

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION BROMLEY HIGH SCHOOL GDST

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Bromley High School GDST

Full Name of School Bromley High School GDST

DfE Number 305/6073
Registered Charity Number 306983

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Telephone Number **020 8781 7000**

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Email Address bhs@bro.gdst.net
Headmistress Mrs Angela Drew

Chair of Governors Mrs Pauline Emburey

Age Range 4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils 856

Gender of Pupils Girls

Numbers by Age 4-5 (EYFS): **40** 5-11: **276**

11-18: **540**

Head of EYFS Setting Mrs Claire Dickerson

EYFS Gender Girls

Inspection Dates 01 Mar 2016 to 04 Mar 2016

PREFACE

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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI* schedule. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI integrated inspection was in January 2010.

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 children aged under two), 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 chair of 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

Mr James Wilding Reporting Inspector

Mr Trevor Clarke Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school

Mrs Lizbeth Green Team Inspector (Former Head Teacher, ISA school)

Mrs Annie McNeile Team Inspector (Head of Department, IAPS school)

Mr Gareth Price Team Inspector (Former Headmaster, Society of Heads school)

Mr John Tolputt Team Inspector (Former Headmaster, HMC school)

Mr Howard Tuckett Team Inspector (Head teacher, IAPS school)

Mrs Rosamund Walwyn Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

1.1 Bromley High School is an independent day school for girls between the ages of four and eighteen years. The school was founded in 1883 and moved to purpose-built accommodation on its present 25-acre site in 1981. It is 1 of 26 schools in the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST). The Council of the Trust has overall responsibility for the school; a separate body of governors provides advice and support at a local level.

- 1.2 The school promotes the ethos of the GDST to enable girls to flourish in supportive, single-sex surroundings, and it aims to provide an academic and social climate that reassures and excites its pupils. Its motto 'Fides et Opera' reflects the school's intention to imbue pupils with self-belief and a strong sense of social purpose, and to nurture their conviction that much may be achieved by hard work and consistent effort. The school aims to foster a love of learning which enables pupils to fulfil their intellectual promise; to enrich pupils' education with an outstanding range of co-curricular opportunities; and to prepare pupils for life beyond school and for their responsibilities in the wider world. The headmistress was appointed in September 2014.
- 1.3 The school is managed as one school with distinct junior and senior sections. The junior school is situated adjacent to the senior school and benefits from the shared facilities for dining, music, and for both outdoor and indoor sport including swimming. It also benefits from some practical lessons in art and design technology. Additionally, some senior school staff provide specialist subject teaching in the junior school.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection 316 pupils were in the junior school, including 40 children aged between 4 and 5 in the 2 Reception classes which comprise the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). A total of 540 pupils were in the senior school, including 101 in the sixth form. The ability profile of pupils in the school is above the national average overall. In recent years the ability profile of Years 11 to 13 has been closer to the national average, with a wider spread of abilities evident than found elsewhere in the school.
- 1.5 The majority of the pupils are of White British origin but others represent a diverse ethnic mix of Asian, Black African and Chinese backgrounds. The pupils are drawn from professional homes; almost all have English as their first language and many speak additional languages, with 3 requiring support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.6 The school has identified 66 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 16 receive learning support. No pupil has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.7 Since the previous inspection the school has introduced a woodland learning environment, with 4 outdoor classrooms and improved play facilities. In the senior school the dining room and sixth form common room have been extensively refurbished, a new landscaped central quadrangle opened, and a new fitness suite and floodlighting of netball and all-weather courts have been provided.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

2.1 The school is extremely successful in meeting its aims. Pupils' achievements and learning are exceptional. The children in the EYFS make rapid progress relative to their starting points and are very well prepared for their future in the school. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate a deep subject knowledge and readily apply their understanding to unfamiliar work; they are engagingly articulate and have highly developed creative skills. Pupils achieve excellent results in national examinations and make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities, most notably in the sixth form. They are highly successful in a wide range of extracurricular activities and display a commitment to serving the needs of others in the wider community. Pupils enjoy a very distinctive curriculum which offers many opportunities for creative enquiry; it is imaginatively planned and encourages intellectual curiosity and independent study. The pupils, including those with SEND, display a love of learning and strive for excellence. This is engendered by excellent teaching overall which is skilfully delivered, promoting challenge and enabling pupils to progress rapidly. Opportunities for the independent use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have yet to be consistently developed at senior level.

- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. All aspects of their lives demonstrate the highly successful achievement of the school's intention to develop pupils with self-belief and a strong sense of social purpose. Pupils are courteous, tolerant, kind and appreciative yet ready to challenge accepted ideas, reflecting the maturity of their emotional development. They willingly accept responsibility for their own behaviour and academic development. Pupils highly value and enjoy the relationships they have forged with the adults that support their learning. Those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed how much they like being at the school and their enjoyment of the work and activities provided, and the overwhelming majority felt that they make good progress. In conversation, pupils are proud of their achievements and are confident that they can rely upon adults to provide them support at any time.
- 2.3 The excellent governance of the school stems from the high level of support provided by the GDST and the active local school governing board, who together provide scrutiny and counsel for the school. Governance has a clear vision to enable pupils to flourish in supportive, single-sex surroundings. It has been very effective in ensuring that the school provides an academic and social climate that reassures and excites its pupils, fulfilling the GDST's ethos. The school enjoys outstanding leadership at all levels. In the EYFS, leadership is highly effective in self-evaluation and setting priorities for development, and this is mirrored throughout the school. As a result, the school is a lively environment with active learning evident inside and outdoors. Creative and vibrant displays celebrate the many and diverse activities and successes of the pupils. High-quality pastoral teams provide strong support to pupils. The three recommendations of the previous inspection have been fully implemented. Most parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire made positive comments about the school, its provision and their children's happiness progress.

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) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
 - 1. Share existing use of ICT across the whole school to provide appropriate challenge for all pupils and to support them in their learning.

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 exceptional.
- 3.2 The outcomes for children in the EYFS are excellent. They make rapid progress relative to their individual starting points. Children learn to explore and investigate a wide range of resources, for example when creating a 'London transport museum' in the role-play area. They learn to recognise different letter combinations, and to read and write words and sentences independently. All can recognise numerals and count to 20 accurately and many can, with some support, count to 100. Children display excellent skills in computing and express themselves creatively through music and art, showing concentration, progress and enjoyment. By the end of their time in Reception many children, including those with SEND or EAL, have exceeded expectations and are very well set for the next stage of their education.
- 3.3 The school is extremely successful in meeting its declared aims of fostering a love of learning and fulfilling intellectual potential. Pupils display a deep knowledge of their subjects and readily apply that level of understanding to new concepts and themes. Subject skills are exceptional at best, with pupils readily developing hypotheses and articulating complex ideas with ease. Pupils research information effectively, using fully the resources at their disposal and then produce written results of considerable quality for their age. They collaborate with others extremely well and engage successfully as citizens.
- 3.4 Pupils throughout the school are highly numerate, reflected in their regular success in national mathematics competitions at high levels. They display exemplary scientific knowledge and interest, including in ecology. Pupils' mature powers of reasoning are evident, complemented by their work in art, drama and music. Displays and exhibitions celebrate the pupils' creative approach to work and willingness to experiment with new ideas.
- Pupils are extremely successful in extra-curricular activities. Individuals and teams participate at national level in a very wide range of sports including biathlon, diving, golf, gymnastics, hockey, tennis and rowing. Numerous pupils gain notable achievements in external accredited speech, drama and music examinations, and in engineering scholarships, Young Enterprise and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). Pupils have also seen similar excellent achievements in robotics, application programming and chess. Many pupils regularly qualify for regional and national finals of choir, debating, orchestral and art competitions; pupils' work has been chosen for display in a major London gallery. Drama and dance are similarly represented, with pupils currently appearing in regional and West End productions.
- Junior school pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available from standardised tests, lesson observations, scrutiny of samples of work and interviews with pupils it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates excellent progress.
- 3.7 The following senior school attainment analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent years for which national statistics are currently available. At GCSE, results are well above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to the national average for girls in selective

maintained schools. Over nine tenths of grades were achieved at A* to B. Results in A-level examinations are well above the national average for girls in maintained schools and above those for girls in selective maintained schools. Over four fifths of grades at A level were at grades A* to B. The vast majority of pupils in Year 13 move onto university, with almost two thirds gaining places in highly selective institutions in the United Kingdom or abroad.

- 3.8 These levels of attainment at GCSE and the standardised measures of progress that are available indicate that pupils in the senior school make progress that is excellent in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. At A level, progress is even more significant. This is confirmed by inspection evidence from lessons observed and work scrutinised. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress and achieve results in national examinations that are on a par with their peers, reflecting the excellent support provided by the school. Those individuals identified as most able are also provided challenging opportunities which greatly enhance their learning experience and result in excellent progress.
- 3.9 Pupils at all ages have a very positive attitude and are very enthusiastic about their learning, demonstrating great perseverance and determination. They are particularly focused in lessons, listening carefully to their teachers and asking challenging questions. Pupils take responsibility for their learning seriously throughout the school, though particularly notably in the sixth form.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 In the EYFS, the broad and well-balanced curriculum helps all children to reach at least expected levels of development. It is carefully planned with excellent programmes to challenge the children and arouse their curiosity, and meets individual needs. Intervention programmes provide extra support for those with SEND. Specialist teaching is provided for French, ICT, music, gymnastics and games. Children have a wealth of opportunities to explore and express themselves both outdoors and indoors.
- 3.12 The school successfully meets its aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that provides all pupils the opportunity to fully develop their individual interests and talents. The comprehensive curriculum, complemented by the extra-curricular provision, is a significant feature which encourages pupils to strive for excellence. The considerable subject choice available and the many opportunities offered by the school are reflected in the positive pre-inspection questionnaire responses of the parents and the pupils.
- 3.13 The junior school's imaginative and distinctive curriculum includes the core disciplines of English and mathematics, and takes a thematic approach for the acquisition of subject knowledge and thinking skills. In Years 7 and 8 a broad curriculum combines English and mathematics with the three sciences taught separately, four languages, technologies including computing and robotics, and humanities and arts subjects. This wide subject cover enables the pupils in Year 9 to make informed choices regarding their GCSE options, where as far as possible every pupil is able to study their chosen subjects. The A level curriculum is similarly broad and includes business studies, economics and photography. The Cambridge Pre-U qualification is offered in some subjects. Throughout the school, provision is further enhanced through the use of ICT.

3.14 Pupils requiring additional help and those with SEND are identified through extremely thorough analysis. Each is provided excellent curricular support specifically targeted to ensure that the right help and appropriate level of challenge is provided for each pupil.

- 3.15 The extra-curricular programme is a strength of the school. This includes the many musical opportunities available, including groups started and run by the pupils themselves. Some pupils choose an activity in order to develop personal qualities, such as debating to promote self-confidence. Other pupils select their activities because they enjoy them as was observed in the happy group of pupils knitting in the creative textile club, or in order to stay fit as seen in pupils' use of the school gym. A number of clubs in the junior school are led by senior school pupils.
- 3.16 Strong links with the local community serve to make pupils aware of the needs of others. These are evident with the wider community, as was observed at a whole-school assembly where senior pupils launched the 'rainbow charities' initiative for 2016. Year 10 drama and music groups visit a school for severely disabled children, supported by sixth formers. The vast majority of Year 10 pupils participate in community service, as part of the DofE scheme. Sixth formers can participate in many initiatives including voluntary work in charity shops, a senior citizens' Christmas party and cookery with psychiatric patients in sheltered accommodation.
- 3.17 Arrangements for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) are comprehensive and highly effective in meeting the needs of pupils. Registration periods are used productively to discuss topical issues such as elections, and staff have access to an online newspaper for use. During the inspection the junior pupils celebrated World Book Day, dressed as their favourite character.
- 3.18 The programme of PSHE in the sixth form is delivered through a range of opportunities with assemblies led by staff, pupils or visiting speakers broadly covering the themes of health and well-being, economic and political awareness, and personal development. Sixth form pupils may elect to pursue critical thinking or Extended Project work. They can also choose debating, fashion or to contribute to the school magazine in order to learn about the development of a commercial product. Sixth form pupils appreciate and enjoy this programme, and the opportunities and excellent careers guidance that it provides.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.19 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.20 In the EYFS, teaching is very well planned, skilful and uses an imaginative range of resources. It is highly effective in engaging and motivating the children. Extremely thorough systems facilitate accurate tracking and assessment, ensuring that each child's individual learning needs are identified and addressed effectively. All adults have an excellent understanding of the EYFS curriculum. They promote the children's learning and critical thinking through excellent questioning, conversations, acting as role models and by continuously challenging the children to learn through their own practical investigations and experiences.
- 3.21 Excellent teaching promotes pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school. It has improved significantly, in response to a recommendation from the previous inspection. Teaching is characterised by careful planning, focus on the specific needs of individuals, rapid engagement in a range of tasks, stimulating introductions and a brisk, purposeful pace which maintains pupils' interest. In an English lesson

for older junior school pupils, teaching enabled them to create a balanced argument in a skilful and sensitive manner. Younger senior school pupils in mathematics responded enthusiastically to challenging questioning and confidently tackled problems of increasing difficulty to make excellent progress in understanding how to measure triangles.

- 3.22 Pupils' work is marked regularly and effectively in both the junior and senior schools. The best marking and assessment offers detailed, constructive suggestions for improvement to which the pupils respond. It is encouraging and sets useful targets. In interview, many pupils commented on the quality of both the verbal and written feedback that they receive and its value in helping them to understand how they might improve further. Pupils of all ages enjoy peer marking and the opportunities for discussion and reflection it provides, as observed in sixth form biology where pupils gained better insight and understanding of examination marking criteria by assessing one another's drawings of microscope samples. The junior school makes extensive use of ICT; Years 5 and 6 use tablet computers in lessons and for homework, and benefit from a virtual learning environment. In the senior school, ICT is widely used in lessons to create work seen, but utilised less effectively to encourage independence and collaboration.
- 3.23 Teachers have strong subject knowledge and their teaching skills are further enhanced through a clear focus on the sharing of best practice. Data provided helps them to understand their pupils' capabilities and to formulate challenging tasks. This enables pupils, with sensitive prompting and encouragement, to develop independent learning skills and achieve success at their own pace. Senior biology students valued the opportunities to discuss contentious issues, either as they arose in class or when instigated through topics that they brought to the lesson, such as genetic engineering.
- 3.24 Strong support is provided for those with SEND, EAL and the most able. Teaching anticipates their diverse and individual needs thoroughly, providing key resources and suitable tasks as well as offering individual support. For example, pupils in art are challenged to develop their responses in a very wide range of media including paint, film and computer graphics, to which they do so particularly well.
- 3.25 Pupils speak highly of their teachers, recognising their professionalism, dedication and expertise. The school has an excellent range of resources in all areas which provide inspiration, facilitate high-level study and include diverse ways to scholarship. Pupils benefit from 'clinics' and one-to-one sessions to provide subject-specific help. Junior school pupils value the opportunity to identify concerns about particular areas of uncertainty and receive help, which supports their learning. Throughout the school, pupils and teachers have a great deal of mutual respect for each other. This enhances a strong, purposeful work ethic; younger junior school pupils were encouraged to demonstrate mature thinking and perseverance when studying poetry, and sixth form classicists made excellent progress in response to focused and stimulating questioning which challenged their understanding.
- 3.26 Teaching provides many opportunities for pupils to discuss sensitive issues in an environment conducive to free speech and tolerance of the views of all. Pupils relish these opportunities, and recognise the importance of studying and understanding the implications of fundamental British values. Younger senior school pupils discussed how these values apply to their daily school life.

3.27 A genuine love for learning pervades the school, and pupils speak positively of the support that teachers provide across all age groups and disciplines. This is further supported from the pupil questionnaire where almost all agreed that their teachers provide them individual help when they need it.

- 3.28 In their questionnaire responses, a few pupils felt that teachers do not ensure that they are set the right amount of work. Inspection evidence gained from teaching observed and work scrutiny demonstrated that a high degree of planning and care was taken to ensure that demands are appropriate for pupils' age and ability.
- 3.29 In parents' pre-inspection questionnaire responses, most were pleased both with the appropriate amount of homework that their children receive and the progress that they make at school.

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 All aspects of pupils' school lives demonstrate the highly successful achievement of the school's aims and the ambitions that it holds for its pupils.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, the children play very well together and they have an excellent understanding of each other's needs. They enjoy coming to school and are able to make independent choices about their play, learning and behaviour. Children learn to use basic courtesies such as taking turns, sharing, co-operating. They develop a considerate and tolerant nature, and an appreciation of the rich diversity of different cultures and faiths. Children also learn the school rules and the importance of fundamental British values, and are well prepared for their transition into a more formal learning environment.
- 4.4 The school's active and comprehensive promotion of fundamental British values in assemblies, form periods and in the PSHE programme very effectively supports pupils' understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance.
- 4.5 In many lessons and in discussions, pupils demonstrated their ability to reflect on beliefs that shape their perspective on life, and their appreciation of life's non-material aspects. Excellent spiritual development is widely evident, for example pupils expressed joy in the beauty of the natural world observed in a DofE expedition and during outdoor junior school lessons, and talked about their delight in friendship. Pupils listen attentively in form periods, for example they responded sympathetically to a teacher's description of his experience as an immigrant. On these and many other occasions throughout the school, pupils demonstrated excellent self-knowledge, self-awareness and emotional maturity for their age.
- 4.6 Pupils know right from wrong, show a keen sense of fair play and display excellent behaviour. They are kind in their relationships with each other; they co-operate and respect each other's' opinions particularly well, as evidenced in a whole-school assembly with their collective applause and laughter to the student heads of house's proposals for suggested individual charitable activities in the summer term. The excellent PSHE programme successfully brings pupils to understand the civil and criminal law of England; pupils explore moral and ethical values relevant to their age with confidence and sensitivity.
- 4.7 Pupils willingly accept responsibility for their own behaviour and understand how they can contribute positively to the life of the school and the wider world. Their social development is excellent. Membership of the school council is taken seriously, and through this pupils make an effective contribution to the running of the school. The head girls' team has a significant impact and all pupils make the most of opportunities for leadership, for example within the house system. Pupils mentor those younger, choreograph dance activities, help out in the junior school and have a sensitive appreciation of those less fortunate than themselves. A PSHE lesson on financial budgeting led to younger senior school pupils' thoughtful understanding of what it might be like to live in poverty. Economic and political awareness is strong and widely demonstrated, for example in mock elections and during articulate and thoughtful discussions about the European Union, the rights and duties of

citizenship, and the challenges and dilemmas posed by migration. Pupils choose the charities they wish to support and raise funds with dynamic and generous enthusiasm.

- 4.8 Pupils display a strong understanding and appreciation of each other's differences and shared humanity. This is a significant strength of pupils at the school. They join in with celebrations of a range of cultures, for example India Day and the Year 2 'Round the World' topic. Participation in music and drama, and vibrant artwork around the school demonstrate pupils' excellent involvement in cultural activities. The achievements of Western cultural tradition are celebrated throughout the life of the school including in classrooms, debates and assemblies. Pupils' espousal of the philosophy of kindness expresses itself in respect for other people regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation. The head girl's team recently introduced a project to raise awareness of the needs of those of differing sexual orientations. Pupils have a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services of England, which is appropriate to their age and informed by relevant visits and PSHE teaching.
- 4.9 By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an extremely high level of personal development. They are mature, articulate and confident, displaying a modest attitude despite their evident success.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, adults work closely and sensitively with children's families to ensure a smooth and secure start to school life. Key people ensure the children's safety and development. Children quickly establish positive relationships with the adults, and they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They particularly enjoy the many opportunities that they have to learn outdoors, and they are provided a healthy and balanced diet.
- 4.12 Staff provide very effective support and guidance which are much appreciated by pupils and fully meet the school's aim to provide the right care for each individual. They know the pupils very well and the comprehensive sharing of pastoral information enables them to adapt as necessary to the needs of the pupils, who feel happy and safe at school. Since the previous inspection, the establishment of two senior posts to manage the pastoral care of pupils has further strengthened the school's excellent provision in this area.
- 4.13 Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are excellent. A strong sense of mutual respect permeates the school; pupils say that they are well supported should they approach a teacher to share any concerns. In the junior school, pupils know that if they have a concern they can utilise the 'Listening Ear' box and that staff consequently will respond helpfully.
- 4.14 Pupils appreciate the new dining facilities and approve of the food provided. Their suggestions are taken into account, as in the introduction of 'Meat Free Mondays'. Very good healthy eating advice is a key part of the PSHE programme and any concerns in this area are carefully monitored. The curriculum and activities provide good opportunities for pupils to take exercise; they have a thorough understanding of the importance of exercise and diet in a healthy lifestyle.

4.15 Systems to promote excellent standards of behaviour are effective and carefully support the needs of those with EAL or SEND. A few parents expressed concerns in their questionnaire responses regarding the manner in which the school deals with bullying. Inspection evidence gained from the questionnaire responses of and discussions with pupils, and through a scrutiny of records and review of systems concluded that the school manages such incidents appropriately. The school has a clear policy to combat bullying in all its forms and pupils say that such incidents are very rare and effectively dealt with.

- 4.16 The very well-designed merit scheme which is outlined in the excellent pupil handbook is clearly understood by the pupils and offers encouragement along with clarity about expectations of behaviour. In the junior school, pupils enjoy collecting merits which can be converted to house points. A few pupils in their questionnaire responses felt that their teachers are not fair in the way they issue rewards and sanctions. With the exception of concerns raised by pupils in Years 7 and 8 in interview, inspection evidence from the teaching observed, work scrutiny and other pupils in interview did not support this view. The school was already aware of these concerns and, together with the school council, continues to monitor them. The school has a suitable plan to improve the educational opportunities for pupils with SEND.
- 4.17 A strong sense of community pervades the school, with pupils displaying warm relations amongst each other and with their teachers. In their responses to the preinspection questionnaire, a small minority of girls felt that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspection evidence found that the school council provides good opportunity to raise issues which are addressed by the school leadership. In interview, pupils said that they feel the staff listen to their views, and that changes to school arrangements have been made as a result of their suggestions. The school council is a much-appreciated and effective forum, and pupils say that they can approach any member of staff from the headmistress downwards at any time.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 Comprehensive guidance and support for welfare, risk, health and safety management is provided by the GDST and tailored appropriately by the school to reflect its individual context. All staff and governors, including those with specific responsibilities, receive appropriate safeguarding training including about e-safety and radicalisation. The GDST, with strong support from the local governors, oversee all safeguarding matters including the Prevent duty. Staff recruitment policies are excellent and the single central register is properly maintained.
- 4.20 Well-qualified and experienced administrative and teaching staff carry out detailed risk assessments for all on and off-site activities. Fire practices are carried out regularly and are carefully and properly recorded. Extinguishers and alarm systems are well maintained. In addition, the GDST carry out an annual review to audit the effectiveness of these arrangements across the school.
- 4.21 In the EYFS, children's welfare is promoted extremely effectively and excellent systems are in place to monitor their attendance and well-being. Safeguarding is carefully and sensitively promoted, and adults are vigilant in supporting the school's

- policies and procedures. The broad curriculum includes a range of activities and experiences which help to prevent extremism and radicalisation.
- 4.22 Both junior and senior schools have well-appointed medical rooms. Qualified nursing provision is supported by staff who are suitably qualified first aiders, and appropriate procedures are in place for dealing with accidents and health emergencies. Detailed records are kept and these are audited so that patterns can be spotted and appropriate actions taken to reduce risk.
- 4.23 Pupils are formally registered electronically every morning and afternoon, late entries are monitored, and absences are followed up promptly and recorded in the attendance register. The admission register contains all the required entries. Both registers are backed up and stored appropriately.
- 4.24 In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents agreed that their children feel happy and safe and are well looked after in 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 Governance of the school has been particularly effective since the previous inspection. The local governing body has been refreshed with new governors to ensure expertise and insightful knowledge of the school and its community, including in the EYFS. This has provided both challenge to and excellent support for the leadership and management of the school. Consequently teaching has seen significant improvement, which fully meets the recommendation of the previous inspection, as have other areas of the school. Teachers' dedication to the ethos and aims of the school and the pupils in their care has ensured that the school has developed into a cohesive community where exceptional learning takes place and excellent standards of personal development and pastoral care are maintained.
- 5.3 Monitoring is clear; the GDST, supported by sub-committees of local governors, exercise effective oversight of educational standards, financial planning, and investments in accommodation, learning resources, and staff recruitment and development. As a result, significant refurbishments across the school have taken place since the previous inspection. Excellent support and guidance has been provided in the implementation of new procedures to counter radicalisation and in welfare, health and safety, legal support and human resource management. This has strengthened the arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the regulatory requirements, meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection.
- Trust officers visit the school regularly and an annual review of the school's performance is undertaken by the GDST. This includes the required review of safeguarding measures and of health and safety, an annual appraisal of the school's performance and the setting of targets within a coherent school development plan. This enables innovation and improvement throughout the school, including in the EYFS, meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection.
- The regular visits of local governors have established a close working relationship with the school leadership and pupils, which keeps governors fully informed on all aspects of the school. Support, scrutiny and counsel provided by local governors are new developments and make a strong contribution to the school's governance arrangements.

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, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are well integrated and are effective in leading the school in successfully achieving its ambitious aims to foster a love of learning which enables pupils to fulfil their intellectual promise. This is evident in the work and displays observed around the school, success in national challenges and pupils' successes in public examinations and university entrance.
- 5.8 Leadership and management have an ambitious vision to further develop the EYFS setting. They are highly effective, and ensure rigorous self-evaluation and the setting of priorities. The EYFS has strong links with other settings and external agencies so that children are supported in transitions from other schools or within the school, and receive appropriate interventions to support their needs. All members of staff receive an annual appraisal and are provided plenty of opportunities for professional development. The safeguarding of children is actively promoted through the curriculum, the staff training programmes, staff supervision sessions, and both the safety and the security of the site. The curriculum actively promotes equality and diversity, and fundamental British values. Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress; new management and staff have been appointed, a termly cycle of supervision sessions has been successfully implemented and provision for children with SEND has been improved.
- 5.9 Since the previous inspection, the senior leadership team has been successfully restructured. Leadership is focused on providing the very best educational experience both academically and pastorally for all pupils. It has ensured that all aspects of safeguarding are securely embedded in the culture of the school. All members of staff are regularly trained in their roles in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. As a consequence they are secure in their knowledge of how to identify and react to any safeguarding concerns appropriately.
- 5.10 Strong management structures ensure the implementation, planning, development, monitoring and tracking of academic progress across the school. High levels of ambition for pupils to succeed have led to the establishment of a new, demanding junior school curriculum, whilst at senior level greater challenge and rigour have been introduced. Self-evaluation is very effective. Regular meetings review the impact of current school developments. Facilities for pupils are safe and in excellent repair.
- 5.11 The school successfully recruits and retains suitable, high-quality teaching and support staff. Staff have excellent opportunities for continuous professional development. The culture of open and full communication between members of staff and the senior leadership team allows for a constructive exchange of ideas and opinions, for example regarding the implementation of digital tablets to support the teaching and learning of the younger pupils. All members of staff and governors are suitably checked.
- 5.12 Leadership promotes a culture of tolerance and respect for people of all faiths or none, and of all ethnic backgrounds. Pupils and members of staff speak clearly about the characteristics that underpin modern society and these are reflected in the personal conduct of individuals across the school.

5.13 Highly effective partnerships have been established with parents in the EYFS. They are provided with plenty of opportunities to support their children's learning at the beginning and end of the school day. They are kept well informed about their children's behaviour, learning, growing independence and any particular needs. Since the previous inspection, both the school website as well as new EYFS tracking software have facilitated improved communication and provided opportunities for parents to be more involved in supporting their children's learning. Homework books, parents' evenings and written progress reports also keep parents well informed about their children's progress. A written summary reporting each child's progress against the early learning goals and assessment scales is sent to parents before the end of their children's Reception year. Parents are also provided with an opportunity to discuss the contents of their children's EYFS profile with the relevant teacher.

- 5.14 The school promotes positive relationships with parents, who are extremely happy with the education and support provided for the children at the school. Regular publications such as 'Highflyer' provide information and news about pupils' involvement in recent events and their achievements. Updates are available on the school website and portal, and the school's social media presence ensures that parents can keep up with the most recent school events. Parents in the junior school accompany their children on educational visits and help with themed days. Senior school parents support mock interviews, Young Enterprise and assist with careers advice. All parents are warmly encouraged to support their children in sports matches, musical concerts and drama productions across the year groups.
- 5.15 The school has comprehensive procedures to deal with parental concerns. In their questionnaire responses, most parents commented that they are happy that concerns have been dealt with promptly and in line with policies. All recent concerns have been dealt with successfully at the informal stage.
- 5.16 Parents have a very wide range of opportunities to participate in school life including induction evenings for new parents, and consultation workshops to explain to parents changes in the curriculum, approaches to learning and how the school manages transition between key stages. Visiting speakers are also invited to speak to parents about how to support their children pastorally and regarding key issues such as mental health and reducing anxiety.
- 5.17 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided the required information about the school. Before joining, prospective parents receive a comprehensive pack of joiner literature and are offered induction events to introduce them to the school. Upon joining the school, parents have access to the updated portal which contains information about the curriculum, handbooks and workshop notes.
- 5.18 A very small minority of parents expressed concern about the information that they receive about their children's progress. Inspection evidence found that the combination of detailed reports on academic subjects, extra-curricular achievements and tutor comments, interim reports and parent-teacher meetings enables parents to have a comprehensive picture of how their children are progressing. Parents also have the opportunity to respond to written reports and seek clarification where needed.
- 5.19 The very large majority of parents made positive comments about their children's experience of the school, most notably with regards to the curriculum, and also felt

that their children exhibit high standards of behaviour and are happy and safe in school.

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