



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
COKETHORPE SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Cokethorpe School

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| Full Name of School | Cokethorpe School |
| DfE Number | 931/6046 |
| Registered Charity Number | 309650 |
| Address | Cokethorpe School Witney Oxfordshire OX29 7PU |
| Telephone Number | 01993 703921 |
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| Email Address | hmsec@cokethorpe.org |
| Head | Mr Damian J Ettinger |
| Chair of Governors | Sir John Allison |
| Age Range | 4 to 18 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 658 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (406 boys; 252 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 4-5 (EYFS): 10 5-11: 127 11-18: 521 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: 658 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Christine Cook |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed |
| Inspection Dates | 2 to 5 December 2014 |

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

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 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

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Mrs Susan Marks | Reporting Inspector |
| Mr Neil Gabriel | Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Ann Lawson | Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Doris Hugh | Team Inspector (Former Head of Sixth Form, GSA school) |
| Mr Tom Keenan | Team Inspector (Head of Sixth Form, HMC school) |
| Mr Neil Mason | Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school) |
| Mr Jay Piggot | Team Inspector (Head, HMC school) |
| Mrs Frances Proud | Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school) |
| Mr John Tolputt | Team Inspector (Former Head of HMC school) |
| Dr Wendy Bowring | Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years |

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| 1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL | 1 |
| 2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL | 3 |
| (a) Main findings | 3 |
| (b) Action points | 4 |
| (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements | 4 |
| (ii) Recommendations for further improvement | 4 |
| 3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS | 5 |
| (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning | 5 |
| (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) | 6 |
| (c) The contribution of teaching | 8 |
| 4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT | 10 |
| (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils | 10 |
| (b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care | 11 |
| (c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety | 12 |
| 5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 13 |
| (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 Cokethorpe School was founded in 1957 as an independent boarding school for boys aged 13 to 18 and became a charitable trust, overseen by a board of governors, in 1963. Girls were first admitted in 1991 and a junior school was established in 1994. Boarding provision ceased in 2003. The school is situated in 150 acres of parkland two miles south of Witney in Oxfordshire.
- 1.2 The school seeks to educate and nurture its pupils and help them fulfil their potential by providing a challenging and rigorous set of academic and extra-curricular programmes within a caring and supportive environment. Pupils are encouraged to learn about themselves, to develop a concern for others and to grow intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. The school seeks to foster a capacity for clear and creative thought.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection the school had a total of 658 pupils aged between 4 and 18. There were 10 in the EYFS, 127 in the junior school and 521 in the senior school, including 129 in the sixth form. Most pupils are from a white British background with a few from other cultures. A quarter of pupils enter the school from the maintained sector and about half enter the senior school from Cokethorpe's junior school. Around three-quarters of pupils stay on into the sixth form where they are joined by pupils from other schools, who make up a fifth of the sixth form.
- 1.4 Pupils mainly join the junior school in Reception, Year 3 or Year 5 following assessment. Most pupils enter the senior school through competitive examination and interview at the age of 11, with a small additional entry at age 13 and into the sixth form.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the junior school is above the national average, with most pupils having an ability that is at least above average, and a notable proportion in some cohorts having well above average ability. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with a similar spread of abilities.
- 1.6 The school has 17 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL); most are fully bilingual and 10 receive extra support for their English. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified 82 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 71 receive specialist learning support.
- 1.7 Since the previous inspection the senior management team has been expanded, and a new chairman of governors has been appointed. A centralised staff appraisal scheme has been introduced and systems created to enable pupils' targets and progress to be tracked. Latin has been re-introduced and is now available up to GCSE level. The use of ICT in teaching, learning, record-keeping and communication with parents has been developed.

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

Senior School/Upper School

| School | NC name |
|-------------|---------|
| First Form | Year 7 |
| Second Form | Year 8 |
| Third Form | Year 9 |
| Fourth Form | Year 10 |
| Fifth Form | Year 11 |
| Lower Sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper Sixth | Year 13 |

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The high quality of the educational experience offered and the excellent personal development of the pupils meet the school's aims. The academic achievements of pupils of all capabilities and across the age range, including the EYFS and the sixth form, are good. Junior school pupils' attainment is of a high standard in relation to national age-related expectations and senior school pupils achieve examination results that are good in comparison with the national average for maintained schools. Pupils who are able, gifted and talented achieve well, particularly in activities, but in a few lessons their progress is limited by teaching which offers them insufficient challenge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported and achieve at levels equal to their peers in relation to their starting points. Throughout the school, pupils' learning and progress are facilitated by excellent teaching and by the broad and balanced academic curriculum, and are supplemented by a varied programme of enriching extra-curricular activities and trips. Standards achieved in extra-curricular activities are particularly high throughout the school.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, pupils' personal development is excellent and their personal qualities develop extremely well, in accordance with the school's aims. Pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and personal values are excellent by the time they leave the school. Pupils are courteous, thoughtful and considerate towards one another and respectful towards their teachers. Pupils of all ages recognise the strong community and family feel of the school and feel very fortunate to be part of it. Pupils are well supported by excellent pastoral care, including in the EYFS. The supportive partnership which exists between the school, parents and community underpins the highly successful pastoral care programme offered to pupils of all ages.
- 2.3 Good governance, leadership and management provide a strong and committed vision for the future of the school. New senior appointments have been made to bring the school's ambitious development plans into effect. A lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities for some staff has resulted in initiatives being implemented inconsistently in the senior school. The arrangements to safeguard and promote the pupils' welfare are effective, although monitoring by the governors has not always identified necessary improvements. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and all recommendations from that report have been acted upon. The school has excellent links with parents and responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicated a very high degree of parental satisfaction with the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010 and therefore it is required to:

- monitor the school premises to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured [Part 5, paragraph 23C, under premises and accommodation of schools].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Build on the progress made since the previous inspection to increase the level of intellectual challenge provided in lessons to able, gifted and talented pupils.
2. Ensure that all pupils are made aware of the process through which they can make suggestions and voice their opinions to school leadership, and of the school's responses to their views.
3. Make roles and responsibilities clear at every level of leadership and management, to ensure consistent implementation of the school's strategies for improvement.
4. Ensure that the governing body exercises effective oversight of regulatory policies and procedures.
5. In the Early Years Foundation Stage develop the use of ICT to support and extend learning across all areas of the curriculum.

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 good.

Junior School

3.2 Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum in response to excellent teaching and a broad curriculum. The school is highly successful in achieving its aims to encourage pupils to learn about themselves, to develop a concern for others and to grow intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

3.3 Pupils in the EYFS are active learners who work independently, think critically and reflect on what they learn. By the end of the year almost all children in the EYFS have met the Early Learning Goals in all areas and, in many cases, exceeded them.

3.4 The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are excellent at all ages. Pupils listen well and express themselves fluently in oral and written communication. Pupils show strong understanding of science, for example in a lesson where the Year 6 class were predicting conditions that would encourage mould growth. Pupils' work in art, music, drama and design technology is excellent. Pupils of all ages and abilities make very good progress, although in a few lessons the most able are not always challenged sufficiently, for example in lessons where the work does not take account of pupils' differing abilities.

3.5 Pupils follow a well-planned PSHE programme and outside the classroom they have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities including golf, sailing and horse riding. The junior school sailing crew won the IAPS U11 national inland sailing regatta. Junior girls have been selected for the county U13 development squads and county team in netball. Pupils have access to an outdoor environment for their learning. Junior pupils have recently raised money for a charity in Kenya.

3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from their work, performance in lessons and responses in interviews their attainment is judged to be of a high standard in relation to the national age-related expectations. This attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils, including those with SEND, make excellent progress.

3.7 Pupils' attitudes are exemplary. They are well motivated, focused, articulate and display a love of learning. They are keen to learn, articulate and are confident to ask questions when they need assistance.

Senior School

3.8 Pupils are well-educated in accordance with the school's aims, and show good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas in response to excellent teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils achieve excellent standards in extra-curricular activities and in the twelve months prior to the inspection the school had 44 county level players and several regional and national sporting representatives. Pupils enjoy success in national arts and local literary awards, exhibitions, jazz and public speaking competitions. They raise significant funds each year for their chosen charities.

- 3.9 In the classroom, pupils demonstrate strong subject skills, creativity, knowledge and understanding. Pupils express themselves articulately in writing and orally, they listen carefully and ask challenging and thought-provoking questions to broaden their understanding. Pupils show well-developed skills in modern foreign languages and produce high quality work in art, music, drama and design technology. Pupils enjoy being challenged, and apply themselves well. They take pride in their work, and perform effectively both individually and in group activities.
- 3.10 The following analysis uses national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the three most recent years for which national comparative statistics are available. GCSE results are above the national average for maintained schools, and IGCSE results are higher than worldwide norms. Pupils gain almost twice as high a proportion of A*/A grades as the national average. At A-level, results are similar to the national average for maintained schools. Overall, girls' results have been higher than boys', and are above the national average for girls in maintained schools.
- 3.11 This level of attainment, considered alongside the analysis of standardised measures of progress and inspection evidence, show that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with EAL or SEND receive excellent individual support, are well integrated into classes and achieve highly in relation to their abilities. Overall, able, gifted and talented pupils progress well as a result of both academic and extra-curricular opportunities.
- 3.12 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and the school is working to develop pupils' independent approaches to thinking and learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, they listen attentively and in most lessons observed the pupils' level of focus was excellent. Pupils enjoy positive relations with their teachers, and are respectful and encouraging towards the opinions of their peers in the classroom.

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

- 3.13 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

Junior School

- 3.14 The junior school offers a wide and varied range of opportunities that fully supports its aims. The curriculum covers the required areas of learning and is both well-planned and suited to all ages and most abilities. Pupils who require extra support are identified effectively, have their own individual education plans, and are provided with one-to-one support where needed. Pupils of high ability are identified but they are not always set appropriately challenging tasks in lessons. French is taught from Reception onwards.
- 3.15 In the EYFS the overall quality and standards of provision are excellent, and the learning and care provided ensures that individual children's needs are extremely well met. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to engage children's learning. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed the use of indoor space to provide an environment that encourages activities that extend and stimulate individual learning. Although the layout does not enable free-flow between the indoor and outdoor environments, plenty of opportunities exist for children to explore and enjoy the outside world in the attractive grounds. There is a high level of challenge for children of all abilities, differentiated for their individual needs across all areas of learning. As a result, children of all abilities make excellent progress. Although one classroom has an interactive whiteboard it is not accessible for the

children to use and during the inspection limited opportunities to use ICT in children's learning were observed.

- 3.16 The junior school curriculum is monitored effectively through regular scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. Pupils who need additional support or greater challenge are identified through initial assessments and those with SEND receive excellent one-to-one support from well-qualified staff. In the holidays able, gifted and talented pupils are given open-ended activities and research projects to inspire and encourage curiosity but the degree of challenge they receive in lessons is not consistently high.
- 3.17 There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities including horse riding, sailing and golf. Through the junior school council pupils are working to establish further links with the community, including visiting the local care home. Pupils are very happy with the range of activities and experiences on offer.

Senior School

- 3.18 The well-planned curriculum successfully meets the school's aims to provide a challenging and rigorous programme. The academic curriculum is well-planned and provides a continuous programme of core and optional subjects from Year 7 to Year 11. Most teaching in Year 7 is in mixed ability groups but from Year 9 more subjects are taught in sets. A wide range of options at GCSE ensures that pupils can make choices which suit their abilities. ICT is not taught as a discrete subject; pupils learn and develop their skills through opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum.
- 3.19 Modern foreign language lessons in French and Spanish are compulsory from Year 7 and most pupils take at least one modern foreign language through to GCSE. The small number of pupils who do not are able to choose an additional subject more suited to their individual learning needs. Pupils appreciate the school's personal, social, health, cultural and education programme which is followed in all years. The timetabled academic surgeries for pupils in Years 9 to 11 are well-attended and provide an extremely useful revision and reinforcement facility.
- 3.20 In the sixth form a wide variety of subjects is on offer. Since the previous inspection, the choice has been extended to include A level courses in economics and classical civilisation and a BTEC Level 3 business studies course. In the sixth form pupils benefit from well-planned careers education and advice about university applications.
- 3.21 Provision for SEND is excellent, including for any pupil with a statement; pupils are well catered-for and make progress in line with, or above, expectations for their ability. The school employs a small number of teaching assistants within classes to aid the progress of SEND pupils. The provision for the small number of EAL pupils is also excellent.
- 3.22 Since the previous inspection the school has enhanced its extra-curricular provision for able, gifted and talented pupils. A 'Master of Scholars' oversees a well-structured programme of activities for pupils in all years, including an optional extended individual research project in the sixth form.
- 3.23 The excellent provision of extra-curricular activities is a great strength of the school, which strongly supports the philosophy of educating the whole person. Pupils appreciate the extended lunchtime break when they can participate in numerous activities and pursue their wide range of interests. Sports teams compete in every

age group and at a range of standards in matches against other schools and within inter-house competitions. Numerous drama productions are staged every year and the school orchestra has played across the county. Residential trips abroad raise the pupils' cultural awareness as well as improving their oral fluency in a foreign language. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is compulsory for Year 10 pupils at bronze level and a number of sixth formers each year continue to complete the gold award. In the pre-inspection questionnaire pupils of all ages expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the extra-curricular programme.

- 3.24 The school has established strong links with the wider community and regularly raises funds for their chosen charities. Overseas expeditions allow sixth formers to contribute to disadvantaged communities overseas.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.25 The quality of teaching is excellent.

Junior School

- 3.26 The school fulfils its aim to educate and nurture its pupils and to help them to fulfil their potential. In the EYFS, extremely thorough planning, observations and regular assessment ensure that next steps are clearly identified. Staff know the children well, have an excellent knowledge of child development and are skilled at making timely interventions to support and extend individual learning.
- 3.27 Teaching is very successful in promoting pupils' progress and provides a stimulating environment in which to learn. In the many excellent lessons, teachers show detailed understanding of pupils' needs, provide appropriate support and challenge, employ varied resources at an appropriate pace and use a range of teaching strategies, including the use of ICT. Much of the teaching is energetic and encouraging, allowing ample opportunity for all pupils to contribute to lessons. In a small number of lessons, progress is restricted by the slow pace and low expectations of what pupils can achieve in relation to their capabilities.
- 3.28 Teachers have very good subject knowledge and engender a positive approach to learning. Pupils with individual needs are well catered for; staff make provision for them in their planning and provide challenging extension activities. Teachers are very well supported in the classroom by teaching assistants who provide valuable support for pupils with SEND, and also assist in science and ICT lessons.

Senior School

- 3.29 Teachers are well qualified and passionate about their subjects, and about meeting the needs of their pupils. There is a programme of peer observation and a new teaching and learning forum is being developed to encourage the sharing of best practice in teaching, drawing on links with a university research project to promote excellent teaching and learning. Subject knowledge is good and often excellent.
- 3.30 The most successful teaching is characterised by high expectations and high energy. Staff have excellent relationships with their pupils, who are very positive about the teaching they receive. The best lessons are typified by strong planning, are well-paced and purposeful, and allow for the different needs and abilities of individual pupils. Teachers assess the quality of pupils' learning throughout lessons to ensure their full understanding and this enables plans to be adapted to meet

pupils' needs successfully. The small amount of less effective teaching lacks clear objectives and is not carefully planned to meet pupils' individual needs.

- 3.31 The capabilities of pupils with EAL, SEND or those who are able, gifted and talented are made known to teachers across the age range, and many lessons take account of their needs with a combination of tailored resources for them to select from and open ended tasks that encourage individuals to work at their own level; teachers make appropriate provision for any pupil with a statement. Teaching assistance and learning support is of significant value to pupils with EAL and SEND students. The school is taking steps to raise expectations of, and provision for, highly able pupils although in a few lessons seen, use of closed questioning led to able, gifted and talented pupils becoming disengaged and restricted their progress.
- 3.32 The use of ICT is embedded in some departmental schemes of work and is applied well; the newly-installed virtual learning environment is enhancing the teaching and learning of several subjects. Pupils use ICT individually in a small number of subjects and greatly enjoy lessons where activity is varied to meet their personal learning styles and allows them access to a wide range of resources.
- 3.33 The school has improved the quality and consistency of marking since the previous inspection. Most marking now helps pupils to improve their understanding, knowledge and skills. In most classes work is regularly assessed with formative, constructive feedback given, although in a few cases the progress of more able pupils is held back by the absence of suggestions to promote further thinking.
- 3.34 The school has addressed the recommendation from the previous inspection report to continue to develop its assessment policies and procedures. A baseline is now established across the senior school, which is used to monitor, track and set targets for pupils from Years 7 to 13 as well as identifying effectively those pupils who need additional support or challenge. Pupils are aware of their target grades and they are given opportunities to discuss their progress against these grades with their subject teachers and their tutors.
- 3.35 In response to the pre-inspection pupil questionnaire, a significant minority of pupils expressed concern about whether homework helps them to learn. Inspection evidence did not support those concerns. Many examples of useful homework assignments were seen in scrutiny of pupils' work and pupils gave inspectors numerous examples of tasks which were both interesting and appropriate, and encouraged work outside the classroom.

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 Throughout the school, the pupils' personal qualities develop extremely well in accordance with the school's aims. The development of pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and personal belief is excellent by the time they leave the school. They are courteous and thoughtful, and show consideration for one another and respect for their teachers. Pupils of all ages recognise the strong community and family feel of the school and feel very fortunate to be part of it. By the time they leave each school pupils have reached an excellent standard of personal development for their age.
- 4.3 In the EYFS children's behaviour is extremely good. Clear boundaries are in place within which the children operate intuitively; they make good choices, co-operate extremely well with each other and develop their independence. Children are hugely supportive of each other and work well in pairs and small groups as well as on their own. Children happily engage and co-operate fully in every aspect of their learning. They show great respect for each other, behave well and show considerable independence.
- 4.4 Pupils of all ages show excellent spiritual development. Some pupils take up the opportunities to develop their personal faith by attending voluntary services or by preparing for confirmation. Lessons also provide moments of awe and wonder, such as when a Year 8 pupil was amazed at a poison dart frog from the Amazon rain forest. The inspiring programme for personal development enables senior school pupils to reflect on their personal choices and to appreciate better the positions of others. House assemblies demonstrate and promote the importance and value of teamwork.
- 4.5 Pupils' moral development is excellent throughout the school. Junior pupils treat each other with respect and apply the school rules, which they are involved in formulating. Pupils exhibit a clear sense of right and wrong and show an excellent awareness of, and concern for, the wider world by raising large sums of money for charity. Visiting speakers ensure that senior pupils are well prepared to take their place in the adult world.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent, starting in the junior school where a strong sense of responsibility for others is encouraged and pupils move about purposefully without impeding others. By the time they leave junior school, many pupils in Year 6 will have had the opportunity to take on a position of responsibility from a range of leadership and supporting roles such as house captains, monitors and members of the school council. In pre-inspection questionnaires a significant minority of older pupils expressed concern about the number of opportunities for them to exercise leadership skills but in interviews with inspectors pupils were able to point to numerous examples where leadership was possible such as team captains, Year 7 buddies or as school or house prefects.
- 4.7 Pupils of all ages show excellent cultural development. Differences in background and heritage are celebrated and enrich the experience of all pupils. Junior pupils are helped to share different heritages by visiting speakers, such as a parent who explained Judaism, by the celebration of Diwali and through assemblies. Pupils

benefit from a wide range of cultural visits to venues such as the Cheltenham Literature festival. Senior school pupils' cultural awareness benefits from a well-planned programme of day trips and residential visits as well as their studies of literature, drama, art and music which introduce them to a variety of different cultures and lifestyles, both Western and elsewhere. Pupils greatly appreciate the opportunities to develop their political and financial awareness by hearing a variety of political speakers, participating in mock elections and taking part in the Young Enterprise scheme in the sixth form.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school's aims that pupils will develop strong self-esteem and high personal expectations are fulfilled very successfully. The co-operative and supportive partnership which exists between the school, parents and the community underpins the very successful pastoral care programme.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, the children's well-being is central, and they feel safe and secure. Children articulately join in discussion, happy to express their point of view. They are aware of the benefits of physical exercise and understand healthy eating.
- 4.11 The pupils feel happy, valued and cared for. Teachers know the pupils well, encourage them to take advantage of all the school offers and support them in their work. Relationships are excellent both between pupils and staff and amongst the pupils. Pupils feel they always have someone to turn to for advice. Rewards and sanctions are appropriate and are understood.
- 4.12 The school works hard to ensure appropriate provision for pupils of all ages with SEND and has a suitable plan to improve educational access for them still further. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, a significant minority of senior school pupils raised concerns about opportunities to express their views and receive feedback. Inspection found that there is currently no formal mechanism for this in senior school, although there are a number of informal routes and a few examples of changes that had resulted were identified by pupils. The junior school council provides a forum for pupils to raise issues, express their views and share opinions.
- 4.13 The school promotes good behaviour very successfully and pupils of all ages report that bullying is rare. They are confident that should it arise it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Any incidents are recorded carefully together with the ensuing action, and parents are fully involved. Concerns were raised by a minority of senior school pupils in pre-inspection questionnaires about inconsistency in the way sanctions and rewards are applied. These views were not supported by inspection evidence, which showed that the clear policy is applied appropriately, taking into account the particular situations of individual pupils. Serious sanctions are applied according to the school's published procedures and are recorded appropriately.
- 4.14 The vast majority of pupils are keen to share how much they enjoy the school and feel part of a community where they are supported and treated with respect. Pupils are encouraged to live healthily both through physical exercise and through developing sensible eating habits. Pupils agree that the food is of good quality and that there is a wide choice, although some would like portions to be larger.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.16 The school has in place secure arrangements to safeguard pupils' welfare, including in EYFS. There is an appropriate strategy for safer recruitment, and designated staff receive appropriately regular child protection and inter-agency training. Child protection training for all other staff, including in the EYFS, meets regulatory requirements in terms of scope and frequency and is properly recorded. Induction training in safeguarding is provided for all new permanent and temporary staff, staff supplied by external agencies and volunteers. The single central register of pre-employment checks now meets regulatory standards, although some entries were incorrectly recorded in the past.
- 4.17 Registration of pupils is carried out with care and unexpected absences are followed up quickly by administrative staff. The school's admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.
- 4.18 The medical centre makes excellent provision for pupils who are ill or injured, and provides outstanding support for the welfare of all pupils. Detailed individual care plans are drawn up where required and the nurse liaises closely with catering staff over pupils' dietary requirements. Appropriate numbers of staff are trained in first aid. The school takes very good care of pupils with SEND, providing all necessary assistance individually tailored to ensure their health and safety requirements whilst also encouraging them to play as full and energetic a part as possible in the life and activities of the school.
- 4.19 Well-written policies relating to welfare, health and safety are in place, including a policy for the safe use of the internet, and these are reviewed regularly by an external health and safety specialist. The health and safety committee meets regularly. Policies and procedures ensure that necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and most other hazards; fire practices and security drills are carried out regularly and there is a comprehensive plan for dealing with emergencies. Security measures are carefully implemented by staff but the risk assessment for the school site has not identified all potential risks and therefore does not specify sufficient mitigation measures. Risk assessments for activities in school and on trips are thorough and effective.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 In many areas, including guiding the school's strategic direction and forward financial planning, governance is excellent but the monitoring and scrutiny of regulatory policies and procedures have not been sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.3 Governors are fully committed to the aims and ethos of the school, and in many areas they provide both appropriate challenge and strong support for the school's senior leadership. Governors have a very good understanding of the different roles required of governors and managers of the school. They are well-qualified and represent a variety of professions and skills which provide the school's senior leadership with valuable advice and guidance. Governors are committed to the success of the school. The whole governing body takes a keen interest in the pupils' collective academic and extra-curricular achievements and is committed to the continuous improvement in the standard of education offered, and to enhancing and developing the school's facilities insofar as funding allows. Governors have ensured the successful fulfilment of the previous inspection's recommendations.
- 5.4 A governor is nominated to take the lead in matters of safeguarding who also takes a particular interest in the EYFS, visiting once per term. Governors review and approve the school's main policies, including for safeguarding, on an annual basis, and they have delegated to the leadership of the school significant responsibility for ensuring that the policies and their implementation are in line with regulatory requirements and relevant guidance. The governing body has not monitored with sufficient rigour the exercise of these delegated responsibilities.

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

- 5.5 The school's leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians are good.
- 5.6 Dynamic, committed and energetic leadership and management ensure that the school's aims are met with considerable success. The school has made considerable progress since the previous inspection in raising overall academic standards and expectations whilst maintaining the school's strong commitment to inclusion, family values and the development of personal responsibility. The development of the facilities, curriculum and teaching methods have all played their part in enhancing the quality of the education provided across the age range, including in the EYFS. This success results in the pupils' many academic and extra-curricular achievements and their excellent personal development.
- 5.7 The talented, dedicated and hardworking teaching and non-teaching staff enthusiastically support the broad strategic development of the school as envisioned by the senior leadership and governors. In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection, various management processes have been put in place to assist with establishing, monitoring and implementing school policy. A centralised appraisal system, clearer systems for target setting and the monitoring of targets, and electronic recording of major pupil events are all now in place.

- 5.8 The school appoints well-qualified and dedicated staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Induction of new staff is excellent and arrangements to train staff in their roles to ensure the pupils' welfare, and for health and safety including in the EYFS, are very well-designed and delivered. Appropriate checking procedures ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors to work with children. The recording of checks, whilst not always accurate in the past, meets the regulatory requirements.
- 5.9 A considerable number of support staff provide committed and loyal service to the school in such areas as administration, catering and cleaning, grounds maintenance and medical support. Many are longstanding members of staff who know the pupils well and who support the ethos of the school through their exemplary service.
- 5.10 In the EYFS and junior school, leadership and management are excellent. Since the previous inspection, training and development opportunities for EYFS staff have been expanded considerably to enhance staff understanding of the principled approach of the EYFS setting. The educational programmes are extremely well-monitored by the team. Staff have formal and informal opportunities to contribute to the ongoing development plans for the setting, both as a discrete EYFS and as part of the pre-prep school. A system for the supervision of staff in terms of monitoring their individual training needs is in place and is formalised as part of EYFS staff development.
- 5.11 In the senior school an expanded senior leadership group has been assembled to strengthen the school's identity, to develop its ability to refine school policies on key areas such as teaching and learning, and to monitor their implementation. The enhanced and expanded senior leadership team contains considerable expertise and experience. Some staff however are uncertain about individual roles and responsibilities, or about reporting lines and areas of delegated authority within both senior leadership and middle management structures. Monitoring of the standards of teaching and learning is inconsistent across departments and initiatives to provide stretch and challenge in the classroom for able, gifted and talented pupils are not fully effective, although they are a clear element of the school's planning.
- 5.12 At middle management level, heads of department are keen to support the senior leadership's overarching vision for the school, but the necessary level of responsibility has not been delegated to them in order for them to play an effective role in ensuring that the vision becomes firmly embedded in the culture of the school. To date, the professional development of staff has focused mainly on subject-specific areas and more recently on teaching and learning; there has been little training on leadership and management for those who hold responsibilities as middle managers. Notable progress has been achieved within the leadership of the house system; pastoral management is particularly effective in promoting the core values of the school.
- 5.13 Links with parents are excellent. The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims. Parents of prospective pupils are provided with the required information about entry to the school. Parents receive clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress. Junior school parents receive a weekly note in their child's homework book to inform them about work covered during the week, and to be covered in the following week. In the senior school parents have one full written report and two parents' evenings per year in which the pupils' progress is reviewed. If parents have queries they can easily contact their child's tutors or head of year by email, and they are invited to attend

information evenings about subject choices. The thriving parent-teacher association hosts a variety of events, which strengthens parents' relationships with the school.

- 5.14 In the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents expressed a very high degree of satisfaction with the education and support provided for their children and with the quality of communication with the school. They can access information about school policies, sports fixtures and school events on the website. They are kept fully informed by a weekly online newsletter and they are grateful for the speed of the school's response to their questions. The overwhelming majority of parents acknowledge that the school handles any concerns they may have with care. In recent years, the few formal complaints have been dealt with in accordance with published procedures and appropriate records maintained.

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