



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**DULWICH PREP LONDON**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## Dulwich Prep London

Full Name of School	<b>Dulwich Prep London</b>
DfE Number	<b>210/6001</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>312715</b>
Address	<b>Dulwich Prep London 42 Alleyn Park Dulwich London SE21 7AA</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 8670 3217</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 8766 7586</b>
Email Address	<b>information@dcpslondon.org</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Michael Roulston</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr David Pennock</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>824</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (806 boys; 18 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 5-11: <b>518</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>145</b> 11-18: <b>161</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>818</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>6</b> Full: <b>0</b> Weekly: <b>6</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Ruth Burtonshaw</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>20 Nov 2012 to 23 Nov 2012</b>

## 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 September 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](http://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.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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, parents, and the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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

Dr Stephen Grounds	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Gillian Bilbo	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Susan Bailes	Team Inspector (Former Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr Nicholas Garrett	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Ms Annie Lee	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Chris Lewsey	Team Inspector (Compliance Officer and Senior Tutor, IAPS school)
Mr Peter Nicholson	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Stephanie Piper	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr Tim Walton	Team Inspector (Head of Science and Housemaster, IAPS school)
Ms Myra Rodgers	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Lynda Sharpe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dulwich Prep London (formerly Dulwich College Preparatory School) is an independent school for boys aged between three and thirteen years, with girls in the Nursery. It is predominantly a day school which also offers weekly boarding from Year 5, plus a boarding programme for all boys from Year 5 to Year 7. The school was founded in 1885 as an independent preparatory school and is now one of two preparatory schools administered as a charitable trust by a board of governors, the other being Dulwich Preparatory School, Cranbrook. The leadership and management of the two schools are entirely separate. A new headmaster has been appointed since the previous inspection. The school has a Christian (Church of England) foundation, but welcomes pupils of all denominations and faiths and encourages a sense of respect and understanding of people of all backgrounds.
- 1.2 There are five sections of the school: Pre-Prep - Early Years (Nursery and Reception); Pre-Prep - Years 1 and 2; Lower School (Years 3 and 4); Middle School (Years 5 and 6); and Upper School (Years 7 and 8). The majority of pupils join the school in the Pre-Prep - Early Years and an additional thirty boys join in the Lower School; places in other years are filled as and when spaces become available. The boys transfer to selective day and boarding schools at the age of thirteen.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection the school had 815 full-time and nine part-time pupils on roll. The number includes: 136 full-time and nine part-time children from three to five years, including 15 full-time and three part-time girls; 518 boys between five and 11 years; and 161 boys between 11 and 13 years. The school has six weekly boarders. The school has seven pupils who are receiving support for English as an additional language (EAL). The school provides additional support for 146 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.4 The school's main priority is the well-being and happiness of its pupils. Beyond that the school seeks to challenge every pupil in his or her pursuit of excellence, and aims to support them in developing their full potential. The school strives to develop intellectual mastery and academic ambition and to build qualities of character essential for personal growth.
- 1.5 The school reflects a diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and pupils come from families of mainly professional or business backgrounds. The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with around a third of pupils having ability that is well above average, and few having ability that is less than above average. The ability profile of Year 7 in 2011 was higher than in previous years, being well above average overall.
- 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 Dulwich Prep achieves very high standards in all aspects: it provides a breadth of education and opportunities. All pupils, including those with SEND and those in the EYFS, achieve and make progress at a very high level, reflecting first-rate knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they study. They employ information and communication technology (ICT) with competence, apply English and mathematics consistently at a high level, and show critical thinking, practical skills, and creativity across a range of subjects. They can work independently. They achieve outstanding results in competitive entry to selective senior schools. The curriculum is wide ranging and unusually challenging. The taught curriculum is supplemented by a plethora of visits, sporting opportunities and clubs. Teaching shows exceptional creativity and is a major strength of the school. There is excellent individual support, particularly for those with SEND. Marking and assessment policies have been reviewed since the previous inspection but there are some inconsistencies in their operation. The school now uses assessment data more centrally and systematically to monitor pupils' progress. Although a relatively small element of the school's provision, the boarding is excellent and meets all of the National Minimum Standards.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent and a major strength of the school. Pupils enjoy their life in the school and have fun: from the EYFS upwards the school values play inside and outside the classroom. Pupils have a good appreciation of the less tangible aspects of life, excellent social skills, and a strong sense of right and wrong. They take opportunities to exercise responsibility. Pupils' ethnic diversity contributes to their very good cultural awareness. Pupils are supported by excellent pastoral care and welfare arrangements and effective procedures for their safeguarding, health and safety. Pupils develop good self-esteem and self-confidence so that they are mature and well prepared for life on leaving. Children in the EYFS are well behaved and co-operative and have high levels of confidence, imagination and curiosity. The pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed great satisfaction with the provision of the school.
- 2.3 At all levels the governance, leadership and management of the school are excellent. The headmaster and the senior leadership team have made a dynamic and positive impact with a management structure characterised by clear lines of responsibility, dedication of effort and effective communication. The school has a powerful system of departmental reviews strongly focused on teaching and learning. Over time there has been a steady improvement of the school's quality and its facilities to their present exceptional level. The school has responded to all the recommendations of the previous inspections of the main school, the EYFS and the boarding provision. The EYFS is very well led and managed. The school promotes excellent links with parents, whose replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire were both exceptionally large in number and positive in response.



## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Consolidate the application of marking and assessment schemes so that each pupil can monitor his progress against the objectives of the lesson or task.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 Pupils' overall achievement is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully achieves its aim of challenging pupils in the pursuit of excellence and to inspire each pupil to achieve his or her full potential. The pupils' basic skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing, logical and independent thought, creativity, the application of mathematics, and physical activity are at a particularly high level as reflected in the outstanding results achieved at scholarship and Common Entrance level and the high quality of achievement observed in lessons.
- 3.3 Throughout the school pupils display very secure knowledge, understanding and skills. They apply English and mathematics at a consistently high level. They employ ICT with a high degree of competence. Critical thinking was evident in history where pupils used primary evidence to form historical judgments. Both ICT and practical skills were seen used in science where Year 7 dissected hearts and photographed them using tablet computers. Creativity was shown in a very sensitively rendered Year 8 drama production, in high quality music performances and in the quality of the artwork displayed. Alongside scholarship success, two pupils have won national accolades in a short story writing competition in 2012 and in 2010 a pupil won an under-18 international art prize. A Year 5 team won a national science competition.
- 3.4 Achievement in the extensive and rich array of extra-curricular activities is widespread and excellent. Music is a major strength of the school: scholarships are awarded to various senior schools and almost all pupils from Years 2 to 8 play instruments. Pupils perform in choirs, instrumental ensembles and orchestras at prestigious venues. Outstanding levels of performance are achieved in sports activities. Sports scholarships are gained to senior schools and individual pupils in rugby, football, cricket, athletics, hockey, skiing and karate have achieved high levels of success. All pupils from Year 4 are given the opportunity to represent the school in competitive sport at their appropriate level. Swimming is a particular strength with high achievement in individual and team performance in national and district competitions. The school has provided three national players in the last three years in chess, and quiz teams have achieved regional and national successes.
- 3.5 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are excellent. All children respond well to the high expectations of the staff and are making excellent progress towards the Early Learning Goals in all areas of the curriculum. Nursery children are beginning to recognise letters by name and sound and they listen with enjoyment to stories. They are keen to make marks, and show increasing imagination, creativity and a growing knowledge of the world. Those in Reception classes communicate confidently, have excellent listening skills and have begun a phonological awareness: children read simple texts and write in sentences using simple punctuation. Their confidence in singing and speaking in the performance of *'The Bossy King'* was unusually good for their ages. In mathematics children add and subtract competently, have knowledge of two dimensional shapes and can solve simple problems.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. The pupils follow a broad and demanding curriculum which exceeds the level of demand of most schools. This level of

attainment, as judged by inspectors, indicates that pupils, including the most able, make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND make progress which is at least as good as their peers' and are able to access the curriculum fully. All pupils are able to achieve at their own level, as was observed in a Year 7 diving lesson at which all participants were enabled and empowered to work to their best levels.

- 3.7 Pupils' achievements are very well supported by their enthusiastic, committed and positive attitudes to learning, which encompass clear determination, curiosity and enjoyment. High standards of presentation are maintained and pupils work effectively, both independently and collaboratively, with their teachers and peers.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 A stimulating curriculum, appropriate to the age, ability and needs of all pupils, ensures that the aim of the school to 'emphasise intellectual mastery and academic ambition' is achieved. A strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy steadily develops into a broader curriculum as pupils progress. Languages are prominent and the opportunities for studying them have improved. Pupils start French in Year 1 and Latin is studied from Year 6 when pupils can also choose to learn Spanish. Ancient Greek is also taught to scholarship classes in Year 8. The range of other subjects is broad. Where appropriate, pupils can be referred by their teachers to receive effective learning support. The matching of tasks to pupils' abilities has improved through the new setting arrangements in Years 5 to 8.
- 3.10 The facilities supporting the curriculum such as those for ICT and the creative and expressive subjects are outstanding. The first-rate accommodation for visual, creative and performing arts provides an opportunity for pupils to excel in this area and high-quality instrumental and singing tuition is taken up by almost all pupils. In art pupils can extend their expertise beyond the normal range of media found in schools.
- 3.11 The breadth of sporting opportunities enables all pupils to develop their physical skills. The aim to include pupils of all ability levels to both enjoy and make progress is a particularly strong feature. Strong sportsmen are well challenged and given lots of opportunities to improve their skills.
- 3.12 The curriculum followed in the EYFS is well balanced. It is enhanced by specialist teaching in physical education and music, and ensures that basic skills are developed effectively. Challenging, purposeful play is balanced successfully between teacher-led and child-initiated learning activities in spacious and welcoming accommodation. The highly stimulating and safe outdoor environment, which includes a woodland area, is extremely well resourced and is used to good effect across all areas of learning.
- 3.13 The main school curriculum is enriched by an extensive range of well-organised educational trips, visiting speakers and workshops. Trips to Iceland and Sorrento had been recently enjoyed by pupils. Closer to home, Year 4 pupils had been 'evacuated' for the day as part of an imaginative broadening of their study of the Second World War. The school offers a huge choice of clubs ranging from beekeeping to circus skills, and young writers to water polo. There is an outstanding and popular programme in the middle and upper schools, where pupils may sign up to enrichment activities that will not be covered in lessons. In science, pupils were

observed investigating the relative strength of male and female brine shrimps. The Leake lecture series is very well attended by pupils and parents and offers a good range of interesting presentations by guest speakers. The younger children enjoy a stimulating programme of lunchtime activities. In one sewing class pupils were observed quietly and fully engaged in fine needlework. In other areas, more physical clubs stretch both mind and body and encourage creative thinking and active learning. The activities attended by pupils are carefully monitored by staff to ensure that pupils balance their interests.

- 3.14 The school has strong links with the local and wider community. The school opens its facilities for local community use at weekends and in the holidays. It raises money for a number of charities; pupils assist with a Christmas tea party for the elderly and support a Romanian summer school. Pupils collect Christmas gifts for the less fortunate and for soldiers serving in Afghanistan. School musical groups support the local church and the Royal Hospital at Chelsea. Forty boys from Year 5 to Year 8 will add their support to the school's Christmas charity appeal to raise funds for the Cardinal Hume Centre for the homeless, by volunteering their help.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.15 Teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 Teaching supports the school's aim to challenge pupils in their pursuit of excellence by encouraging intellectual curiosity and a spirit of enquiry.
- 3.17 Since the previous inspection teaching has been reviewed and care has been taken to cater for pupils' learning styles. The school has also successfully responded to recommendations concerning the diagnostic use of assessment data, accommodating investigation, research and higher order thinking, ensuring a high standard of behaviour in all lessons and improving lesson timing. Teaching is now strong in fostering in pupils the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, the ability to think for themselves and interest in their work.
- 3.18 Lessons are well planned and taught. Pupils are given a variety of tasks to hold their interest and challenge their thinking skills. Independent work is encouraged, as with the Year 7 English project 'My London'. Younger pupils learn to work independently through cross-curricular teaching. Individual, pair and group work give these pupils opportunities to learn in different ways. Lively discussions take place between pupils and teachers: in a Year 4 English lesson pupils cross-questioned each other about Shackleton and his team.
- 3.19 Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge using it to enrich learning. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect adding to pupils' enjoyment. The creative teaching of art, employing a wide range of media, encourages pupils to experiment with their work and not be afraid to make mistakes.
- 3.20 Formal termly reports provide a good insight into pupils' progress. Form tutors discuss the reports with the pupils who write their own comments and set targets together. These targets are used to stimulate pupils' efforts and motivation and are shared with parents. Targets are also evident in the pupils' 'prep registers' and in some subject lessons. Younger pupils have their targets in the front of their exercise books. However, not all pupils are fully aware of what they need to do to improve.
- 3.21 The assessment system has been reviewed thoroughly and new departmental marking policies have been implemented. This has led to greater consistency and in

the best cases marking is thorough, with some helpful comments on how work can be improved and opportunities for pupils to respond to advice. However, not all marking follows the good practice laid down in departmental policies. A new centralised system uses an assessment data spreadsheet to systematically check pupils' progress, including assessments from standard test scores. This is a good and well-managed initiative but it is too early to judge its effectiveness. Test results in science and mathematics are being added to this data for future analysis and all departments are looking for more ways to assess their subject areas. The data is used by the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) to identify pupils falling below expectations.

- 3.22 There are opportunities for teachers to observe each other through peer coaching and to discuss effective teaching methods across and within departments and year groups. Training on differentiation and special educational needs has increased staff awareness of the pupils' individual needs. An effective system supports SEND and EAL pupils within the lessons when required and the overall support for these pupils is excellent. Classroom teachers make good use of information disseminated by the learning support department to inform their planning.
- 3.23 Provision in the EYFS is excellent. The setting successfully achieves its aims to treat each child as an individual, nurturing confidence and self-esteem, whilst encouraging them to become keen, active and independent learners. Staff have a thorough understanding of the EYFS framework and nurture pastoral and academic development. In consequence, all children make excellent progress in their learning and development. Assessment through observation is rigorous and is used constructively to guide planning and target next steps for children, using a computer based 'target tracker' system. The strong skills of both teachers and Early Years' practitioners ensure that all children are well prepared for the next stages in their learning.
- 3.24 Throughout the setting, excellent resources are used and managed well to support learning, and visits to the local park, museum and art gallery provide rich experiences for children to learn about the wider world.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils have a clear understanding of other cultures, as demonstrated by their easy-going relationships with each other in the multi-cultural and multi-faith setting of the school. In class discussions pupils are encouraged to share their first-hand experience of different faiths. The theme of a whole-school assembly was supported by reference to the teachings of Christianity, Islam and Judaism and understood by pupils. Pupils are able to appreciate different cultures through the vibrant displays around the school, for example, those of London landmarks and photographs from the French day in the lower school. Through the curriculum and assemblies pupils learn about those less fortunate than themselves. For example, Year 4 study Mumbai, and learn about the changes there and the gap between rich and poor, and the chosen Christmas charity is to raise money for the homeless in London.
- 4.3 Pupils have a good appreciation of the non-material and more ephemeral aspects of life. They appreciate the beauty of music and in a Year 1 assembly the beauty of the colours of autumn leaves was shared by a pupil in a discussion of the seasons. Broader issues of morality are reinforced in assemblies, to which pupils are very responsive. Older pupils are given regular opportunities to debate ethical issues, for example, in school council, philosophy club, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education (RE) lessons. The PSHE programme includes learning about the value of money and the dangers of gambling. Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem which they demonstrate in concerts, drama performances and assemblies. In interviews, the pupils were able to express their opinions clearly and with maturity.
- 4.4 Pupils display excellent manners both to each other and to adults. Pupils went out of their way to greet inspectors and help them with directions. Within the PSHE programme pupils are encouraged to be mindful of their own shortcomings and to set themselves targets for improvement. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong which is developed through being encouraged to address issues by themselves or by seeking adult support when appropriate. The pupils act as playground buddies from Year 2, and in discussion Year 4 pupils clearly explained how they would use a help card to seek teacher support if they found themselves hurt or bullied on the playground.
- 4.5 Pupils' personal development is successfully encouraged through opportunities for taking responsibility at a number of levels. For example, prefects and Tribe Leaders in Year 8, Braves in Year 6, buddies, assembly monitors, chair monitors and looking after guinea pigs in the Pre-Prep. Pupils in Year 5 to 8 research and nominate charities for the school to support. Pupils then organise fund-raising events, for example one pupil in the Pre-Prep used his initiative to create a Lego model exhibition and raised £1,000, whilst other pupils filled Christmas boxes for soldiers in Afghanistan.
- 4.6 Year 8 pupils leave the school as confident, well-rounded young men, prepared for their next stage of their education.

- 4.7 Pupils' questionnaire responses were overwhelmingly positive. A small minority of pupils considered that there were unfairnesses in the system of rewards and sanctions, but inspectors were satisfied that the school had already identified this issue and was taking it forward in school council meetings in a very positive way.
- 4.8 Children in the EYFS are happy, confident and independent learners who have excellent relationships with staff and each other, and they respond to school life with great enthusiasm and enjoyment, sharing, taking turns and behaving well. They co-operate with each other and show high levels of confidence, increasing independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 The school fulfils its aim to ensure that the well-being and happiness of the pupils is its first priority.
- 4.11 Strong pastoral management caters for pupils' individual needs. The pastoral team have regular meetings and oversee a constant flow of information sharing about the pupils in their care. The addition of a school counsellor to the team is a great strength and the pupils speak positively about his input. All adults work together to give pupils extremely effective support and guidance and act as excellent role models.
- 4.12 There is much greater consistency in the teaching of PHSE. Subject specialists and heads of year now teach this subject in Years 1 to 6, resulting in greater consistency. The programme ensures that all pupils have opportunities to learn to be confident, self-aware and to set themselves behavioural targets.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and take regular exercise. They are knowledgeable about how to select a balanced diet at lunch including protein and carbohydrate.
- 4.14 The school has high standards of behaviour and further improvements to the rewards and sanctions have been thoughtfully implemented. Pupils understand the need for sanctions and appreciate the variety of awards that are used. There is an energy and community about the school. The views of the pupils are sought through questionnaires, school council and discussions with form teachers. Teachers value play which is taken very seriously both inside and outside the classroom. There are numerous examples of facilities which enable the pupils to have fun together. The sense of community is further enhanced by the strong Tribe (house) system.
- 4.15 In the EYFS the quality of provision for children's well-being is excellent. Good use of the key worker system enables strong relationships to be formed and children feel safe and able to share any concerns with staff. The children enjoy the healthy food provided for them and they are taught about good health and hygiene, for example, the importance of regular hand washing.
- 4.16 The school has a suitable three-year accessibility plan in order to meet the Equality Act. The current built environment of the school already has a very high level of accessibility for the physically disabled through the widespread provision of lifts, ramps and disabled toilet facilities.

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

- 4.17 The school's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.18 In both the main school and the EYFS regular reviews of policies and procedures ensure that all necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety are in good order.
- 4.19 In the EYFS children's safety is promoted effectively and the safeguarding of children ensured.
- 4.20 Appropriate arrangements secure the health and safety of pupils and thorough attention is paid to child protection in all parts of the school. Both the deputy head and the school's safeguarding officer have had recent training in the safeguarding of pupils. The school has strong links with the local authority, which ensures that it is able to give very high priority to the protection of children. The school has responded systematically to the findings of the previous inspection regarding the shortcomings identified in the checks with contractors, ensuring that contractors explicitly make the required checks and supply written confirmation that they have been carried out. A governor is designated child protection governor and child protection matters are considered at every meeting of the Dulwich Management Committee.
- 4.21 Fire drills take place regularly and suitable audits have been undertaken. Effective measures are taken regarding pupils' safety in organising the evacuation of the school in case of fire or other hazards. Risk assessments are prepared for tours, visits, trips, activities and facilities. The bursar's department maintains a constant review of the site and has systematic programmes for checking its features such as the water supplies, fire and gas safety, electrical safety and the portable equipment used by pupils.
- 4.22 Admission and attendance records are properly maintained and stored.
- 4.23 The facilities for pupils who are sick or injured are of a high standard. Thorough, systematic records of accidents and the dispensing of medicines are kept. The first aid policy is comprehensive and the school has an appropriate number of staff with first aid qualifications.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.24 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.25 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are articulate and confident and demonstrate positive attitudes to their life in the school showing that their personal development is clearly promoted by the boarding experience. They enjoy being part of their community and make a positive contribution to it. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses they were very positive in their views of the boarding experience. Boarders exchange their views on the experience freely with the staff who care for them. This proactivity on the part of the boarders is responded to by the staff leading to changes in the quality of the provision of which boarders are proud.
- 4.26 This year the school has introduced a 'Stayover at Brightlands' initiative where one form a week stays over for three evenings and experiences boarding and takes part in life skills activities. The weekly boarders can join in these activities and when they do so they proudly show off their house to the visitors. They enjoy playing with the



stay-overs and they take pleasure organising a friendly 'dorm tidiness' competition. On the other two evenings the boarders enjoy going to the sports hall and the hot chocolate and toast which follow. They also have and enjoy an in-house cinema evening.

- 4.27 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are well cared for, feel safe and their needs are well met. They know that they have a wide range of people to whom they can talk including an independent listener. They benefit from an informal buddy system for new boarders and there is a helpful A-Z guide to the house. The school has and implements policies for those who are unwell with a medical centre staffed by qualified nurses during the day and nurses who are on call out of hours. As a consequence the boarders receive excellent health care: nurses also play a supportive general role. There is a medical room in-house where boarders can be cared for by the houseparent. Local services can also be accessed, including the dentist and optician. The boarders' laundry is done efficiently in-house. The boarding accommodation is secure and the safety of the accommodation is given a high priority. For example, fire drills are regularly carried out.
- 4.28 The boarding accommodation has been upgraded since the previous Ofsted inspection and the current provision is of a high standard. Rooms are kept in a very clean state and are bright, airy and comfortable. There is a range of games equipment including a table tennis table and pool table. A wide range of activities in school are available and boarders particularly enjoy games organised by staff in the house grounds. Boarders say that they have a great deal to do in the evenings and that they have sufficient self-directed time.
- 4.29 The quality of food is good. Breakfasts and suppers are enjoyable, tasty and nutritious meals which are strongly appreciated by the boarders. There are varied, healthy menus and special dietary needs are catered for. Snacks and fresh fruit are provided in the house. Boarders are easily able to maintain regular contact with parents and friends by both telephone and email.
- 4.30 The quality of care for boarders' welfare, health and safety is excellent. The school has written policies to promote good behaviour and there is an anti-bullying policy. Boarders echo the general opinion in the school as a whole that bullying is not an issue and that if there were any problems they would be quickly dealt with. All the National Minimum Standards with regard to safeguarding are met. All staff, including ancillary staff, receive safeguarding training. Accurate records of the training are kept. The school operates safe recruitment procedures and staff recruitment files contain all the required documentation. All these are improvements since the previous inspection.
- 4.31 The leadership and management of the boarding provision are excellent. The senior management of the school provides strong and proactive direction. The house master leads the boarding strongly on a day-to-day level and the boarding team are well supported by him. Appropriate records are kept of training in boarding practice. The boarding team is new and the school plans to review and update its practice regularly. The effective school appraisal system includes the boarding staff.
- 4.32 The parents who responded to the boarding questions of the parental questionnaire are extremely satisfied with the provision and the care their children receive.
- 4.33 The school has responded positively to all the recommendations of the 2009 boarding report and fully meets all the National Minimum Standards for boarding.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Through the shared governing body, both Dulwich Preparatory School, Cranbrook and Dulwich Prep London benefit from joint procurement, a trust risk committee and the use of surpluses, wherever raised, although each school is largely autonomous in its operation. Members of the governing body who provide particular support to Dulwich Prep are referred to as the Dulwich Management Committee which meets in advance of the governing body and makes recommendations to it.
- 5.3 Since the previous inspection, this local management committee has reviewed the strengths and interests of its members, and those with a specialism in education are now included, creating a committee with a range of skills. Although no policy of formal induction for governors operates, many members of the board have attended courses and in-service training recently. The local management committee maintains a very close view of the life of the school through frequent contact with staff, parents and pupils. They attend school functions or make visits during the working day. The regular visits to, and involvement of governors in the work of the school, including the EYFS, informs governors about the setting and supports the staff, especially in their planning. Staff speak positively about the governors' presence and support. Governors have a clear vision for the school which they share with the school's leadership. They are committed to ensuring that the school's aims of providing the widest possible curriculum and of transferring pupils to a wide range of schools are met. They provide highly effective oversight of all sections of the school, including educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources.
- 5.4 The local management committee meets termly to receive reports from the headmaster and bursar. It also invites members of the senior leadership team (SLT) to report on different sections of the school, using their expertise to describe the ways in which the pupils experience the education provided. In this manner, governors are helped to identify areas for improvement. The governors regularly review the success of the school's development plan and are creating a ten to fifteen-year plan to improve facilities further. The governing body is now highly effective in discharging its responsibilities for monitoring compliance throughout the school, including those for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management of the school, including links with parents and others, is excellent.
- 5.6 It effectively enhances the aim of the school to inspire excellence and promote the well-being and happiness of the pupils.
- 5.7 Since the previous inspection, the senior management has been strategically restructured. The headmaster and the senior leadership team have made a dynamic and positive impact with a management structure characterised by clear lines of responsibility, dedication of effort and effective communication. Regular

meetings, the dedication of the staff and effective communication ensure that pupils' pastoral and academic needs are fully addressed and that each pupil achieves his or her full potential. The attractive grounds and superbly equipped teaching areas reflect the pride of the whole school community and contribute to the vibrant working culture so evident on tours of the school.

- 5.8 Robust implementation of the safeguarding policy ensures the safety of pupils. Staff are trained in child protection matters and the school adheres to safe recruitment practices.
- 5.9 Self-evaluation is managed very well. Contributions to the ongoing review of the school are invited from across the school community. This includes Year 7 pupils who are invited to the headmaster's house for lunch and to discuss how the school could be improved. The school development plan encompasses these suggestions and seeks to implement the final vision for the school of the governors and headmaster together with a set of aims to underpin all school developments.
- 5.10 The school council feels empowered as its decisions are acted upon, as, for example, in its choice of charities to support or change in dining arrangements. Since the previous inspection, the school has initiated a system of reviews of subject departments. This is a rigorous process led by the headmaster and members of the SLT and is akin in its methodology to a mini-inspection. It is strongly focused on teaching and learning. The outcomes are a series of detailed and relevant action points for improvement and opportunities to further extend the curriculum, as seen in the recently opened Music Technology Centre and the appointment of an artist in residence.
- 5.11 A well-established appraisal system is in place on a two-yearly cycle and staff appreciate the opportunities to review their performance. Staff say that the feedback they receive makes them feel valued. Excellent provision for continuous professional development, linked to appraisal targets, ensures the recruitment and maintenance of well-qualified and dedicated staff and further enhances the quality of teaching and learning.
- 5.12 Management at all levels ensures that staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, in safeguarding, and in welfare, health and safety. Induction procedures for new staff provide an introduction to the ethos of the school, safeguarding training and opportunities to meet the governors.
- 5.13 The leadership of the Early Years demonstrates clear and ambitious vision for development within the EYFS, constantly evaluating the provision, and focusing strongly on the well-being of each child. Teaching is well monitored as part of the appraisal process and the staff, who work effectively as a happy, caring and closely knit team, are well qualified, with most holding paediatric first aid certificates. The school has responded positively to the recommendation concerning assessment in the 2008 report.
- 5.14 The school has developed excellent links with parents, carers and guardians and this was borne out during the inspection in discussion, in observations and in the extensive and very positive response in the pre-inspection questionnaires. Parents strongly value the care and education their children receive, the ready availability of information about school events, and the way in which the school handles any concerns. They receive clear and useful reports about their children's progress. Staff email addresses are published to parents and members of staff respond promptly to any concerns or queries.

- 5.15 The school maintains regular constructive contact with parents through various formal and informal means. Formal communication includes the headmaster's weekly newsletter published on the excellent school website, an electronic link to relevant correspondence for all parents, the termly magazine '*Focus*', which also includes a list of forthcoming events, and regular parents' evenings and reports, which were redesigned and streamlined after a consultation exercise with parents and pupils. A commercial system is used to ensure rapid dissemination of important information and parents can also access the calendar using their mobile devices. There are many opportunities for informal contact between members of staff and parents. Throughout the year the parents from every class are invited to the headmaster's house for a coffee morning and this provides an opportunity for dialogue, which is much appreciated by parents. The Friends' Association, which replaced the Parent/Teachers Association, is very active and brings members of the school community together at such events as balls for parents and staff and an annual fireworks display. Each form also has a parent representative who coordinates social events and this helps pupils and parents to get to know each other.
- 5.16 The school also organizes helpful information evenings for parents, and these include talks on the forthcoming school year, internet safety, mathematics workshops and literacy workshops. Parents value the before- and after-school care provision, as well as the school's use of technology in communicating sports team information. Prep registers are used daily to provide strong lines of communication between parents and the school. Parents regularly attend school events including assemblies, matches, plays and concerts, which in turn allow parents to be involved effectively in their children's education and relate strongly to the school.
- 5.17 Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are well informed about the school through the website, the prospectus, open days and new parents' evenings. At the beginning of each year parents are provided with a comprehensive information booklet and this includes useful telephone numbers and details about school policies and many aspects of their children's education.
- 5.18 Regular formal and informal communications, detailed reports and consultation meetings keep parents of EYFS children well informed of their children's progress, whilst useful links with the local authority support staff with skills and knowledge.

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