



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
COPTHORNE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Copthorne Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Copthorne Preparatory School
DfE Number	936/6438
EYFS Number	EY288842
Registered Charity Number	270757
Address	Copthorne Preparatory School Effingham Lane Copthorne Crawley West Sussex RH10 3HR
Telephone Number	01342 712311
Fax Number	01342 714014
Email Address	office@copthorneprep.co.uk
Head	Mr Christopher Jones
Chair of Governors	Mr Alain Kerneis
Age Range	2 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	331
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (185 boys; 146 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 6 5-11: 213 3-5 (EYFS): 64 12-13: 48
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Susie Swadling
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	28 Apr 2015 to 01 May 2015

PREFACE

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

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

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

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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 boarding accommodation and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Pamela Leech	Reporting Inspector
Mr Andrew Carter	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC/IAPS school)
Mr Neil Chippington	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Hilary Wyatt	Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)
Ms Myra Rodgers	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Deborah Buckenham	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Copthorne Preparatory School is a co-educational independent day school providing education for pupils aged between two and thirteen. The school offers pupils the opportunity to board on a flexible basis. It aims to create a nurturing environment where pupils develop confidence and self-esteem to strive for excellence and be the best they can be, through achieving individual successes both in academic endeavours and across the full range of school's activities. The school seeks to deliver an all-round, broad-based education to enable pupils to meet the challenges of the next steps in their educational journey and become individuals ready to make a positive contribution to society.
- 1.2 The school was founded in 1902 as a boarding school for boys and is set in extensive grounds in a village on the outskirts of Crawley, West Sussex. It has been an educational charitable trust since 1976 and the directors of the trust are governors of the school. The original Victorian building houses classrooms, the dining room and boarding accommodation. A further classroom block, theatre, sports hall and swimming pool are located nearby in the grounds. Playing fields and playgrounds surround the school. The pre-prep has its own play areas. A school chapel adjoins the main building and traditional Christian values underpin the ethos of the school. Pupils of all faiths, and of none, are welcomed by the school.
- 1.3 The school has undergone significant development since the previous inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has been extended to accept children from the age of two. Additional classrooms, including a home economics room, have been created and two new science laboratories opened. The art room has been extended. Considerable investment has been made in upgrading information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, including a second designated ICT suite and the installation of computers and interactive whiteboards into all classrooms, including the pre-prep and the EYFS. Changing rooms have been upgraded and boarding accommodation has undergone a recent refurbishment programme. The school kitchen and dining room have been refurbished and extra facilities for visitors have been created, with additional car parking spaces. Leisure facilities have been upgraded, with the addition of an abseil and climbing tower. Governance has undergone several changes in membership and leadership.
- 1.4 The pre-prep comprises Reception and Years 1 and 2, and the prep consists of Years 3 to 8. At the time of the inspection, there were 331 pupils on roll. Of these, 70 children were in the EYFS and 261 in Years 1 to 8, and 18 pupils were boarding on a flexible basis. Pupils come from within approximately a ten-mile radius of the school and represent a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds. Parents are predominantly professional or self-employed.
- 1.5 Pupils have an ability level that is above the national average. The proportion of pupils of above average ability increases throughout the school, with some having well above average ability. Fifty-nine pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom are provided with learning support at different levels according to their need. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Fifteen pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom two receive additional support for their English.
- 1.6 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 highly successful in educating its pupils in line with its overall aims to encourage them to strive for excellence in all they do, and to be a school which fosters the all-round development of its pupils. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well academically, apply their knowledge confidently, and demonstrate maturity in their opinions and their approach to learning. They work well together as well as independently, and are supported by good teaching. The excellent curriculum and wide range of clubs and activities enhance their learning opportunities. Assessment and monitoring procedures enable teachers to understand the needs of their pupils and plan effectively, though these are not yet fully implemented across all year groups. Measures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress in the earlier years have been effectively instigated in response to a recommendation of the previous inspection. Pupils with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported and the more able pupils achieve well, benefiting from extension work in core subjects. Pupils enjoy independent learning but lesson planning does not always provide sufficient opportunities for them to experience this. Pupils have good technological skills; however, ICT provision results in limited opportunities to apply these skills in lessons. Pupils enjoy learning and present their work with pride. They are encouraged to develop their links with the local community and benefit from a range of educational visits. Outcomes for children in the EYFS are outstanding.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent. They are tolerant and respectful of each other and generous with their support, and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They show maturity when undertaking positions of responsibility and leadership, and are confident in the support and guidance of the staff. Boarders thrive in the nurturing atmosphere of their boarding house and staff encourage them to become actively involved in shaping the provision, successfully fulfilling a recommendation of the previous inspection. The school implements excellent measures to ensure the pupils' safeguarding through rigorously implemented procedures for staff recruitment, training and pupils' well-being. Welfare, health and safety matters are effectively overseen.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. Governors maintain highly effective oversight of the school. They thoroughly understand and rigorously undertake their legal responsibilities. They are dedicated and generous with their time and support for the school. Leadership and management are excellent. Well-established lines of responsibility and a clear vision for the future ensure excellent oversight of the day-to-day running of the school. Nappy changing facilities in the Nursery are adequate but basic and have been identified by the school as requiring improvement. Links with parents are excellent.

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.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
 - 1. Ensure consistency of assessment and tracking procedures across the school.
 - 2. Create further opportunities for independent learning.
 - 3. Improve pupils' access to ICT to enhance their learning experience.
 - 4. Prioritise the planned improvements to the nappy changing facility in the Nursery.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils attain excellent standards and demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning and a desire to be the best they can be, in line with the school's aims. They develop a breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding through both curricular and a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well from Year 1 upwards, and older pupils attain high standards in reading, write with fluency, and demonstrate competence with grammar, spelling and punctuation. From an early age, pupils read with confidence and listen attentively. Throughout the school, pupils discuss issues with empathy and sensitivity, and delight in working co-operatively. They demonstrate imagination and maturity in their writing.
- 3.3 Pupils achieve well in mathematics, confidently applying logical and mathematical understanding to a range of subjects, including science. Pupils acquire high levels of reasoning and thinking skills, further developed through weekly chess lessons from Year 2. They demonstrate competency in ICT and relish opportunities for research and independent study. For example, younger pupils successfully examined a variety of leaves and blossom using microscopes, to identify trees and plants. Researching a project on the local community, older pupils competently used their technological and creative skills to design a leaflet.
- 3.4 The pupils' academic progress is greatly enhanced by their excellent achievement in enrichment activities. Pupils have achieved high levels of success in local, regional and national competitions, notably in chess, comprising a high percentage of the county team, in addition to championship victories in a range of year groups. Achievements in swimming and athletics have been particularly strong in both the pre-prep and prep departments, and excellent standards are reached in a wide range of other sports throughout the school, at local, county and national levels. Pupils achieve excellent results in external music and drama examinations, with a high level of participation in choirs, orchestras and dramatic productions. An example of the creativity of pupils is clearly seen in a vibrant mural on the wall of the playground, a result of the biennial art event when the whole school participates in a week of creative activities, including artwork, willow weaving, tie dying and mural making.
- 3.5 The attainment for pupils in the pre-prep and prep departments cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but based on the evidence available from discussions with pupils and from scrutiny of their work and performance in lessons, it is judged to be good overall in relation to national age-related expectations. Attainment in English and mathematics is judged to be higher than national norms. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Most pupils continue their education at the senior school of their choice, with a high proportion gaining scholarships.
- 3.6 Pupils throughout the school demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour in the classroom is excellent; pupils are good at sharing resources and approach any opportunities for independent learning with maturity. They take care with the presentation of their work and are proud of their achievements. They are

generous in spirit and regularly praise one another. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the provision the school makes for their children.

- 3.7 Small class sizes and specialist teaching enable those with SEND or EAL to make excellent progress. More able pupils make good progress overall; a further programme of activities offers them additional opportunities to extend their understanding and learning.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 From Year 1 through to Year 8, pupils benefit from a broad curriculum that is suitable for their ages and abilities, and strongly supports the school's aim to develop individual abilities and self-confidence in all its pupils. As part of a new curriculum initiative, pupils may study Spanish from Year 3 in addition to French, and Latin as an after-school activity from Year 5 upwards. Home economics has been included in the curriculum from Year 6, and new literacy and mathematics schemes introduced in the pre-prep department. Through the curriculum, pupils are enabled to develop an excellent skills base and participate in many exciting learning opportunities.
- 3.10 All pupils benefit from a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme of studies which thoroughly reflects the school's active response to promoting fundamental British values. Younger pupils learn about their inner feelings and emotions, while older pupils focus on the outside world, developing a clear understanding of British law and the need for tolerance and acceptance of differing points of view. Year 8 pupils benefit from an excellent enrichment course after their examinations for entrance to senior schools, which explores topics such as personal finance and how science has developed as a tool to solve crime and be used in a court of law. A series of talks for Years 7 and 8 offers pupils a well-balanced, non-partisan presentation on a wide variety of topics, deepening their understanding of different points of view and encouraging tolerance.
- 3.11 Curriculum planning is thorough and the school is undergoing a time of change as it embeds a new curriculum initiative. Careful consideration has been given to lesson allocation for each subject and it is intended that the revised curriculum will allocate more time for English and mathematics. Regular scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 is now established and a programme of lesson observations is undertaken by appropriate staff, fully meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection. There are effective systems for identifying those pupils requiring support or additional challenge. Detailed individual plans allow pupils' progress to be carefully monitored. Provision for pupils with SEND or EAL is excellent; they receive effective support in lessons and in one-to-one sessions, and they achieve highly. More able pupils benefit from effective provision of extension work in several subjects and are provided with good opportunities to develop their strengths, achieving well in performances and competitions. Older pupils receive appropriate guidance and advice on selecting their senior schools.
- 3.12 The curriculum is fully supported by an excellent extra-curricular programme of clubs and activities. Games and sports provision is excellent, with a busy schedule of matches against other schools and many additional opportunities to participate in physical activity through after-school clubs, for example kayaking in the school's

pool. Music plays a significant part in the life of the school and there are several choirs and ensembles, with pupils regularly taking part in concerts and assemblies. The dramatic arts are vibrant, with a variety of plays and performances arranged each year for budding actors of all age groups. The extended and refurbished art studio and newly introduced home economics room are the venues for a number of popular clubs. The vast majority of parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire praised the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.

- 3.13 The pupils' experience is enhanced by an excellent variety of trips and workshops. Pupils visit national museums and local places of interest, including a nearby mosque. They enjoy ski trips, a week of team-building activities for Year 7 and a week of water sport activities in France for Year 8. Older pupils undertake voluntary service in the local community, with regular visits to nearby homes for the elderly, and all pupils enthusiastically support a local charity for the homeless.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 Teachers work hard to encourage pupils to be the best they can be, in line with the aims of the school. They present topics in a balanced way, encouraging pupils to explore a range of issues with open minds. Almost all pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they find the work they do interesting and that their teachers help them to learn. A very large majority of parents expressed themselves as most satisfied with the progress their children are making.
- 3.16 Teachers know their pupils well and are extremely supportive and positive, both within and outside the classroom. Lessons throughout the school are well planned and resourced. Across the school, pupils enthusiastically use the outdoor areas of woodland and grounds as a valuable resource for fieldwork, for example when Year 2 used scientific equipment to gather small insects for further study. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and this, combined with detailed planning, results in lessons that engage pupils, helping them to make good progress. The positive rapport between teachers and pupils fosters the confidence to ask questions and engage with topics confidently. Pupils are highly appreciative of the support they receive from their teachers. In most lessons, the pace is brisk and a variety of exercises is used to engage pupils and promote their learning. The most productive lessons provide pupils with opportunities to express their own thoughts and ideas and to work independently. Pupils make less progress in the small minority of lessons where there are no clear objectives, the pace is slower and a reliance on worksheets results in fewer opportunities to challenge and extend them. Pupils relish opportunities for independent research and study, but such opportunities are not routinely incorporated into lesson planning. Pupils are competent users of ICT but the current provision limits their application of these skills in many subjects.
- 3.17 Procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in the younger years have been successfully implemented, fully meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection. A new system to assess and monitor pupils' ability and progress is being introduced, but as yet does not provide consistent information across all year groups and procedures are not yet consistently applied.
- 3.18 A few parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that homework does not promote learning. Inspectors found that the school has suitable

homework and marking policies. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were highly appreciative of the targets set and said that their homework helped them to learn and make progress. Through scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors judged that homework demands are appropriate, with most marking offering helpful and positive comments.

- 3.19 Excellent support is offered for pupils with SEND and for those with EAL, with highly effective links between the staff who teach them and specialist support staff, and they make excellent progress. Teachers challenge and extend the understanding of the more able pupils, enabling them to make good progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. Their sense of spiritual awareness is enhanced by time spent in chapel where they reflect in moments of quiet. They gain a sense of joy, singing and clapping as they practise hymns and songs in weekly sessions. They explore their own beliefs and develop understanding of those of others through class led assemblies. Pupils are quick to share the feelings of others, for example when thinking deeply about war as they designed poppies for the World War 1 remembrance services. They show empathy with each other and are generous in their celebration of one another's achievements. Older pupils demonstrate maturity and sensitivity when discussing the future, and this was evidenced in their design of a mural entitled Imagine Tomorrow's World. Pupils of all faiths, and those without a specific faith, are appreciative of the tolerance and acceptance of their peers.
- 4.3 Pupils develop excellent moral awareness, and have a strong sense of justice and of right and wrong. They are extremely respectful in lessons and of each other, placing a high value on small daily acts of kindness. They are polite and proud of their school. Younger pupils seek to follow the example set by their teachers and are delighted when they are able to bring 'leaves of achievement' from home to contribute to their 'good deeds tree'. Older pupils take pride in their roles as prefects, monitors and helpers. Throughout the school, pupils' strong awareness of right and wrong is demonstrated in their frank discussions about moral issues; for example, Year 8 pupils debated vigorously whether it is ever justifiable to tell a lie. Younger pupils considered the effects of poverty and war, and the rights of each child to go to school. Supported by the carefully planned PSHEE programme, pupils develop strong moral values and accrue an understanding of, and a respect for, the way the law of England works towards creating a harmonious society. Behaviour throughout the school is exemplary.
- 4.4 The excellent social development of the pupils is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are highly articulate, and engage supportively and encouragingly with each other and with their teachers. They develop leadership skills through a variety of roles or by election to the school council. They undertake these positions with enthusiasm and commitment. Many older pupils develop their sense of social responsibility through community service, and all demonstrate an understanding of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves in supporting national and local charities with generosity. Recent mock elections enabled pupils to understand the principles of democracy, including preparation of manifestos.
- 4.5 Pupils develop a strong appreciation and respect of cultural diversity through their studies of different faiths, cultures and traditions, visits to different religious institutions and celebration of the ethnic diversity within the pupil body. They eagerly discuss what it is like to come from a different country and demonstrate tolerance and respect for those with different views and beliefs. Within the PSHEE programme and through discussions in lessons, pupils are actively encouraged to gain a clear understanding of citizenship, British institutions and Western cultural traditions. Through a wide range of visits to places of worship, museums and local sites of interest, pupils gain an appreciation of their own culture and traditions, as well as public services and institutions nationally.

- 4.6 The standard of pupils' development accords with the aims of the school to create responsible global citizens who show respect and tolerance for each other; for example, Year 8 learn about the parliamentary system in PSHEE. They are intellectually curious and motivated, and evidence of the high quality of their personal development is shown in their articulate and engaging manner with each other and with adults.
- 4.7 By the time they leave the school pupils achieve high standards of personal development, in preparation for their place in modern British society. Throughout the school, pupils are polite, confident but not arrogant, and respectful of others. Younger and older pupils are eager to progress to the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The quality of pastoral care throughout the school is excellent. The staff provide highly effective support and guidance for pupils, in accordance with the school's aims to provide a nurturing environment where all children are happy, valued and encouraged to develop as individuals. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the care that their children receive and consider that they are content and safe at the school. They state that it is a happy place.
- 4.10 Thorough and rigorous systems are successfully implemented to ensure excellent pastoral care. Staff know their pupils extremely well and this enables them to respond swiftly and supportively to meet the needs of individual pupils. Formal weekly meetings supported by daily staff briefings ensure that information is appropriately shared and recorded.
- 4.11 Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are warm and trusting. Pupils feel valued and supported, confident of receiving help and guidance from their teachers if required. They speak with confidence of the many adults they feel happy approaching with any concerns. Older pupils undertake their roles as prefects and mentors seriously, reflecting the generous spirit of kindness which exemplifies the ethos of the school.
- 4.12 The school has excellent arrangements to guard against bullying, including cyber-bullying, and to promote good behaviour. Bullying incidents are rare and are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. A small minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that teachers are not always fair in the way they give rewards and sanctions. Inspectors found that the school implements a clear system of rewards and sanctions, and from discussions with pupils and examination of records, judge that rewards and sanctions are applied consistently and fairly, successfully promoting good behaviour.
- 4.13 A small minority of pupils indicated in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses that the school does not seek or respond to their views. Inspectors found that representatives of all year groups attend school council meetings, and pupils confidently described many instances of changes effected through this forum in response to their requests.
- 4.14 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy. The school provides nutritious and home-cooked meals, with vegetarian options, salads and fruit. Other particular dietary needs are suitably catered for. Healthy snacks are provided at break times and water is freely available throughout the day. Pupils learn how to make healthy

choices through their science and PSHEE lessons. A wide range of sports and activity clubs ensures that pupils are provided with many opportunities to take regular exercise. Daily access to the grounds and school woodland encourage active play.

- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

4.17 The school undertakes thorough and comprehensive measures to promote the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils. An extensive audit of maintenance, and health and safety matters is completed annually and is overseen by a dedicated team, supported by external health and safety agencies. Termly reports to the governing body ensure the effective implementation of the school's detailed health and safety policy, with regular review and monitoring of procedures. Risk assessments for buildings and grounds are comprehensive and reviewed annually, with appropriate action taken. Accidents and incidents are recorded appropriately. The school makes every effort to minimise the risk of fire. Equipment is tested on an annual basis and all staff receive appropriate training. Fire marshals are appointed. Fire drills are conducted regularly and are suitably recorded. Electrical equipment is regularly tested and records are appropriately kept. Due care is taken to ensure the welfare, health and safety of those on school trips and those with SEND. A suitable policy to ensure that pupils understand how to be safe online is thoroughly implemented through lessons and workshops.

4.18 Safeguarding policies and procedures are comprehensive, accord with current guidance and are monitored by a designated governor. The full governing body undertakes an annual review of policy and procedures to ensure that any deficiencies of implementation are identified and speedily remedied. A suitable number of governors and senior managers are trained in safer recruitment. All staff receive annual training in child protection matters from an external agency supported by the local safeguarding children's board. Effective links are maintained between the school and local welfare agencies.

4.19 A suitable number of staff receive first-aid training, with an appropriate number trained in paediatric first aid. Pupils who are unwell are suitably cared for until they are collected by parents. Admission and attendance registers are well maintained and stored, and staff are aware of procedures to follow if a pupil were to go missing.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent.

4.21 Parents and pupils are highly appreciative of the school's flexible boarding facility, which provides a caring 'home from home' for pupils on the occasions when they board. Boarders express enthusiasm for boarding, and parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were equally satisfied.

4.22 Boarders form strong relationships with each other and with the staff who look after them. In the nurturing atmosphere, they develop key qualities such as confidence, tolerance and independence. Boarding staff work hard to make the boarding experience a positive and happy time, and boarders are appreciative of the efforts made on their behalf. They enjoy the friendly, family feel of the boarding house and

are able to make their opinions known through the school council and the boarders' survey. Boarders confidently describe their input into menus and the activities on offer, demonstrating how the school has responded positively to a recommendation of the previous inspection. Staff are sensitive to individual needs and all boarders are treated with fairness and consideration.

- 4.23 Boarders are aware of the wide range of adults whom they may approach with worries or at times of need. They are confident that staff will listen and help them. There is a friendship box for posting concerns, an independent listener, who is known to the boarders, and a school counsellor. Appropriate contact details of external agencies are clearly displayed on house notice boards.
- 4.24 The school successfully implements policies to promote good behaviour, and boarders are extremely well behaved, polite and responsive to the needs of others.
- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Every parent responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, indicated that their children feel safe at school and that their children enjoy boarding. In discussions with inspectors, boarders were equally positive about their boarding experiences. Thoughtful induction procedures, and a warm welcome from staff and other boarders, ensure that new boarders feel valued and quickly settle in.
- 4.26 The school has suitable medical policies that are effectively implemented and appropriate medical facilities for the care of those who are unwell. Boarders say that they are well looked after should they need medical care or assistance. Medication is appropriately administered and stored, and records are scrupulously maintained. The high number of staff qualified to administer first aid enhances the care offered to boarders.
- 4.27 Boarders' accommodation is of a good standard: clean, well maintained and welcoming. Dormitories are light and airy, and boarders enjoy socialising together and playing games in the communal sitting room. Leisure activities include a popular table football. Boarding accommodation has recently been upgraded, with new beds and bedding, renovated showers and redecoration. The security of accommodation is promoted by an appropriate alarm system.
- 4.28 Regular fire drills are held in boarding time at appropriate intervals, and fire extinguisher checks are in date, meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection.
- 4.29 Meals are of a high quality. Fresh produce from local suppliers is used whenever possible, with on-site baking. Meals are nutritious and of sufficient choice and variety to cater for most tastes and all specific dietary requirements. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a few of the boarders said that they are unhappy with the availability of snacks and drinks outside mealtimes. Inspectors found that in addition to main meals, boarders are offered a variety of healthy snacks, including fruit, and drinking water is always available.
- 4.30 Laundry is washed on site as necessary. Boarders are able to obtain stationery and personal items while accommodated at school although most choose to replenish their stocks from home. Boarders may hand valuable items to the boarding staff for safekeeping.
- 4.31 The activities programme for boarders is varied and makes good use of the extensive grounds and indoor facilities. Boarders are highly appreciative of campfire

nights and 'onesie' evenings. They have access to information about the world through newspapers and television. Older pupils value the opportunity to board during specially arranged weeks, helping them to prepare for the next stage of their education.

- 4.32 The school facilitates contact between boarders and their parents through the house mobile telephone and email.
- 4.33 The arrangements for boarders' welfare and safeguarding are excellent. All staff receive regular training in the school's safeguarding procedures and are fully aware of their responsibilities to promote the well-being and safety of the boarders in their charge. The school operates safer recruitment procedures for all staff.
- 4.34 The school effectively promotes good relationships amongst boarders across the age range. Boarders behave well towards each other and staff. Measures to discourage bullying are effectively implemented, and boarders say that bullying instances are rare and effectively dealt with, should they arise.
- 4.35 A suitable number of qualified staff look after the boarders. Staff know where boarders should be at all times and what to do should a boarder be missing. Boarders know who is on duty each night and can easily contact staff should they need help or assistance. The effectiveness of leadership and management in boarding is excellent.
- 4.36 A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is made available to parents, staff and boarders, and is successfully implemented. Governors and senior managers take an active role in the oversight of the boarding provision. Leadership of the boarding team is highly effective, and regular meetings ensure that the provision is constantly reviewed and procedures carefully monitored in order to best meet the needs of boarders. Communication between academic and boarding staff is open and frequent, resulting in excellent overall care of the boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body strongly supports the school's aim to inspire pupils to be successful achievers in all aspects of school life. Through a clear vision for the future and rigorous governance, the school successfully maintains high standards of learning, as well as an excellent level pastoral care and personal development of its pupils. Governors uphold and promote the traditional Christian ethos and core values that underpin the daily routines of the school. The governing body has undergone some changes in membership since the previous inspection and all new governors have undertaken appropriate induction training.
- 5.3 Governors achieve a thorough oversight of their responsibilities through their wide range of expertise, skills and dedication. A well-defined committee structure enables governors to maintain highly effective oversight of the working of the school. They are vigorous in monitoring and evaluating the educational standards and performance of the school through regular staff presentations, scrutiny of examination results and close attention to all arrangements for promoting welfare, health and safety, and budgetary control. Strategic development planning is strong and well supported by clear long-term aims. Governance provides successfully for the development and maintenance of the school's accommodation, facilities and resources, and ensures the recruitment of high quality staff.
- 5.4 Governors fully understand their legal responsibilities and maintain highly effective oversight of policies and procedures, including the annual review of safeguarding. All governors receive suitable training for their roles, including child protection training, and new governors undertake a detailed induction programme. An appropriate number of governors are trained in safer recruitment. A safeguarding governor monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguarding matters, including procedures for child protection.
- 5.5 Governors are locally based, dedicated and generous with the time they devote to the school. They attend many school events and make regular visits to the school to observe lessons and meet with staff and pupils. Two governors have been appointed to act as liaison with the staff and are known to parents.

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 and others, is excellent.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are highly effective in providing educational direction. They successfully enable the school to meet its aims to provide an education where pupils are constantly encouraged to strive to be the best they can be in every sphere of their school lives, and to prepare them thoroughly for the next steps in their education. As a result, pupils flourish in the caring atmosphere, become confident learners and develop excellent personal qualities. Effective management structures result in excellent provision for pupils with SEND or EAL and good support for the more able.
- 5.8 Senior managers work closely with managers at all levels to promote the vision of the school, including the encouragement of values that highlight respect for others and the principles of democracy, in keeping with the ethos of the school. Heads of department regularly monitor standards of teaching and learning across all subject areas. A new initiative to collate assessment grades for pupils is underway, in order to establish greater consistency in monitoring and evaluating pupils' ability and progress across the year groups. Subject planning is based on a thorough understanding of the needs of pupils, and schemes of work are detailed and comprehensive, providing a variety of learning opportunities for pupils. Teaching staff benefit from regular appraisal and continuing opportunities for professional development. New staff receive thorough induction training and appropriate guidance. Newly qualified staff are well supported through a suitable programme.
- 5.9 Appropriate systems to ensure the recruitment of suitable staff are meticulously applied, with all required checks completed and recorded before staff begin work at school. All staff undertake regular training in safeguarding procedures and in welfare, health and safety measures. Senior managers work closely with the governing body to review policies and procedures at suitable intervals. Most parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated their satisfaction with the way in which the school is led and managed.
- 5.10 Links between the school and parents are excellent and strongly contribute to the academic and personal development of the pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed their overwhelming satisfaction with the school. They were delighted with the progress their children make and also particularly positive about the education and care their children receive, the range of subjects offered, the high standards of behaviour and the information they receive from the school. A very large majority would recommend the school to another parent.
- 5.11 An 'open-door' policy encourages the development of strong relationships with parents. In-depth knowledge of the pupils and genuine care for them and their families results in a culture of positive communication. There is an effective complaints policy, and in the event of a complaint all procedures are rigorously followed.
- 5.12 Clear published information is readily available to the parents of current and prospective pupils through the detailed calendar, comprehensive website, parents' portal, weekly newsletters, a variety of information packs and meetings. A few

parents in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they are not satisfied with the amount of information they are given about their children's progress. Inspectors found that regular consultation evenings enable parents to discuss their children's progress with staff. Full reports are sent to parents annually. They are evaluative and helpful, and offer clear guidance for pupils for the next stage of their learning. In addition, parents receive termly effort and achievement grade reports for their children. Teachers are readily available for informal discussion. Additionally, the school is currently introducing a new initiative to increase the amount of academic information provided for parents.

- 5.13 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the school. They are frequently welcomed to attend pupils' assemblies, and are invited to the many musical concerts, drama productions and sports events in the school's calendar. Parents are invited to attend curriculum workshops and to help with school trips.
- 5.14 The active Parents' Committee is enthusiastic in its support for the school and its pupils, and offers guidance for the parents of all new pupils to help them feel at home.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision to meet the needs of the range of children who attend, including those under the age of three. Broad and balanced educational programmes include specialist subjects such as Spanish, French, music and swimming, and as a result children of all ages are able to develop and learn effectively, using a range of appropriate resources. Almost all children reach the level of development expected for their age and some exceed these. Excellent support is given to those who have been identified as having SEND or EAL and early intervention is a strength of the school. The more able children are suitably challenged through a range of activities to match their abilities and interests.
- 6.2 There is a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities, with emphasis on independent learning and how to make appropriate choices. Children concentrate well, express themselves clearly and enjoy their learning. Practitioners engage, motivate and enthuse children and have high expectations. Detailed planning, observations and assessment ensure that all areas of learning are covered. Each child's interests and needs are thoughtfully catered for and next steps identified, ensuring that all are making excellent progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The Nursery groups and Reception occupy two separate buildings, and the dedicated and well-qualified staff work well together as a team, share effective practice and establish excellent relationships.
- 6.3 Parents' questionnaire responses were overwhelmingly positive. In discussions with inspectors, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the education and care their children receive, the progress they make and the happiness of their children in school. Parents appreciate the informal daily contact with staff, as well as the email and text alert system. They are kept comprehensively informed about their children's progress through individual portfolios, formal reports and open evenings.

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

- 6.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. All children, including those under the age of three, and those who need support, are extremely well known by the caring and committed staff. The key person system helps children to settle quickly, ensuring that from the youngest age all develop close relationships with the adults who care for them and as a result feel confident when talking with each other and adults alike. Staff give clear guidance on the standards of courtesy and behaviour expected, so that children demonstrate exemplary conduct. 'Golden rules' are regularly reinforced, and 'circle time' and assemblies remind children how to behave in appropriate ways. Children respect one another and play co-operatively, as, for example, when building 'houses' in the woods for their toys, and learn to share.
- 6.5 Children are aware of the importance of physical exercise. They have planned games sessions and also enjoy many opportunities for outdoor play, with outdoor equipment that provides opportunities for taking controlled risks. The setting encourages good eating habits with healthy meals and snacks. Children are

encouraged to be independent and they confidently prepare their own toast snacks, cut up fruit and pour out drinks. The 'good deeds tree' has recently been introduced and celebrates children's achievements at home, such as helping to bake a cake or to dress themselves. Routines for hygiene are well established and children understand the need for hand washing regularly. Most children under three manage their own personal hygiene. Although there is a private, adequate area for nappy changing, it is basic and is scheduled to be re-sited and developed in the near future as a dedicated facility. Through managed play with older children and arranged sessions in their new classrooms, children are well prepared for transition into the next stage of their education.

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

- 6.6 The leadership and management of the early years provision are outstanding. Governors and senior managers maintain highly effective oversight of the setting, including its educational programmes, and are kept fully informed. Appropriate policies, risk assessments and procedures are thoroughly implemented in order to safeguard all children in a secure, welcoming and stimulating environment. Staff are well qualified, including an appropriate number with paediatric first-aid training, and all necessary checks are made before they are appointed. Training in child protection and health and safety is thorough and fully implemented. Staff benefit from a comprehensive appraisal system and continuing opportunities for professional development. Supervision sessions enable staff to discuss their practice or concerns about individual children. High standards of planning and detailed assessments evaluate the progress of each child, and the next steps in learning are carefully monitored. Senior leaders have a clear vision for the EYFS. Effective systems for self-evaluation inform the setting's priorities and set targets for continuous improvement, with a focus on teaching and children's learning and development.
- 6.7 The setting has developed a highly successful partnership with parents to support and enhance the learning and progress of each child.

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

- 6.8 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are outstanding. All children in both the Nursery, including those under three, and Reception, have well-developed listening skills and can follow instructions effectively. Nursery children delight in demonstrating their knowledge of Spanish, confidently identifying colours and names of fruit. Children under three can count up to ten and the over threes count up to twenty and sometimes beyond. They can order numbers and recognise shapes such as squares, rectangles and circles, and some are able to sequence a simple pattern.
- 6.9 Reception children count up to fifty and sometimes beyond, count in twos up to twenty, know one more or less than a number and can sequence a simple picture story. They confidently blend sounds for words and simple sentences, and enjoy the reading scheme and sessions with their talking partners. All can write key words, while the more able write stories in simple sentences using capital letters and full stops.
- 6.10 All children enjoy initiating activities and participating in scientific explorations in the woodland, or, for example, when investigating the undergrowth in the garden in search of insects. Throughout the setting, the children relish using a range of

technology, including cameras, programmable robotic toys and the interactive whiteboards, which provide an exciting opportunity for them to reinforce and extend their skills through games. They are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills.

- 6.11 Children's personal development, including those with SEND, is outstanding. They feel safe, secure and motivated, participating in all activities with enthusiasm and ably supported by adults who know them extremely well. Across the setting, they are co-operative, share resources, take turns and are happy coming into school. Their learning is enhanced by a variety of outings such as trips to local farms, and by a range of visitors to the setting, including a local vet and the police.
- 6.12 Following recommendations of the previous inspection, cosy corners have been established for children under three, and procedures for staff supervision and support and peer mentoring have been successfully implemented.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.13 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.