in 1970 and has since been renamed Brighton College Prep School. It is a fully co-educational day school for pupils aged 8 to 13. The school is administered by the newly re-established prep and pre-prep schools' committee, which is a sub-committee of the main governing body of Brighton College. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headmaster.
- 1.2 The school aims to promote spiritual development within Church of England traditions and to promote moral development and integrity. It seeks to encourage pupils to be academically focused and thereby fulfil their potential; to become confident and articulate adults. The school emphasises the importance of physical exercise, preparing pupils for a healthy lifestyle and enjoyable participation in sport. The school aims to develop cultural awareness through appreciation of literature, the arts, science, music, and the diversity of human beliefs and experience. Additionally, the school seeks to promote worthwhile partnerships with parents and the local community, and to be a safe and happy environment for all. Its informal motto is 'Be the best you'.
- 1.3 There are currently 300 pupils on the school roll, 157 boys and 143 girls. There are 180 pupils in Years 4 to 6 and 120 in Years 7 and 8. Fifty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly in the area of dyslexia and all receive specialist support from the school; no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Twenty-nine pupils use English as an additional language (EAL) but none needs formal specialist support. Pupils are drawn largely from the local area and they come predominantly from business and professional families. The majority of pupils are of white British ethnicity and a small proportion is drawn from a range of other nationalities and cultures.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with cohorts usually having at least a quarter of pupils being of well above average ability; very few pupils are of below average ability.
- 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 The overall quality of the pupils' achievements is excellent. The pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills highly effectively across a broad range of subjects and activities. They fully embrace the school's unofficial motto 'be the best you'. The rich curriculum and the excellent programme of extra-curricular activities carefully support the needs of those of different abilities and ages. Achievements are particularly notable in literacy and mathematics. Activities give pupils a choice based on their interests and skills, building on the school's objectives to create a happy, stimulating, safe and secure school environment where children will be encouraged to reach their full potential. The pupils' success is also promoted by excellent teaching and their exemplary attitudes to learning, which contribute well to their progress. Teaching is particularly effective in motivating and enthusing pupils and challenging them to think for themselves. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Provision of information and communication technology (ICT) is good, though pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use their skills across the curriculum and their use of the library facilities for research and investigation is limited. The provision for pupils with SEND is fully integrated into the curriculum. More able pupils are also catered for extremely well in teaching. The pupils' overall success is promoted further by their excellent relationships with one another.
- 2.2 Pastoral care is excellent, and the pupils' welfare, health and safety are assured. Pupils are courteous to visitors and treat their peers and staff with great respect. Their care for one another is embedded in all aspects of school life. Pupils enjoy life at school and this radiates from all that they do. Pupils demonstrate high levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is evident in their positive approach to charitable giving.
- 2.3 The aims of the school are fulfilled and fostered by excellent governance which is committed to the academic progress and personal development of the pupils. The newly re-established prep and pre-prep committee strongly reinforces the governors' commitment to these sections of the school. Governors have a clear oversight of the school, informed by detailed reports from the head and by their regular visits to the school. All aspects of leadership and management are excellent. Highly effective policies and procedures support pupils considerably in their academic and personal development. Recruitment procedures are efficient and safe, as are all checks on staff. Links with parents are excellent. They are extremely positive about the school's educational and pastoral provision.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Increase the use of the library and its facilities to enhance the pupils' learning.
2. Develop the use of ICT as an integral part of lesson planning.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school amply fulfils its aim to promote the intellectual development of the pupils by being academically focused and by enabling each pupil to fulfil his or her potential. Throughout the school, pupils display highly effective knowledge, proficient skills and excellent understanding in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- 3.3 Pupils of all abilities display excellent levels of literacy and numeracy in response to the strong focus on these areas, the meticulous monitoring of progress and the committed attitude of pupils. In lessons, interviews and informal conversations, the pupils are extremely articulate when answering questions and presenting their ideas, which they do with confidence and enthusiasm. In and out of lessons, pupils seize with alacrity the many opportunities for independent thought. They know that their ideas are valued and encouraged and every opportunity is given in teaching for collaboration and for pupils to share, discuss and debate their thoughts and ideas. This they do with great success, demonstrating excellent learning skills.
- 3.4 Pupils read fluently and with confidence, and are delighted to demonstrate these skills. They write in various styles and with a legibility and concision which indicate high level thinking for their age; they regularly produce creative writing of a high quality. The presentation of their work is excellent across all subjects. Numeracy skills are strongly developed, and are applied particularly well to solving problems. Pupils acquire a high level of understanding of scientific concepts and their investigative skills are well developed. Pupils use ICT effectively for research when given the opportunity. Although the library and its facilities are timetabled for occasional use, pupils do not use these facilities to their maximum potential.
- 3.5 The pupils' creativity is excellent, notably in music art and drama. These play a significant part in the life of the school, and the sound of orchestras, choirs or individual musicians is a constant feature of school life. Pupils have considerable success in local competitions. The vibrant displays around the school are a testimony to their creative skills.
- 3.6 Pupils are successful in a wide range of activities, including speech and drama, sport, music and art. These achievements make an important contribution to their personal development, enabling them to demonstrate their individual confidence, team skills and respect for each other. All pupils are given an opportunity to achieve in music and many achieve high grades for their age in music examinations. Games and physical education (PE) skills are well developed in a variety of sports, and all pupils have the opportunity to represent the school. Individual achievements are many including national success in cross country and athletics, performing with the National Children's Orchestra and joining the cast of a national radio broadcast of *War and Peace*.
- 3.7 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available, it is judged to be high in relation to national average expectations. Pupils follow a broad and challenging curriculum which includes classical and modern languages and the majority gain places at Brighton College, a significant number with scholarships. This level of attainment as judged by the quality of learning seen in lessons, the high level of attainment seen in

the scrutiny of work, the standardised data provided and excellent responses in curriculum interviews with pupils, indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to those of similar ability.

- 3.8 Less able pupils and those with SEND make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported and their progress is carefully monitored. They are withdrawn from lessons for group work in the school dyslexia centre and supported in class by their teachers. More able pupils, and those with particular talents, are well catered for in lessons and in the extra-curricular opportunities provided for them. A significant factor in pupils' achievement is the setting of pupils for mathematics and English in all year groups.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The curriculum provision is rich in content, balanced and exciting. It strongly supports the school's aims. The curriculum promotes challenge and excellence and is sympathetically planned to meet the needs of the whole range of pupils as they progress through the school. It is efficiently timetabled to enable pupils to experience a curriculum beyond basic requirements. Care is taken at the transitional stages between pre-prep, prep and the senior school to achieve a seamless progression.
- 3.11 There is a wide range of linguistic opportunities; French and Mandarin are taught throughout, and Latin from Year 7. Creative subjects are well represented through design and technology (DT), art and music; the latter includes opportunities for all pupils to take part in concerts. There are opportunities for drama and role play within lessons, although drama is not specifically timetabled. Specialist subject teaching is given in art, music, foreign languages and sport throughout the school and, from Year 7, in all subjects. Home economics is a particular feature of the curriculum and is enjoyed by pupils in Years 4 to 6. Triple science is taught from Year 6 onwards.
- 3.12 There is clear progression in the development of the curriculum, and planning across all subjects is meticulous. It is closely monitored and prepares the pupils extremely well for the next stage of their education. The breadth of the curriculum is further enhanced by the use of cross-curricular links between subjects. Whilst the school possesses good ICT facilities, the curriculum offers limited provision for pupils to use and develop their ICT skills.
- 3.13 The curriculum is supported by a wide range of peripatetic music staff who play an unusually active role in the curriculum, regularly supporting class-teaching activities. Sporting provision is equally good throughout the curriculum with a wide range of sports offered to the pupils. The school has continued to increase the number of pupils involved in sports fixtures.
- 3.14 Curricular support for those with SEND or EAL is excellent, and the systems to identify and support such pupils are particularly effective; pupils identified as requiring support are given individual education plans. Work is appropriately matched to their needs in lessons and good use is made of withdrawal for extra support. Those identified by the school as being able and talented are well catered for in teaching through specifically challenging activities.

- 3.15 The curriculum is enriched by an extensive extra-curricular programme which plays an invaluable role in developing the pupils' resilience and open-mindedness. Pupils are actively encouraged to suggest activities and the school makes every effort to accommodate their ideas. Recent pupil-initiated activities have included boys' hockey and 'ultimate frisbee', as well as less familiar interests such as pet club, high wire club and young engineers. The curriculum is enriched by the day and residential trips that support the topics being studied across the school. The pupils' experiences are further broadened by a wide range of visiting specialists and themed days.
- 3.16 Pupils benefit from a personal, social, health, and economic education (PSHEE) that, as well as including all elements of health and safety, acknowledges the importance of fundamental British values. This includes the ability to distinguish right from wrong, to show initiative and to acquire knowledge of public institutions, cultural tolerance and respect for other people. Pupils visit many local places of historic and cultural interest. During the inspection the school was also preparing for its own mock general election in order that pupils could experience democracy first hand. The school has close links with the local community, such as a recent fundraising art project with a local charity for blind ex-service men who spent time in the school working with the pupils.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.18 Throughout the school, teaching enables pupils to develop a very secure understanding in all subjects and to make excellent progress. Teaching is well planned, with a high degree of awareness of the differing needs of all of the pupils. It supports the school's aims, contributing successfully to the pupils' high levels of achievement.
- 3.19 The teachers know their pupils well and this, together with their strong subject knowledge, contributes greatly to the pupils' progress. There is an excellent rapport between staff and pupils, who are encouraged to work hard to ensure that they achieve in line with the school's aim for all pupils to fulfil their potential.
- 3.20 Energetic, enthusiastic and brisk teaching ensures that pupils of all ages thoroughly enjoy their learning and are provided with stimulus and challenge. Teaching is well paced and characterised by clear learning objectives and success criteria identified at the start of lessons. Teachers question pupils skilfully to challenge their thinking. They set a well-planned framework for them to investigate and explore, and encourage them to do so. A significant feature of teaching is the high level of personal attention given, which helps pupils to fulfil their potential and gain in confidence.
- 3.21 Throughout the school there is consistent provision of opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. This enables them to use peer discussion to support and develop their understanding and skills. Older pupils ably collaborated to produce short dramatic presentations to demonstrate irony while others engaged in a class-led discussion on the conception of, and the increase in, the birth of twins. Much of the teaching provides opportunities for pupils to work independently, developing their ability to take more responsibility for their work.

- 3.22 Generous staffing provision is utilised imaginatively and to the considerable benefit of the pupils: for example in DT pupils, supported by additional qualified teachers, have built a rowing machine out of entirely recycled and reclaimed materials.
- 3.23 Teaching meets the needs of pupils of different abilities extremely well. The setting system throughout the school allows teaching to focus on the pupils' individual needs and abilities. Pupils with SEND are supported most effectively in lessons or withdrawn for extra support with specialist teachers. More able pupils are continuously challenged by the high expectations they experience and are given specific activities to extend their learning.
- 3.24 A comprehensive policy to assess and track individual pupils' progress and attainment is implemented well. Available assessment data and nationally standardised test results are used to monitor the pupils' progress carefully. As well as external standardised tests for all year groups, Years 4, 5 and 6 complete continuous assessments throughout the year and have a formal examination near the end of the year. Years 7 and 8 have formal examinations at set times during the year which include Common Entrance examinations or scholarship trials in Year 8. The results of assessments are shared and discussed at staff meetings so that appropriate interventions are implemented where there is cause for concern. Class and individual targets provide pupils with direction and challenge. Marking is excellent across all subjects. It is thorough and, in addition to celebrating the pupils' success, it is helpful in guiding improvement.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The personal qualities of the pupils develop exceptionally well and are central to the aims of the school. Pupils are reflective, focused, compassionate and open-minded. They are well mannered, with an infectious enthusiasm for life that is reflected in all that they do. They work together in harmony, developing a sense of responsibility for others and the wider world. They look after and respect each other and greatly appreciate the support they receive for their development and focus.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. The school fulfils its aim to promote the spiritual development of pupils within the tradition of its Church of England foundation together with an intrinsic respect for those from other cultures and beliefs. Pupils value the rich and thoughtful assembly programme and within the school's supportive environment, pupils grow in self-belief and self-esteem, reflecting the school code of conduct. They have the confidence to ask perceptive questions. The introduction of mindfulness has helped to develop the pupils' reflective attitude. Pupils show an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, valuing, for example, the high quality music and art that is evident throughout the school.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is outstanding. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. Through the curriculum topics, and visits, they learn to understand and respect the civil and criminal law of England. Their exemplary behaviour and kindness is embedded. Pupils of all ages demonstrate good sportsmanship; they are magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat. Pupils understand school rewards and sanctions, such as misconduct marks, although these rarely need to be implemented. Pupils value rewards including house points, commendations, show-ups and headmaster's pens. In Year 8, there are wide-ranging opportunities to undertake positions of responsibility which pupils readily undertake, enjoy and from which they derive benefit. Year 8 pupils very successfully 'buddy' the Year 4 pupils. There are fewer opportunities for responsibility within younger year groups.
- 4.5 The quality of the pupils' social development is excellent; pupils interact confidently with each other and with adults. Pupils understand that they are fortunate and are involved in a wide variety of fundraising activities, particularly for local and children's charities. For example they participated in 'Walk to School Week' to raise money for a children's hospital. The PSHEE and religious studies (RS) programmes develop their understanding of British values, which are also embedded throughout the school culture.
- 4.6 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils show an awareness of British values, for example in celebrating St George's Day. They appreciate democracy, keenly following the general election preparations and planning their own mock election with Year 8 party leaders. Pupils are introduced to world faiths in RS. They visit the synagogue and Buddhist temple. Pupils and staff celebrate the diversity of the school community, enabling all pupils to develop an insight into the values and beliefs of others, and to develop harmonious relations with them. Participation in concerts, learning about artists, including a Kenyan visiting artist, trips to theatres and museums, and studies in geography add depth to their cultural experiences.

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

- 4.7 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The personal development of pupils is fostered by excellent support and guidance, in line with the school's aims. Staff liaise closely about the pupils' needs and share relevant information promptly and effectively. Careful records are kept and these are regularly monitored to assess whether emerging patterns can be seen.
- 4.9 Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent. These are highly valued by the pupils, who speak of their school with pride. Staff know the pupils extremely well and pastoral matters are discussed at weekly staff meetings. The 'buddy' system is spoken of warmly by all pupils and staff. This has strengthened the bond between the oldest and youngest children in the school. The recent innovation whereby Year 8 pupils meet in small groups weekly with their tutor to discuss pertinent issues in an important year has had an extremely beneficial effect on the pupils' pastoral care.
- 4.10 The school has excellent policies and systems to promote good behaviour. The school's code of conduct provides a highly effective framework in which high standards of behaviour and an atmosphere conducive to learning can prevail. A small minority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed a view that teachers are unfair in the way they give sanctions and rewards. Inspectors found, through interviews and in discussion with pupils, that pupils are rewarded appropriately for their work and good behaviour. Sanctions are similarly appropriate and used in a positive manner to encourage good behaviour and organisation. A comprehensive log of rewards and sanctions is recorded, discussed and reviewed by senior management and staff regularly. The school has suitable measures to prevent bullying and harassment. Pupils say that bullying is rare but, should it occur, they are confident that the school would deal effectively with it. Pupils say that they are regularly encouraged to talk to staff if they have any worries or problems. A record is kept and the pastoral system ensures frequent monitoring by staff takes place.
- 4.11 Healthy eating is encouraged through the provision of a well-balanced, nutritious and attractive range of dishes at lunchtime. The recently introduced snacks policy further supports this aim by advocating fruit rather than crisps at break-times. Pupils make full use of the abundant opportunities to take regular exercise through the wide range of curricular and extra-curricular sporting activities. The school has a suitable accessibility plan.
- 4.12 The school employs effective methods to seek the views of pupils. Pupil responses to pre-inspection questionnaires showed that a very small minority felt that the school does not ask for or respond to their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support this view. An active council provides a useful forum for pupils' views to be discussed. Pupils speak proudly of their involvement and they appreciate the positive results achieved from the council, such as water dispensers being installed in the school and a girls' football club being established.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 The school has a strongly-developed and effective system to provide for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils and this has a significant effect on ensuring pupils' welfare and happiness.
- 4.15 Excellent attention is paid to safeguarding pupils and promoting their health and well-being. The school's child protection policy has been recently updated and meets the latest requirements; it is appropriately reviewed by governors. The staff recruitment process is rigorous, and checks prior to appointment are completed and recorded appropriately. All staff know the child protection procedures and they have regular training to update their understanding. A full induction process ensures that all new staff are familiar with all safeguarding procedures. Those with specific responsibilities are trained to a higher level. The school has good links with the local authority, which ensures that it is able to give high priority to the protection of pupils throughout the school.
- 4.16 The school has thorough arrangements to reduce the risk from fire and accidents. It holds regular fire practices and the relevant equipment is checked at appropriate intervals. Health and safety are given a high priority, with detailed risk assessments completed and followed for areas of the school and school activities. Arrangements for health and safety are well managed by the health and safety committee which meets regularly.
- 4.17 The school has excellent arrangements for any pupils who are ill or injured with qualified medical staff always available. It gives careful attention to any pupils who have particular medical or learning support needs. Arrangements for first aid are implemented promptly and efficiently.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are completed correctly and archived as required.
- 4.19 An overwhelming number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children feel safe at school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is wholly committed to the aims and purposes of the school. The board benefits from membership with a wide range of experience and professional backgrounds. It has a clearly defined structure, and highly effective and supportive sub-committees.
- 5.3 Governors are strongly committed to the school, its pupils and staff and to its continuing development. They have a clear understanding of their roles. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and determined, through effective financial planning, to ensure that the school's accommodation, and human and material resources are of a sufficiently high quality to meet the pupils' educational needs. They fulfil their obligations to monitor both health and safety and child protection and specific governors have responsibility for these areas ensuring that related policies are regularly and properly reviewed. They recognise their responsibility for the school's compliance with regulatory and legal requirements. The full governing body reviews child protection policy and procedures annually.
- 5.4 Through the various sub-committees and the detailed minutes of meetings, the governors are well informed and take a full part in the overall strategic planning, educational development and management of the school. They are provided with regular reports on educational matters, and this enables them to monitor the school's life and work effectively. The recent re-establishing of a prep and pre-prep committee to represent these sections of the school on the board of governors more significantly is a testimony to their commitment. It is enhanced by membership with specialist knowledge and experience in this age range.
- 5.5 Governors have clear insight into the working of the school. Relationships between governors and staff are enhanced by the regular visits made by a number of governors to the school. They provide the school leaders with much appreciated help, advice and, where appropriate, challenge while recognising their operational autonomy.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, is excellent.
- 5.7 The vision and determination of the dynamic leadership along with committed and supportive managers and administrators, provide clear educational direction. This is illustrated by the high quality of the pupils' education, their enthusiasm for learning, their intellectual curiosity and the excellent standard of their personal development, in line with the school's aims and motto.
- 5.8 The drive and energy of senior managers, who have clearly defined roles, inspire both staff and pupils to work hard and achieve excellent results inside and outside the classroom. Staff are united in a common purpose, with clear educational direction provided by the leadership team. The school has carried out a thorough evaluation of its academic and pastoral provision; policies are clearly written for all

aspects of school life. They are regularly updated and carefully implemented by staff. The role of the subject co-ordinator is firmly established and these managers meticulously monitor both the delivery of individual subjects and the progress pupils make.

- 5.9 The pattern of regular meetings for all staff and for senior managers ensures that ideas are fully discussed. All staff are kept fully informed about school matters with an appropriate focus on the development and well-being of the pupils. Leaders at all levels are focused in self-evaluation, setting priorities and ensuring that these are achieved. The whole-school development plan is the result of wide consultation and all staff are committed to its implementation. Communication and consultation are purposeful and informative, and enable all staff to make their views known and to contribute to policy and practice.
- 5.10 The school takes care to select and retain high quality staff, all of whom are suitably recruited and trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly in the areas of safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety. A thorough induction programme helps new staff adapt easily to the school. It covers the necessary areas of policy and implementation efficiently.
- 5.11 The school pays careful attention to the development of all staff. The comprehensive appraisal system and the successful peer observation programme identify areas for both personal and professional development.
- 5.12 The quality of links with parents is excellent. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that the very large majority of parents are extremely happy with the education and support provided for their children, both academically and socially.
- 5.13 The school has established a strong partnership with parents and deals promptly with any concerns that they may raise, in accordance with its published procedures. A suitable complaints policy is in place. Parents say they find the staff to be approachable and value the school's open door policy as a means of resolving day-to-day issues quickly.
- 5.14 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They enjoy accompanying school trips, helping with fixtures and taking part in school events such as the recent Saxon Day. All become members of the parents' association, which organises social events for parents and school discos for the pupils. Funds raised contribute to children's charities.
- 5.15 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school. Greater use has been made of the website and electronic means of communication recently, which is appreciated by parents. Excellent quality information booklets, such as the curriculum guides, provide essential information. The weekly school newsletter, the Pelican Post, gives up-to-date information and reports on school events. High quality, written reports contain detailed information on the pupils' knowledge and progress with a summary of work covered and details of how the pupil could improve further. These, along with parents' consultation evenings, ensure that parents are kept very well-informed about their child's work and progress.

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