



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

COTTESMORE SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Cottesmore School

Full Name of School	Cottesmore School			
DfE Number	938/6008			
Address	Cottesmore School Buchan Hill Crawley West Sussex RH11 9AU			
Telephone Number	01293 520648			
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Email Address	office@cottesmoreschool.com			
Headmaster	Mr Thomas Rogerson			
Proprietor	Mr Mark Rogerson			
Age Range	4 to 13			
Total Number of Pupils	166			
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (95 boys; 71 girls)			
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11:	93
	3-5 (EYFS):	10	11-18:	63
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	44		
Number of Boarders	Total:	120		
	Full:	86	Flexi:	29
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Charlotte Rogerson			
EYFS Gender	Mixed			
Inspection dates	05 Feb 2013 to 08 Feb 2013			

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2008.

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

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

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report,

inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Mr Paul Spillane

Mrs Heather Friell

Mr Martin Stott

Ms Myra Rodgers

Mrs Gillian Bilbo

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Cottesmore is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from 4 to 13. Founded in 1894 in Hove, it moved to its present site near Horsham, in Sussex, in 1946. The school occupies a Victorian mansion set in 30 acres of grounds and has been owned by the same family for over 60 years. The present headmaster was appointed in 2008. The proprietor was headmaster from 1971 to 2002; he now governs the school.
- 1.2 The school's stated mission is to provide a secure and happy environment, a home from home, in which each pupil strives for excellence. It aims to provide a high quality all-round education, giving opportunities for all and enabling those who are especially talented to reach the highest levels of attainment. The school also seeks to develop in each pupil independence, commitment and enthusiasm, to foster a spirit of mutual respect and kindness, and to encourage everyone to do their best for the community.
- 1.3 Years 4 to 8 are known as the prep school, and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Reception class and Years 1 to 3 are known as the pre-prep. There are 95 boys and 71 girls on roll. Full boarders total 86, and a further 29 board on a flexible basis. In the EYFS, there are 10 day pupils, of whom 3 are boys and 7 girls. Nineteen pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), all of whom receive specialist support for their English. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs, while the school has identified 40 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to all of whom it gives specialist support. Day pupils come mainly from business and professional families in the neighbourhood, while boarders come more widely from the United Kingdom and overseas, with six nationalities being represented. As the pupils do not sit national tests, there is no advance data about the ability profile of the school.
- 1.4 Since the previous ISI inspection, the school established the pre-prep department in 2009, and this has been housed in a new building since 2011.

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

School	NC name
Reception	Reception
Pre-prep 1	Year 1
Pre-prep 2	Year 2
Pre-prep 3	Year 3
Form 1	Year 4
Form 2	Year 5
Form 3	Year 6
Form 4	Year 7
Form 5	Year 8
Form 6	Year 8 (higher stream)

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school, standards are high and the quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent. Overall, pupils make rapid progress in reaching high standards of attainment. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute very effectively to their learning. The quality of teaching is excellent. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to include a variety of activities that succeed in engaging and maintaining pupils' interest. The school has efficient and effective systems of monitoring pupils' progress at all levels. The academic curriculum is well tailored to match pupils' abilities and needs. Pupils benefit from an extremely rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, achieving success in a wide variety of non-academic pursuits. The school prepares them extremely well for the next stage of their education.
- 2.2 The sense that the school is like a large family is clear from pupils' spoken and written comments. Excellent pastoral care and arrangements for the pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety enable the school to fulfil its aims to be a home from home and a secure, happy environment for the pupils. All are known and valued as individuals and they are helped to achieve their potential across a wide spectrum, in accordance with the school's stated aims. Boarders develop confidence, self-reliance and ability to get on with others. They enjoy boarding and take pleasure in the excellent variety of activities in the evening and at weekends. Pupils are unfailingly polite to visitors, and treat their peers and staff with great respect. Pupils have a clear insight into their own culture and a sensitive appreciation of other cultures. Their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is demonstrated in their positive approach to charitable giving.
- 2.3 That the school's aims are being successfully realised is a strong testimony to the good oversight exercised by the proprietor and the leadership, and the high quality management team. However, the school has not kept up to date with some regulatory requirements and the proprietor has not shown sufficient oversight in this area. Leadership is energetic and committed; bold initiatives for the school's development have displayed vision and ambition. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, staff work as a co-operative team. Staff at all levels know the school and the pupils very well, and are strongly committed to providing the highest quality of education. The recommendations of previous reports have not been fully implemented: some facilities have not been upgraded and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not fully developed.

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:
- ensure that the showers in the boys' changing rooms afford privacy and that the girls' changing rooms are equipped with suitable showers [Part 5, paragraph 23A.(c), under Premises and accommodation].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, and therefore it must:
- ensure that all boarding staff have job descriptions reflecting their duties and receive regular reviews of their boarding practice [National Minimum Standard 15.1, under Staffing and supervision];
 - ensure that residential staff are provided with suitable washing and toilet facilities, appropriately separated from those provided for boarding pupils [National Minimum Standard 15.9, under Staffing and supervision].
- 2.6 In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school is required to:
- establish a programme of regular staff appraisals in the Pre-prep.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all members of staff are appraised on a regular cycle.
 2. Ensure that leadership and management are familiar with all of the regulatory requirements, including those for the EYFS, and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.
 3. Develop the pupils' application of ICT across the curriculum.
 4. In the EYFS, improve the provision of resources for play.
 5. In the EYFS, adopt a systematic programme of staff training and professional development.

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' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Children in the EYFS enjoy their learning. They make good progress in relation to their starting points. They know the names of single sounds and blends, and the more able can use these skills to sight read. Most are able to form their letters correctly and they use their word-building skills to write independently. They work confidently with numbers to ten, can count in tens and fives, and enjoy using songs to reinforce their skills. They can identify two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. The children's feeling of security in their classroom fosters independence and curiosity about their surroundings and they use equipment freely to develop their skills.
- 3.3 At every stage thereafter, pupils show high levels of knowledge and understanding, and very well-developed skills. Pupils of all abilities, including those with EAL or SEND, apply their literacy and numeracy skills well across all subjects. They read intelligently and write fluently. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are of a high standard. Many pupils enjoy debate and discussion, and they demonstrate strong powers of reasoning and logical thought. Pupils display lively imagination and creativity not only in the performing and expressive arts but also in poetry, prose and projects. Pupils have a sure grasp of mathematical concepts. They are keen problem solvers, particularly in mathematics and science, where they demonstrate high levels of success. Pupils use ICT competently, but not widely, in their academic work.
- 3.4 In Year 8, the pupils perform extremely successfully in the examinations for their senior schools, with every pupil gaining entry to their chosen school in recent years. A substantial number of pupils have won scholarships, including not only academic awards but also recognition of talent in music, art, drama and sport. In senior school entrance examinations, the results of pupils with SEND or EAL are generally indistinguishable from those of the others.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence from observation of lessons, scrutiny of work and discussions with individual pupils confirms this judgement. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils also achieve a high rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Less able pupils and those with EAL or SEND make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported in class and when withdrawn from class for specialist help. More able pupils and those with particular talents are consistently challenged in lessons through enrichment and extension tasks, so enabling them to achieve exceptionally well.
- 3.6 Pupils avail themselves of the extensive range of opportunities for developing their talents and personal qualities. The choir's part-singing is highly accomplished. Individual pupils have achieved representative honours in many sports and high grades in instrumental music examinations. An inclusive approach enables all pupils to represent their school in matches, and sports teams have enjoyed a consistent record of success in inter-school fixtures on a competitive circuit. Senior pupils in particular achieve high levels of personal fulfilment as they conscientiously discharge their duties in positions of responsibility and service.

- 3.7 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils demonstrate an attitude to learning that is good and sometimes excellent. Children in the EYFS display a lively interest and an appetite for exploring and investigating. Pupils in Years 1 to 8 apply themselves with evident enjoyment, keen to do well and eager to be challenged. Enthusiastic participants in lessons, they are readily responsive, offering answers and opinions articulately and confidently. They work conscientiously, showing perseverance and determination. When working in pairs or groups, they co-operate very well. They produce a good volume of work that is, on the whole, neatly presented, reflecting pride and care. Excellent work is displayed on classroom walls. In their responses to the questionnaire, the pupils affirmed that they find the work interesting and that they are encouraged to work independently, and this was borne out during the inspection. Pupils participate in the many extra-curricular activities in a similarly spirited and enthusiastic way.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The EYFS classroom skilfully incorporates the different learning areas. Children use the interactive whiteboard to practise their ICT skills and to reinforce their learning using number programmes, though its position makes it hard for the children to reach and its use is not yet embedded in planning. There is an appropriate balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities. The children's developing independence helps them to choose confidently from the wide range of activities provided both inside and outside the classroom. Action songs and games are an integral part of the multi-sensory teaching methods that the children enjoy. Direct access from the classroom to the outdoor area extends the children's learning and some outdoor toys strengthen their gross motor skills. Lack of cover restricts the use of the outdoor area in all weathers and there is limited storage for toys. The estate is well suited to the establishment of a woodland learning environment. The children enjoy their playtime and the chance to have a quiet time before afternoon school. Physical education and swimming lessons provide structured opportunities for physical exercise. The close proximity of the EYFS setting to the main school and the opportunity to join in whole-school events prepares children very well for their move to the next year. Records are passed up to Year 1 to ensure that suitable starting points are established. Joint activities with Year 1, such as music lessons and 'golden time', help the children to know staff and pupils in the pre-prep.
- 3.10 The curriculum enables all pupils from Years 1 to 8 to experience a well-balanced and broad range of subjects, carefully planned and thoughtfully tailored to suit the needs of all ages and abilities. It encompasses all the required aspects of learning and presents particularly good opportunities for scientific exploration and understanding of historical events, both ancient and modern. Latin is taught from Year 5, and Greek, which is studied as an extra-curricular activity, further enhances the pupils' learning. Independent learning is strongly encouraged during prep sessions, and pupils acknowledge the significance of well-honed thinking skills, recognising their value in their future education. Chess is introduced as a curriculum lesson in Year 4, which supports the development of an analytical and strategic approach to work. The previous inspection's recommendation that a scheme of work for ICT be developed to ensure that a wider range of skills is consistently taught has been addressed but not fully embraced.
- 3.11 Comprehensive support is provided for pupils who require extra help. In mathematics and English, some classes have two or three teachers in the room,

enabling the most and least able to be challenged and supported very successfully, according to their individual needs. The school provides excellent specialist support for pupils with SEND or EAL. Teachers work closely with the learning support department to ensure that, where necessary, pupils have an up-to-date and regularly reviewed individual education plan, outlining targets and personal requirements to aid and encourage progress. Pupils with EAL are very well supported in their individual needs and are assimilated sensitively into lessons and school life.

- 3.12 Pupils are offered an excellent and extensive range of extra-curricular activities, and participate with great enthusiasm. The school's intention to provide a fulfilling and enriching experience is strongly evident from its commitment of time to extended morning breaks and after school for sporting, artistic, musical and linguistic activities. All pupils are included in representing school teams and in set competitions, in addition to being afforded the opportunity to participate in non-competitive activities that broaden their cultural awareness, examples of which include Italian and real tennis. Choral singing is a very popular activity and opportunities exist for all pupils to participate in concerts, both in the choir and otherwise.
- 3.13 The curriculum is further enriched by regular trips and visits that encompass a variety of cultural opportunities nearby and abroad. Educational excursions include visits to the theatre in London and a variety of history and geography field trips. Senior pupils regularly participate in trips to France and a multi-sports tour to the United Arab Emirates in alternate years.
- 3.14 The pupils regularly engage in charitable work and recognise the significance of raising funds for those less fortunate than themselves; donations are made to a range of charitable organisations.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 Staff in the EYFS know the children very well and lesson plans reflect careful variation of tasks to meet the needs of each child. School-based assessments at the beginning of the school year establish a baseline for monitoring children's progress. Planning is carefully matched to the revised areas of learning for the EYFS, which were introduced in 2012. A scheme to record and match observations and assessments to these Early Learning Goals is being developed to culminate in a profile of each child's achievements over the year. The teaching assistants play a key part in assessment, working with small groups or with individuals as directed by the teacher. There are limited opportunities for staff to plan together. Targeted questioning supports those who need it and extends the more able. The children's developing independence enables staff to work with individuals. The wide range of learning styles is a strong feature of the setting and the children especially enjoy musical activities. The range of multi-sensory teaching methods makes lessons very effective in reinforcing the day's learning and the children respond enthusiastically. Class routines are designed to extend children's concentration span and strengthen their listening skills.
- 3.17 Half of the observed teaching throughout the pre-prep and prep school was excellent; most of the rest was good and very little was less than good. The high quality of teaching engages and motivates the pupils, and enables them to make rapid progress with their learning. The teachers know their pupils very well and thorough planning addresses pupils' individual needs. Educational support for all

pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, is utilised effectively, both during lessons and through one-to-one attention, which pupils receive from the highly effective educational support department.

- 3.18 Almost all of the lessons observed were taught at a brisk pace, encompassing a variety of teaching styles, which required pupils to complete appropriately challenging tasks and thereby extend their thinking and problem-solving skills. In most lessons observed, the teachers' passion for their subjects was clearly communicated and swiftly engaged pupils. The majority of teaching is characterised by a genuinely compassionate and kind approach, which enables pupils confidently to ask questions and willingly share their ideas and hypotheses.
- 3.19 Emphasis is placed on independent learning and pupils are given many opportunities to explain their thoughts during group work and class discussion. Their ideas are respected by their peers, and in most lessons teachers skilfully assist individuals to hone their ideas and achieve high levels of self-esteem. Questionnaire responses overwhelmingly confirmed that pupils are encouraged to do things for themselves and work independently, which was borne out during the lessons observed and the activities provided for pupils.
- 3.20 Their excellent rapport with staff throughout the school is appreciated by the pupils. Whilst recognising value in independent thinking, pupils affirmed that their teachers are genuinely interested in their progress and give willingly of their time outside lessons to help them make progress and overcome difficulties. Prep is completed in two sessions during the working day, which enables teachers easily to identify strengths and weaknesses and address individuals' needs. Weekly staff meetings provide a forum for teachers to share information on individual pupils and inform their planning, which further enhances pupils' progress.
- 3.21 Information and communication technology provision has not significantly improved since the previous inspection and is not yet encompassing a sufficiently wide range of resources to serve teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- 3.22 The overall quality of marking and assessment is good. The best marking gives explicit feedback on how pupils can improve and this is combined with encouraging oral feedback, following the completion of assignments. In some areas, marking lacks consistency and constructive written feedback.
- 3.23 Regular assessment is carried out by teachers in lessons, and a recently implemented school management system is beginning to enhance the current ways in which individual pupils' progress is monitored and tracked.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The ethos which exists in the school community enables the pupils to grow and flourish in confidence and self-assurance. Lively and personable, they are excellent ambassadors for the school, showing visitors around with evident pride. They express themselves articulately, displaying maturity and a sense of self-worth. The school chapel forms an integral part of the daily life of the pupils, whether for a music lesson, choir practice or chapel service. The pupils benefit from a rich experience as the school joins together for collective singing and worship in awe-inspiring surroundings. The outstanding performances of the choir are uplifting for singers and audiences alike.
- 4.3 Pupils have a clear understanding of moral issues and are able to discuss the value of doing one's best and making thoughtful decisions in difficult situations. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. In morning assemblies pupils demonstrate respect for others and they in turn are shown respect, as their efforts are acknowledged and rewarded through praise and the presentation of certificates and other awards. Pupils debate moral or social issues, for example financial implications of the Olympics. In lessons pupils conduct themselves co-operatively and respectfully.
- 4.4 The pupils' excellent social development is reflected in their manners and politeness. As they progress through the school pupils have opportunities to take on added responsibilities, which they carry out with great diligence. Charitable giving ranges from local to worldwide organisations, examples being a national children's charity and a school in Kenya. The annual 'Swimarathon', which raises substantial amounts, involves many pupils and furthers their awareness of the needs of others. A set of class rules in the EYFS, chosen by the children and based on the school's 'happiness charter', sets the tone for the happy atmosphere in the classroom, in which they co-operate and share, showing consideration for one another. A structured programme of personal, social and health education introduces more focused topics, such as the role of class monitors, and team games emphasise the need for all to work together.
- 4.5 The mix of nationalities, faiths and cultures represented by pupils in the school is characterised by harmonious relationships. Pupils gain an understanding and appreciation of different cultures not only through their peers but also from lessons and from visits to foreign countries, such as France and the United Arab Emirates.

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

- 4.6 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 The school fulfils its aims to provide a secure and happy environment; a true home from home. Before and during the inspection, and in parents' and pupils' questionnaire responses, the word 'family' was much used and is evident in all aspects of the daily life of the school.
- 4.8 In the EYFS, the key person ensures that the children are happy and settled. Children readily share their concerns with all staff, whose caring attitudes ensure that the children feel safe. The very high level of gentle and unobtrusive support provided for all children is a strong feature of the setting. Good behaviour and contributions to the life of the class are rewarded. Children manage their personal hygiene independently and know that they must wash their hands before eating. A healthy snack is provided at break and water is always available. Lunch is nourishing and good table manners are encouraged by staff.
- 4.9 Pupils are extremely well cared for. The successful pastoral structure caters effectively for pupils' individual needs. Regular staff meetings ensure open lines of communication so that all staff can support and guide pupils in an informed manner. Classroom displays in the pre-prep reinforce positive behaviour through use of behaviour charts and a reward system. Older pupils receive stars for their work and attitude. The 'happiness charter' is displayed in all classrooms, concerns may be posted in a 'worry box' and pupils know that they can go to any staff member if they need help. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that teachers are unfair in the way they give rewards and sanctions, but no evidence was found to support these concerns. Pupils say that they feel safe and valued, and that the older pupils provide good role models and care for the younger. Staff set an excellent example; there is a very easy rapport between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves.
- 4.10 Healthy attitudes to eating and exercise are reflected in the range and number of pupils who participate in sporting activities daily, along with pupils' clear understanding of what is needed to maintain a healthy and varied diet. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the food, which is prepared and served in hygienic conditions. Staff join pupils at mealtimes in an informal and civilised environment.
- 4.11 A small minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their views were not always sought. The inspection team found that their views are heard through representation on the school council and the food committee, and their proposals result in changes and developments. The whole community values good behaviour. A minority of parents expressed concern about bullying. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue, however, and that if any incident is reported it is dealt with swiftly and fairly. The bullying log was carefully examined and all entries were satisfactorily recorded and appropriately dealt with. New pupils are given a 'shadow' to support them in their induction to school life so that they feel they have a special friend who will support them. Pupils join one of four 'sets', which encourages pupils across the age range to work together, develop team spirit and foster a sense of pride and ambition, as they strive to achieve points through a variety of school events.
- 4.12 The school has a detailed long-term plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Clear procedures for safeguarding pupils are implemented effectively. The required checks on new staff are carried out and recorded correctly. All staff receive appropriate training in child protection at specified intervals. In the EYFS, children's safeguarding is carefully ensured and their welfare and development are enhanced by strong links with parents. As elsewhere, the diligent monitoring of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS ensures that the children have a safe environment for work and play. Procedures are secure and implemented well and conscientiously across the setting. The children are always closely supervised and are taught to be aware of the need for their personal safety.
- 4.15 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are taken very seriously. Highly effective, they cover all aspects of the life of the school. Policies relating to health and safety are detailed and wide ranging. In addition to the termly health and safety committee meetings, staff meet regularly to discuss care and welfare practices. Pupils are alerted to e-safety issues; all use of the computer network is monitored and pupils are given clear instructions about appropriate and unacceptable use of the internet. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire practices are held regularly and fire protection measures are in order, with regular monitoring of equipment throughout the school, both by staff and by external agencies. Risk assessments are comprehensive and thorough for relevant activities in and out of school.
- 4.16 The medical staff offer an excellent service in caring for pupils who are ill or injured. The medical needs of pupils are made known to all staff. A large proportion of the staff have had first-aid training, several at the higher level.
- 4.17 The admission and attendance registers are completed meticulously, and are maintained and stored in accordance with regulations.
- 4.18 The ethos of the school promotes co-operation, supportive relationships and high standards of behaviour: consequently pupils and staff understand how to keep themselves and others healthy and safe.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarders' personal development is clearly promoted by their boarding experience. They develop key qualities such as confidence and tolerance, and they are very thoughtful of the needs of others and extremely polite. The boarders are well supported and encouraged by committed boarding staff, who work hard to create a homely atmosphere. The staff provide a high standard of care and are sensitive to boarders' individual needs. Boarders appreciate the staff and say that their boarding experience is like being in one big happy family. The boarders develop strong friendships and there are very good relationships between younger and older boarders and between boarders and staff. Strong links exist between boarding and academic staff. The boarders know that they have a wide range of people they can talk to, including an independent listener; there is also a 'worry box' for posting concerns. Telephone numbers for ChildLine and the Children's Rights Director are also displayed. New boarders are welcomed and integrated into the community, and on arrival they have a 'shadow'. A boarding handbook provides useful information for boarders and parents. Boarders from other countries receive helpful support from the EAL department. Equal opportunities are offered to all boarders. A school council and a food committee, both made up of form representatives, meet regularly and changes have been made as a result of their discussions. Boarders also feel confident in raising issues with members of staff. The boarders have access to information about the world around them through newspapers and television. The school has written policies to promote good behaviour which are implemented in practice. Boarders were seen to behave extremely well and they are courteous to visitors and one another. Although a small minority of boarders, supported by a small minority of parents, said in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses that they do not enjoy boarding, the great majority of pupils declared in interviews that they do enjoy it and all of the boarders met during the inspection expressed enthusiasm for boarding.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are well cared for and feel safe. The school has and implements policies for those who are unwell. A qualified nurse is on duty and the school doctor holds twice-weekly surgeries. As well as providing excellent medical care, the nurse also offers a listening ear. When the nurse is off duty the team of house matrons continues this care and have received appropriate training. The nurse is also on call. Boarders can be cared for in the medical room. Local specialist services can also be accessed, including dentists and opticians.
- 4.22 The boarders' accommodation is of a good standard and rooms are clean, light and airy. Bathroom facilities are adequate for the boarders' needs. However, facilities for staff are not adequately separated from those for boarders as is required. Boarders personalise their own areas with posters and items from home. In their questionnaire responses a minority of boarders felt that their belongings are not safe, but evidence in the inspection did not support this and boarders may keep possessions in locked tuck boxes. The school keeps records of all risk assessments, complies with fire safety regulations and holds regular fire drills, including some when boarders may be expected to be asleep.
- 4.23 Boarders enjoy their meals, with Sunday lunch being particularly popular. They are also provided with drinks and snacks at appropriate times. Where possible, the catering staff use fresh produce bought locally and they respond positively to

suggestions from the food committee. Particular dietary needs are catered for. Matrons launder clothes and bedding. There is a school shop and boarders can obtain stationery and personal items.

- 4.24 The activity programme is excellent. Boarders are enthusiastic about the wide range of activities organised. In the evenings, they have use of school facilities in their free time. They enjoy this time, when, as well as socialising, they participate in a wide range of activities that include pottery, gymnastics and table tennis. At weekends, appropriate and entertaining activities are organised: the boarders particularly enjoy the Saturday movie night with popcorn. They maintain regular contact with their families by telephone and email, and they also write letters home on Sunday mornings.
- 4.25 Boarders feel safe and know where to go if they need help. There is a robust anti-bullying policy: boarders say that bullying is not a concern and if there were any instances they would be quickly and effectively dealt with. All staff, including ancillary staff, receive appropriate safeguarding training. The school operates a safe recruitment policy. Some boarding staff do not have job descriptions and their boarding practice is not regularly appraised as required.
- 4.26 The leadership and management of the boarding provision are highly effective. The matrons and boarding team feel supported and well led by the head of boarding, who also works as part of the team on boarding duty. Supervision of the boarders is good, with several members of staff on duty at all times. A clear statement of boarding principles and practice is available and all required policies and records are in place, including a complaints policy. A substantial section of the school development plan is devoted to boarding.
- 4.27 Parents express great satisfaction with all aspects of the boarding provision.

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 close collaboration with the headmaster and the bursar, the proprietor exercises diligent and effective oversight of educational standards, financial and strategic planning, investment in staff, resources, welfare, health and safety, and child protection. The proprietor undertakes a thorough annual review of the implementation and effectiveness of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. The contents of some other policies and compliance with regulatory requirements are not, however, regularly monitored.
- 5.3 Closely involved on a day-to-day basis, the proprietor is very well acquainted with all aspects of the life and work of the school. His frequent presence in the school enables him to ensure that aims are met and that his advice is informed, as are his contributions to decision making. High standards are expected in every area, with a particular emphasis on academic performance and pastoral care.
- 5.4 The proprietor is fully supportive of the contents of the school development plan, and also the establishment and continuing development of the pre-prep and EYFS departments, regarded as central to the long-term strategy of the school.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good overall.
- 5.6 While nurturing the traditional characteristics of the school, leadership has displayed vision and energy in undertaking wide-ranging initiatives in order to secure the school's continuing effectiveness. The broad and detailed school development plan has been created, meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection. It covers all aspects of school life and all age groups, including the EYFS.
- 5.7 The high standard of leadership provided by senior and middle managers demonstrates their very strong and successful commitment to furthering the aims of the school. The comprehensive staff handbook gives clear guidance on how to realise the school's objectives. The commitment of all staff to fulfilling the school's mission and supporting its ethos to keep boarding at its heart is clearly reflected in the high quality of teaching and the excellent pastoral care provided for pupils.
- 5.8 Leadership and management have implemented detailed policies and procedures for most aspects of school life which ensure its smooth operation and the provision of an excellent educational experience for pupils. Leadership has not, however, kept abreast of all the regulatory requirements for the main school and the EYFS, and for boarding welfare.
- 5.9 The school is very well run on a day-to-day basis, ensuring a learning environment in which pupils feel safe and where they enjoy high quality teaching. Staff duties, including all those relating to the safeguarding of pupils, are discharged most efficiently. The main building and grounds provide an attractive and stimulating

setting in which the pupils learn and develop, although a few of the facilities are not well maintained. The recommendation of the Ofsted boarding inspection of 2009 that the boys' changing room on the ground floor should be refurbished and redecorated has not been met. Both the boys' and the girls' changing rooms are of a generally low standard. The lack of showers in the girls' changing room and the lack of privacy in the boys' showers represent a failure to comply with the regulatory requirement that the school should provide suitable showers for pupils after physical education.

- 5.10 The senior team, working closely with the proprietor, has been very successful in recruiting, supporting, developing and motivating high quality staff. The school has a rigorous procedure for the recruitment and appointment of staff and the central register of appointments is accurately completed. All staff, including those in the EYFS, are fully trained and aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils and for their welfare, health and safety. Throughout the school, policies and procedures are in place to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. Some staff do not have job descriptions and some job descriptions are inadequate. A programme of staff appraisal, incorporating self-evaluation, monitoring and feedback, promotes the professional development of some members of staff in the prep school, but it does not include staff in the pre-prep or the EYFS, or the ancillary staff. Training needs or the opportunity for continued professional development for staff in the EYFS are not identified, nor does the timetable provide them with allocated time for planning.
- 5.11 Very good systems of communication within the school ensure a sense of corporate involvement and purpose; they also enable any difficulties to be tackled at an early stage. Members of the senior team are accessible and this is appreciated by staff and pupils. The senior team has created a culture of trust within the school and this is very well supported by the ancillary staff. A range of suitably minuted meetings involves staff with particular responsibilities, and managers work closely with the proprietor. The weekly full staff meeting is devoted to consideration of each form in turn, thus providing the opportunity for discussion of any pupil's academic and general progress.
- 5.12 Curricular planning has been developed with a particular focus on ensuring that the needs of all pupils, including the more able, are met. Schemes of work across the whole school help to ensure unity of academic purpose. Effective departmental leadership promotes coherence in learning for all pupils. Well-constructed systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress and setting targets ensure that pupils' academic development and welfare are monitored at every stage, with constructive action being taken when necessary.
- 5.13 In the EYFS, a welcome communication is sent to each child before the new year starts and this includes details of the coming term's topics. Children are invited to visit the setting informally with their parents before term begins so that they are familiar with their new environment. Daily contact with parents, email and the 'open door' policy ensure that parents are up to date with the activities of the day. Parents receive additional details of topic work in advance and are keen to collect related books and artefacts. A portfolio of each child's activities is compiled during the year. Regular reports and parents' meetings ensure that parents are informed of their children's progress in relation to the Early Learning Goals and they are invited to share their children's profile at the end of the year. Parent representatives from the EYFS and pre-prep classes meet informally with the leadership to discuss ideas for the development of the school. In self-evaluation, the school has identified a need to improve outside learning opportunities for children in the EYFS. Suggestions for

inclusion in the school development plan are not prioritised and, although there is a timescale, there are no clear success criteria to mark completion. Changes to the statutory provision for learning in the EYFS have been embraced and a new system has been introduced to monitor the children's progress and to inform the end-of-year profile. This is not yet fully embedded in the planning of the curriculum or in the system of reporting to parents. Effective partnerships with parents and outside agencies ensure that appropriate interventions can be put in place where necessary.

- 5.14 Throughout the school, parents are highly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents expressed their pleasure at the progress their children are making and that their children are happy, safe and very well looked after. Helpful information is provided for parents of prospective pupils and of new pupils. Informative, comprehensive end-of-term reports, monthly grade cards, regular meetings between parents and teachers, and the availability of staff keep parents well informed about their children's academic performance and progress.
- 5.15 While there is no formal parents' association, the involvement of parents in the life of the school includes attendance at matches, concerts, social functions and other events. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents indicated some dissatisfaction with the way the school was led, in particular that the school has not handled concerns well and has not provided timely responses to questions. Some parents also felt that the school is resistant to suggestions and opinions, and inspectors agreed that the school could operate a more open dialogue with parent. The complaints procedure is now available to parents on the website and scrutiny by inspectors of complaints records confirmed that they have been answered promptly and in accordance with the school's published policy. Some expressed a concern that information about the school and its policies is not readily available. Recent additions to material on the website have rectified this deficiency.

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