



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
DULWICH PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Dulwich Preparatory School

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| Full Name of School | Dulwich Preparatory School |
| DfE Number | 886/6043 |
| Registered Charity Number | 312715 |
| Address | Dulwich Preparatory School Coursehorn Cranbrook Kent TN17 3NP |
| Telephone Number | 01580 712179 |
| Fax Number | 01580 715322 |
| Email Address | headmaster@dcpskent.org |
| Head | Mr Paul David |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Richard Maidment |
| Age Range | 3 to 13 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 485 |
| Gender of Pupils | Boys and Girls (276 boys; 209 girls) |
| Numbers by Age | 3-5 (EYFS): 55 11-13: 128 5-11: 302 |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: 427 |
| Number of Boarders | Total: 58 Flexi: 58 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Johanna Scanlon |
| EYFS Gender | Boys and Girls |
| Inspection Dates | 15 Mar to 18 Mar 2016 |

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI integrated inspection was in February 2012.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

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|-------------------|---|
| Mr Graham Gorton | Reporting Inspector |
| Mrs Alexia Bolton | Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Jenny Jones | Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school) |
| Mrs Emma Stanhope | Team Inspector (Director of Lower School, GSA school) |
| Mrs Anne Turner | Team Inspector (Head of Department, IAPS school) |
| Miss Sue Duff | Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding |
| Mrs Yvonne Parry | Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years |

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dulwich Preparatory School is a co-educational school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 13 years. It is set within a 50-acre site in the heart of the Kent countryside. It was founded at Cranbrook in 1939 and is one of two schools administered as a charitable trust by the Dulwich Preparatory Schools board of governors. The two schools are entirely separate in terms of leadership and management. A local management board undertakes specific responsibilities in this school, on behalf of the trust. The school is predominantly a day school, offering flexible boarding during the week.
- 1.2 The school is formed of three departments: Nash House, for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); Little Stream, for pupils in Years 1 to 4; and Upper School, for pupils in Years 5 to 8. Since the previous inspection there has been extensive redevelopment of Nash House. This has created new classrooms and outdoor learning and play environments. Additional play areas have been added to Little Stream. There have also been development and extension to the school's dining facilities.
- 1.3 In its stated aims the school strives to provide excellent standards in education for its pupils, set in a happy learning environment and tailoring learning to their individual abilities. It seeks to achieve this by providing a balanced curriculum alongside a broad range of extra-curricular activities. The school sets out to support pupils to achieve their full potential, building self-esteem to help the transition to the next stage of learning. The school values hard work, respect and co-operation believing that they are at the heart of its operation. It seeks to encourage self-reliance balanced with self-control in an atmosphere in which staff are dedicated to fulfilling its purpose.
- 1.4 There are currently 485 pupils at the school, of whom 55 are in the EYFS. There are 276 boys and 209 girls on roll. At the time of the inspection, 58 pupils were using the boarding facilities on a flexible basis. There are six pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly originating from Asia. Most pupils live within a 20-mile radius and come mainly from professional, rural and business families. The ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.5 The school has identified 192 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 118 require school support with some aspect of their learning. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school has no pupils who require support for speaking English as an additional language (EAL).
- 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 Throughout the school pupils are extremely well educated in line with its aims. They leave the school as confident and competent young people, ready for the next stage of their education. Across the school pupils' achievements are excellent. Pupils are most successful in gaining entry to their chosen senior schools, often with scholarships and awards. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and are always keen to give their very best. The school, including in the EYFS, offers an excellent curriculum that provides many exciting opportunities for the pupils. This is supported by a rich and varied extra-curricular programme that provides numerous opportunities for the pupils to involve themselves in sport, the creative arts and other activities more cerebral in nature. Teaching is good throughout the school. At its best, the teaching is planned carefully and makes excellent use of resources, using a variety of styles and methods that capture the full engagement of all pupils. However, some teaching is not planned so well and offers more limited opportunities for pupils to make rapid progress.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, the personal development of the pupils is excellent. They show high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, and their moral awareness is extremely well developed. Pupils' social development is outstanding and they readily contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. Pupils show a strong cultural awareness, and they are tolerant and respectful towards those whose beliefs and backgrounds are different from their own. Excellent pastoral arrangements ensure that all pupils are well cared for. Effective systems support the pastoral care of the pupils but occasional inconsistency exists in the giving of rewards and sanctions. Welfare, health and safety arrangements in all parts of the school are thorough and comprehensive, including safeguarding policies and procedures. All aspects of the boarding provision are excellent. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the boarding experience.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is excellent. At all levels governors fully support the development of the school and provide excellent levels of challenge. They carry out all of their legal responsibilities thoroughly. Excellent leadership and management throughout the school are reflected in the high quality of the pupils' achievements and personal development. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been dealt with but a degree of inconsistency exists in the impact of subject leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning in some subjects in Years 5 to 8. Parents value the strong bonds that exist between themselves and the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Implement a consistent approach to the giving of rewards and sanctions amongst all staff.
 2. Ensure that all subject leaders provide the same high quality and rigour in their monitoring of teaching and learning.
 3. Improve teachers' planning to ensure that all teaching meets the standard of the best and enables pupils of all abilities to make their best possible progress.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Children in the EYFS enjoy their learning and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able. Younger children are excellent listeners, follow instructions and respond well to questions. In their number work, Nursery children recognise simple shapes and add and count objects confidently. In Reception, children use their phonic knowledge masterfully to read simple texts fluently and write stories and captions independently, and can add and subtract two single-digit numbers and recognise and use coins correctly in role play. The children are confident taking turns and asking questions. They show initiative, independently exploring their ideas and interests with critical thought. They concentrate well and are creative.
- 3.3 The school fulfils its aim to provide the best educational opportunities for the pupils and enables them to move confidently to the next stage of their education. Pupils leave the school with high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum, supported by their successes in the many curricular and extra-curricular activities the school provides. Pupils are highly articulate and apply their speaking and listening skills confidently in lessons and discussions. They listen well, and respect and show appreciation for the contributions of others. They read with intonation and eloquence, and write with increasing creativity and in a range of contexts. Mathematical knowledge and application are excellent and skills are applied extremely well to other curriculum areas.
- 3.4 Beyond the classroom, pupils follow their interests and achieve high standards in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Achievement in sport and creative arts is outstanding. Pupils take part in ambitious and successful drama productions where the talents of a broad range of abilities are fostered and nurtured. Excellent levels of creativity are evident in the high quality of art and pottery displays throughout the school and in leavers' legacies displayed across the school site, celebrating their talents. School teams excel in inter-school, county and national sports competitions, and individual pupils perform nationally and internationally in sports such as golf and hockey. Creative arts are given high priority, with pupils regularly achieving distinctions in music and speaking and listening examinations, in addition to winning local awards.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but from the extensive evidence available it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. The evidence is drawn from work scrutiny, lesson observations, discussions and a study of school data on pupils' progress, as well as pupils' success in gaining entry to the senior school of their choice. Many achieve scholarships, including for academic performance, music, art, design and technology (DT), sport, drama and languages.
- 3.6 The level of attainment indicates that pupils make a good rate of progress, and in some cases excellent progress, in relation to those of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND or EAL also make good progress, as evidenced by their reading, spelling, mathematics and reasoning scores in standardised tests and by discussions with them. More able pupils make good and sometimes excellent progress, in response to the challenge that is provided in some subjects.

3.7 In responses to questionnaires, almost all pupils felt that they are making good progress. Pupils in interviews confirmed this, including those with SEND. A very large majority of parents also consider that their children make good progress. Pupils enjoy their learning and generally demonstrate high levels of focus and engagement when the teaching is effective. Pupils show high organisational capabilities, especially when working co-operatively. Presentation of work is excellent and pupils are proud of their achievements.

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 excellent educational programmes in the EYFS help all children to reach the expected levels of development, and individually targeted next steps ensure that needs and interests are met thoroughly. Specialist provision of French, music, physical education (PE) and art enriches the curriculum. Trips and visits to the community enhance children's awareness of people and places.

3.10 Throughout the rest of the school, the excellent curriculum also fully supports the aims to educate the whole person so that all pupils can achieve their potential. The curriculum covers fully the requisite areas of learning. Long-term planning is thorough and is supported by excellent schemes of work in all subject areas. Throughout the school, a well-structured programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), appropriate to the ages of the pupils, ensures that pupils are taught a range of topics, such as how to stay safe on the internet and how to deal with friendships. Through inclusion of democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, the curriculum ensures that there is a balanced position of opposing views in the coverage of political issues, including in extra-curricular work.

3.11 In Years 1 to 4, pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music, games, science, information and communication technology (ICT), art and French. From Year 2, pupils are grouped by ability for mathematics, which provides excellent opportunities for them to be extended in their learning. The development of the outdoor learning experiences promotes co-operation and pupils taking responsibility for themselves.

3.12 In Years 5 to 8, pupils' language experiences are further enhanced by the introduction of Latin and Spanish. The inclusion of hand-held devices in Year 7 and 8 allows pupils to develop ICT skills in some subjects. In Year 8, a further teaching group is added, to support pupils aiming to sit academic scholarships to senior schools, as well as providing opportunities for pupils who would benefit from a higher level of academic challenge. Pupils are also supported by scholarship sessions in art, drama and music. 'Clinics' in Years 5 to 8 provide excellent opportunities for the pupils to receive additional support if needed in a particular subject area, as well as offering the more able pupils opportunities to extend their learning. Pupils are given excellent opportunities to enter examinations in English speaking, music and dance. The excellent house system provides pupils with numerous opportunities for inter-house competitions, enabling them to develop successfully as individuals.

3.13 There is excellent provision for pupils with SEND, including any with an EHC plan. Pupils are given high levels of support in the classroom by additional learning support staff and through the skilful use of teaching assistants.

3.14 Almost all parent and pupil questionnaire responses indicated satisfaction with the curriculum. The wide range of trips and educational visits greatly enhances the

learning opportunities for all pupils. These include visits to places of historical, geographical or cultural interest, both at home and abroad. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop outdoor skills through numerous camping experiences. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in activities such as rock climbing and using a zip wire. Extra-curricular activities include sports, drama, art and music in extensive provision, offering pupils excellent opportunities to try new pursuits and further their individual gifts and talents. Community links are strong. The wider community is welcomed through a variety of sporting events held at the school. Pupils also benefit from specialist weekend schools that link the community with the school, such as in dance.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, staff have high expectations and, as a result of excellent teaching, children are engaged and highly motivated. Generously resourced classrooms and outdoor areas are used well to promote critical thinking and independent learning. For example, children across the age range explore the 'mud kitchen' with great interest, creating hot cross buns, crepes and other foodstuffs. Regular, precise observations and assessment guide learning strategies to ensure that children make rapid progress.
- 3.17 Teaching throughout the school encourages and supports pupils, in line with the aims to provide the best educational opportunities. Excellent relationships exist between staff and pupils. The good policies for marking, assessment and homework work well in most subjects. Pupils' work is often marked thoroughly and they appreciate having informative teacher comments that indicate how they might improve further. The school has a clear, well-structured assessment system, including a range of standardised tests, and the results are collated and analysed to gain an effective overview of pupil progress and achievement.
- 3.18 Long- and medium-term planning is detailed and effective but short-term and individual lesson planning sometimes lacks detail on how teaching will meet the individual needs of all pupils. When this occurs, lessons lack challenge, creativity, variety of teaching methods and appeal, especially for the more able, and progress slows for some pupils. The most effective teaching is characterised by quality short-term planning, with focused learning objectives and teaching strategies such as open-ended questioning, provision for different abilities and effective management of time. Teachers generally use resources well to engage the pupils and to support their learning.
- 3.19 In pupils' questionnaire responses, a small minority expressed the view that they do not always have the right amount of work to do and that the homework set does not help them to learn. Evidence from homework diaries and scrutiny of work does not support these views. The quantity and quality of work set are appropriate for the ages and abilities of the pupils. Pupils of all abilities are enthusiastic about opportunities for independent research, both in school and when set as a homework exercise. This helps to ensure that the needs of the more able are met as they are given the opportunity to extend their thinking, particularly benefiting these pupils.
- 3.20 Teaching successfully meets the needs of any pupils with an EHC plan. Good support structures are in place and teachers have received suitable training. Excellent liaison with external agencies is in place. Teaching responds extremely

effectively to the needs of pupils with SEND or EAL. The support is at its best in the classroom, when SEND specialists and teaching assistants are used skilfully. Teachers generally make good use of a wide range of resources to support pupils with SEND.

- 3.21 Teaching promotes tolerance and respect through many subjects and ensures non-partisan coverage of political matters. In questionnaire responses, almost all pupils felt that their teachers help them to learn and a very large majority felt that their teachers provide individual help when they need it.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 In the EYFS, children work well together, learning to accept each other's differences and showing a high level of respect and tolerance towards one another. They understand the need to share and take turns, and display a well-developed ability to make good choices and decisions. Even the youngest children willingly take responsibility, for example when tidying up or pouring milk at snack time. Children are beginning to understand democracy through themes and simple activities such as voting for which book to read at story time. Good communications and planned visits prepare children well for the transition to their next class.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development fulfils the school's aim of nurturing confident individuals who are happy in their learning environment. Pupils display considerable maturity; they are highly articulate in their discussions with adults and in their PSHEE topics. Pupils show a deep appreciation for non-material and spiritual aspects of school life; for example in drama, pupils lent powerful emotions to their work on characterisation. Their self-esteem and self-knowledge are evident in their calm conduct around the school. The pupils are assured young people, at ease with their peers and adults alike, while maintaining the joy of being children.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral sense is highly developed. They learn to distinguish right from wrong from an early age and understand why rules are required. They have a keen sense of fairness, and their excellent behaviour and respect for one another are one of the hallmarks of the school. They discuss moral and ethical issues with a developing awareness of and respect for the civil and criminal law of England. Pupils display a growing understanding of democratic processes through debates in citizenship classes, as well as through a secret ballot in a mock election. Pupils show respect for each other, and are aware of one another's differences and the importance of identifying and combating discrimination.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent, fulfilling the school's expectations for them to co-operate in the smooth running of the community. They contribute positively to the lives of those in the locality and further afield, supporting people who are less fortunate. Numerous charitable fund-raising projects, including those initiated by pupils, are a testament to their highly developed sense of social responsibility. Pupils gain a broad understanding of social and political institutions through the workings of the school council, an elected pupil body whose decisions have a positive impact on the life of the school. In response to the questionnaire a few pupils expressed a concern about opportunities for responsibility. Inspection found that whilst some of the opportunities favour the older pupils, the impact of duties on the personal development of those in Year 8 as they prepare to enter the next phase of their lives is considerable. Their care for younger pupils provides an excellent model for them in their own roles as monitors and 'buddies', while they aspire to wider responsibilities later on.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural awareness is well developed. They are tolerant of different cultural traditions, and through their study of world religions pupils develop a strong understanding and acceptance of faiths and beliefs that are different from their own. Their experience is heightened by links forged with organisations overseas and by studying migrant issues closer to home. The pupils celebrate key festivals from

other cultures and exhibit a keen awareness and openness to different faiths and customs. Pupils have an acute respect for their own culture, developed, for example, through art and music.

- 4.7 Pupils display an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school and are ready to take their place in the wider world.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 In the EYFS, the key person knows each child and his or her family exceptionally well, ensuring that their needs are met. Excellent relationships and careful deployment of staff result in exemplary behaviour by the children, supported by an effective system of rewards and praise. Children are taught how to be safe. When moving around school or when using simple tools they feel secure and they become highly confident learners. At lunch and snack times they are encouraged to make healthy choices and they enjoy the nutritious cooked lunches in the school's dining hall. In PE lessons and other activities, children learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise.
- 4.10 The school is successful in providing a high level of pastoral care through the personal attention given to each pupil, in line with the school's aims. The excellent and respectful relationships that are evident across the school help the smooth running of the school community. The detailed electronic recording of all information relating to an individual ensures that all pupils are individually supported and tailor-made plans are created and shared. In questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspection found that the strong bond between staff and pupils provides excellent opportunity for pupils to discuss their views, and the school council provides a vehicle through which the pupils' voice is heard and responded to. Pupils set the agenda and feedback is provided in various forms. The school thus ensures that the views of pupils are sought.
- 4.11 Opportunities throughout the day and after school for regular exercise encourage the pupils to be healthy. The good range of home-cooked hot food available is complemented by a daily salad bar, helping to develop healthy eating habits.
- 4.12 Behaviour is effectively monitored throughout the school and support is in place to promote positive relationships. In questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils felt that teachers are not fair in giving rewards and sanctions. Inspection found that there are clear systems but some inconsistencies were identified. A few parents and pupils also commented that the school does not deal effectively with any bullying. Inspection found that meticulous records are kept, which are analysed to note any particular patterns or trends. This enables excellent support and guidance for all those involved in any bullying incident. The extensive mentor programmes and 'buddy' systems in place help all pupils to feel involved by giving them responsibilities to strengthen relationships across year groups.
- 4.13 The school has an appropriate three-year plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, which is regularly updated to meet the evolving needs of all pupils.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 In the EYFS, thorough attention is given to safeguarding by the staff, who are vigilant in providing a welcoming, secure and stimulating environment where children feel safe and know they will be listened to. Staff have appropriate training in arrangements to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Prompt and regular attendance is promoted.
- 4.16 Throughout the school, safeguarding arrangements are thorough and given an extremely high priority. Staff are fully trained in child protection, including in the potential radicalisation of pupils. The school keeps detailed records on all safeguarding matters.
- 4.17 Thorough procedures are in place to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. All equipment is regularly maintained and thorough records are kept. There are regular fire drills which are held at different times throughout the school day and during out-of-school hours for boarders.
- 4.18 Health and safety policies and procedures are thorough and ensure that pupils are well cared for. Meticulous records are kept on all matters relating to testing, which is undertaken on a regular basis. The school site is maintained to an extremely high standard, minimising potential risks to pupils. Excellent, detailed risk assessments are in place for all activities both within school and for trips, visits and excursions. The school has good provision for pupils who may become unwell and a team of qualified staff is always on hand to support any medical needs or accidents around the school. There are excellent arrangements for pupils with SEND.
- 4.19 Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored. In questionnaire responses an overwhelming majority of parents said that their children feel safe at school, and this was reaffirmed during interviews with pupils.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are happy, confident and articulate, and feel extremely well looked after at school. They enjoy boarding and have positive views on the additional experiences that boarding brings to them. House staff build positive relationships with all boarders. The boarders have excellent relationships with each other across the year groups, fostering tolerance and understanding. Boarders value many aspects of boarding and talk proudly of their involvement in various elements of it. They have a number of adults to turn to if they have concerns. Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute to the operating of the boarding provision, for example through the school council, the impact of which is well regarded by boarders. Representatives are elected from each boarding house.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent and it fully supports the individual needs of boarders. The two boarding houses are furnished to an exceptionally high standard to provide homely, inviting accommodation. The excellent pictures, artwork and posters feature boarders' work and collage photographs of recent boarding events, which make pupils feel a true part of the boarding community. Boarders' belongings are safe. They have lockers in the

house and staff look after any valuables if requested. Prep is supervised by house tutors, providing an excellent working environment where one-to-one help is available for those who need it. Showers, toilets and baths are numerous and appropriately private. Mobile telephones are not permitted across the school but boarders have easy access to telephones and email in their boarding houses to contact their parents. The food at school is plentiful, nutritious and of a high quality. Two additional snack times after school offer selections of fresh fruit, biscuits, toast, cereal and drinks. Boarding staff join pupils for meals. The house kitchen facilities are excellent and are the hub of the social life of the house, offering snacks and drinks. Water is available at all times. Laundry is all undertaken in house and kept safely in lockers or in the large basket allocated to each boarder.

- 4.23 Notice boards provide comprehensive information on a variety of aspects, including supervision rotas. They also provide an array of telephone numbers including helplines such as an independent listener and the office of the Children's Commissioner. Boarders benefit from excellent opportunities for recreational and developmental activities. They comment that they enjoy the areas for relaxation indoors and out, and the games rooms, which provide an extensive variety of opportunities for enjoyment. Quiet rooms offer a place for boarders who may wish to be alone. In addition, planned activities are available in the evenings. Newspapers and magazines are provided for the boarders in their houses. If boarders are unwell, excellent medical facilities and qualified staff are available, supported by the house staff, all of whom are trained in first aid. All medication is stored and dispensed appropriately. Pupil healthcare plans support those with specific medical needs. Appropriate medical risk assessments are undertaken before boarders are permitted to self-medicate. Boarders can arrange to see the school doctor, who visits regularly, and other professionals when needed. All necessary parental consents are gathered for medical treatment. The boarding provision communicates effectively with parents and has suitable procedures should complaints be received.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. The weekly pastoral meetings ensure that the individual attention that all boarders receive relates to their particular circumstances. All information is recorded electronically to ensure that a full picture is gathered for all relevant staff and tailored support is provided where necessary. Communication amongst staff is excellent. As a result, boarders feel exceptionally safe and secure in the school and boarding houses. Vetting procedures before staff are appointed are thorough. Staff are suitably trained in all welfare, health and safety areas, including child protection. Fire drills are regularly undertaken in boarding time. Positive behaviour is promoted thoroughly through effective policies. Any incidents of bullying, including cyber-bullying, are dealt with. The protocols for missing boarders, for restraint and for searching boarders are clear and understood by staff. Supervision of boarders is comprehensive. Boarding staff are readily available overnight should the need arise. Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken for all activities and excursions.
- 4.25 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. The overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of all aspects of the boarding provision. The house teams work very well together and this is reflected in the high quality interactions and positive relationships observed amongst the boarders and with staff. The boarding staff are fully trained for their roles through courses provided both internally and off site. Any training is efficiently shared with all boarding staff. Effective self-evaluation identifies clear priorities for development within boarding. There is excellent support from governors who work closely with

the senior boarding staff to ensure that the boarders receive the best possible boarding experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors' involvement in the EYFS is highly effective and they fully support the setting through a nominated governor who makes regular visits. Since the previous inspection the governors have endorsed significant investment in the EYFS areas, thereby supporting its continued development.
- 5.3 Governors have a broad range of skills and experience that enable them to have an effective oversight of all school matters, in line with its aims. The local management board meets regularly and successfully focuses on specific responsibilities for the school. In turn its work is well supported by other members of the main board. Governors are forward thinking and constantly seek ways in which to improve the educational provision for all pupils. This is reflected in the excellent quality of the school facilities, in the excellent resources and in high staffing levels.
- 5.4 The chairs of the main board and the local management board hold regular formal and informal meetings with the head and other senior leaders. These help to ensure that they have a thorough understanding of the working of the school and that all aspects, including boarding, are monitored effectively. The head submits papers to all meetings, to strengthen links between leadership and governance. The school development plan provides an effective vehicle through which governors can evaluate the school's work. This provides opportunities to provide both support and challenge, as the school develops. There is an excellent and comprehensive performance review system in place for the head and key senior leaders, instigated and overseen by the governors.
- 5.5 Governors carry out a regular review of all school policies and procedures. This ensures that they fully discharge their responsibilities for policy implementation, including safeguarding. Within an annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements, policies and procedures are fully discussed, reviewed and recorded carefully.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 In the EYFS, high quality leadership and management maintain strict adherence to policies and procedures so that the safeguarding and well-being of children are ensured, within a welcoming and stimulating environment. Excellent systems of self-evaluation inform the setting's ambitious vision and result in clear priorities for improvement. Educational programmes are meticulously monitored to ensure that they meet the needs of all children. This includes promoting equality at every opportunity and ensuring that children's understanding of British characteristics is given a high priority. Procedures for staff supervision are well established and this leads to continuous professional development for identified needs. Staff actively encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning and work closely with them to secure appropriate interventions where necessary.

- 5.8 Throughout the school, leaders and managers are well qualified for their roles to ensure that the aims of the school are fully met. Senior leaders, several of whom are relatively new to their roles, work effectively as a team, and all are valued and respected for the contributions that they make. There is a collegiate approach to school leadership. Roles and responsibilities are now more clearly defined as leaders continue to strengthen the provision for pupils. The role of subject leaders is developing well, in response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, but is inconsistent to a degree because not all carry out effective evaluation and monitoring of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 5 to 8. The skills and experience of senior leaders and managers ensure that all policies are kept up to date, including those relating to safeguarding.
- 5.9 School leaders provide clear educational direction and have introduced many new initiatives to improve the outcomes for pupils. The detailed school development plan is used effectively to identify the school's strategic needs. The plan is regularly updated and targets reviewed. School leaders and managers have a positive approach to promoting democracy and in valuing the input of everyone through mutual respect and inclusion.
- 5.10 The school is successful in securing and retaining high quality staff. Strong emphasis is placed on their professional development through courses from both within and outside the school. The school has a good system of appraisal of staff, including all senior leaders. Excellent procedures, supported by thorough and detailed records, are in place for the safer recruitment of all adults who contribute to the school community, including governors and volunteers. An excellent induction process for newly appointed staff covers all the necessary areas of policy and implementation. New staff feel valued and supported as they take up their posts at the school. All staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly in the areas of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.11 All records and procedures for the welfare, health and safety of all members of the school community are maintained and documented thoroughly. The high quality of leadership and management at the school is supported by excellent administrative arrangements. In questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents felt that the school is not led and managed well. Inspection found that the success of leaders and managers is reflected in the high quality of the pupils' achievements and in their excellent personal development.
- 5.12 Strong links exist between the school and parents, carers and guardians. A very large majority of those who responded to the questionnaire said that their children are happy and feel safe at school and they were pleased with the progress their children are making. Communication with parents is of high quality and is maintained through regular, constructive contact, both formal and informal. Formal communication includes the regular weekly newsletter, the school's website, social media, the school magazine, academic reports and parents' evenings. Staff often speak informally with parents at the start and end of the day, and through email and telephone calls. Home-school books and reading diaries are also valuable ways of maintaining contact, particularly with the parents of younger pupils.
- 5.13 A small minority of parents indicated through questionnaire responses that their concerns are not handled well. Checks of records showed that the school responds to any parental concerns promptly through suitable published procedures.

- 5.14 Parents have extensive opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They are invited to class and celebration assemblies, concerts and plays. Parents' evenings are regular, meetings for parents of new pupils are held and parents are invited to special events. Within school, parents provide support by involving themselves in pupils' preparation for speaking examinations, craft, cookery, gardening and DT projects, as well as accompanying trips and visits and helping with swimming.
- 5.15 Parents of prospective and current pupils are provided with the required information about the school through the website and comprehensive handbooks. This includes valuable information such as daily routines, policies and staffing. Parents receive clear and useful written reports about their children's work and progress. The parents of older pupils receive a mid-year report that details examination results and grades for effort and standard of work. Older pupils also contribute to reports through self-assessment, which completes the full picture of their progress and achievement.

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