



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**FARNBOROUGH HILL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Farnborough Hill

Full Name of School	<b>Farnborough Hill</b>	
DfE Number	<b>850/6020</b>	
Registered Charity Number	<b>1039443</b>	
Address	<b>Farnborough Hill</b> <b>Farnborough Road</b> <b>Farnborough</b> <b>Hampshire</b> <b>GU14 8AT</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>01252 545197</b>	
Fax Number	<b>01252 513037</b>	
Email Address	<b>secretary@farnborough-hill.org.uk</b>	
Head	<b>Mrs Sarah Buckle</b>	
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Jonathan Hull</b>	
Age Range	<b>11 to 18</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>561</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>	
Numbers by Age	11-18:	<b>561</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>561</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>21 Jan 2014 to 24 Jan 2014</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 May 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, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](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.

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

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

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

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

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and vice chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mrs Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Alan Bougeard	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, HMC school)
Mrs Christine Douglas	Team Inspector (Head of Department, GSA school)
Dr Christopher Enos	Team Inspector (former Assistant Head, HMC school)
Mr Andrew Gillespie	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, SoH school)
Mr Richard Knott	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr John Tolputt	Team Inspector (former Head, SoH school)

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Farnborough Hill is a Roman Catholic day school for pupils in Farnborough, Hampshire. The school was founded in 1889 by the Sisters of the Institute of Christian Education (ICE). In 1927, the ICE purchased the main house and 65 acre estate, originally the home of the Longman publishing family and later the home in exile of the Empress Eugenie, widow of the Emperor Napoleon III of France. Ownership of the school was transferred to the Farnborough Hill Trust in 1994, and the first lay headmistress was appointed in 1996. Two of the Sisters, who live on the site in separate accommodation, still assist at the school. Although the Farnborough Hill Trust is a private limited company with a board of trustees it delegates the day to day administration of the school to a board of governors.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to promote academic excellence among its pupils and is dedicated to educating the whole person in a happy, caring community, in which every pupil is both individually valued and helped to develop her gifts and talents to the full. The school emphasises gospel values in a spirit of joy, friendship and family. The school welcomes pupils of the Catholic faith as well as those of other faiths or who have no faith but are supportive of the school ethos. Pupils travel to the school from a wide geographical area around and beyond Farnborough. They enter the senior school from a large number of maintained and independent primary schools.
- 1.3 The school educates 561 pupils aged eleven to eighteen and of these 79 are in the sixth-form. Pupils are from a variety of social backgrounds and many are supported with bursaries. A small number of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are no pupils requiring support for English as an additional language. The school has identified 40 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 20 receive learning support. One pupil has a statement of educational need. Standardised national assessment tests show that the average ability of pupils at all stages in the school is above the national average. Most pupils are of at least above average ability, with very few having ability that is below average.
- 1.4 Several facilities have been improved since the previous inspection. A new art and design technology centre has been completed and three science laboratories and two prep rooms have been refurbished and modernised. The old gymnasium has been converted into a performing arts theatre space. A new building, St Joseph's Courtyard, was completed in October 2011 and houses a large dance studio/multi-purpose room as well as new sixth-form facilities and classrooms. A new music building housing a performance space, peripatetic rooms and a specialist music technology classroom has just been completed.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2. (a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to provide academic excellence in an environment that is caring, supportive and fun. Pupils' achievements are excellent across a wide area of learning underpinned by mostly high quality teaching and a curriculum that is often personalised for their interests and ability. Their good and often excellent progress results in high levels of attainment in public examinations and achievement in extra-curricular activities. The previous inspection recommendation to review the daily and weekly timetable, to ensure that pupils have appropriate time in all lessons and between lessons, has been successfully implemented and has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Subject accommodation continues to be rationalised, as recommended, and the school has improved the resources to aid teaching especially those for information and communication technology (ICT), although the impact of this on learning is yet to be consolidated. Pupils are conscientious learners, hard workers and persevere when they find work difficult. They are enthusiastic participants in all the school has to offer.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. Supported by strong pastoral care and a secure and safe environment, they thrive and develop into mature young people guided by their values and sense of self-worth. Pupils grow in their own beliefs through their participation in the spiritual life of the school supported by the Catholic ethos and the beauty of their surroundings. They appreciate the importance of contributing to their school and wider community and have a good understanding of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and the importance of justice. Many opportunities are provided to develop strong social and cultural awareness through their work in school and their involvement in charity and outreach programmes. Pupils are happy in their school and grow into young people well prepared to meet the challenges of their future.
- 2.3 Governance, and leadership and management are excellent. Governors fully understand their responsibilities especially those regarding safeguarding and child protection. They provide a wide range of skill and experience and offer excellent support for the whole of the school community. Combined with the senior leadership team (SLT) they provide a clear vision for the future of the school and plan accordingly for its success. Leadership of the school is strong and a highly effective team has successfully managed a number of significant improvements since the previous inspection. A more effective management information system has been introduced and improved efficiency and communication. Staff are well managed by strong academic and pastoral leaders and are supported by an excellent professional development programme. The school maintains excellent links with parents who are pleased with the progress their children make and the care and support provided for them. The pre-inspection questionnaire revealed that very few concerns were raised by the vast majority of parents.

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

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

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

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

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure all heads of department explore and share new ideas in teaching and learning to promote best practice.
2. Co-ordinate the experience of using online technology in teaching to ensure that all teachers mirror the best examples in the school.



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

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

- 3.1 The overall quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is highly successful in its mission to promote academic excellence whilst developing individual gifts and talents. Excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skill are demonstrated in pupils' classroom work, extra-curricular activities and in their attainment in public examinations.
- 3.3 Excellent standards of literacy are evident in pupils of all ages, who use their linguistic skills with confidence. Written tasks are diligently completed and contain well-reasoned and thoughtful comment. Creative writing is a particular strength with success gained in national essay, poetry and prayer competitions. A high volume of work is produced showing well-developed skills of presentation. Pupils are extremely articulate, gaining national success in debating and public speaking. The application of mathematical knowledge across all ages is strong and scientific knowledge is well developed with the most able pupils demonstrating excellent reasoning skills. Powers of analysis and logical thought were observed across all ages but especially amongst those who are most able and by pupils in the sixth-form when challenging tasks were set. The pupils' ICT skills are used competently and business acumen is well developed by those participating in the Young Enterprise Scheme, often achieving success in regional and county competitions. High achievement in areas of creativity and aesthetic learning can be seen in pupils' work in the classroom and in their many music and drama performances, and on display around the school. Success has been gained in local and national competitions in art, photography and musical composition. Examination results in instrumental music and drama are good and often excellent. It is in these areas of creativity that pupils' ability to work independently is most noticeable. Many pupils enjoy significant individual and team success in regional, county and national sports. Skill levels in physical activity were noted to be high in all age groups across a wide range of sports and pursuits.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE are above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. On average, over the three years, 67 per cent of all grades were at A\* or A. Results in A levels are above the national average for girls in both maintained schools and in maintained selective schools. On average 79 percent of all grades are achieved at grades A\* to B. Results in 2013 were slightly higher at 82 per cent. In recent years there has been a consistent 100 percent pass rate at A level.
- 3.5 The level of attainment at GCSE and A level and nationally standardised measures of progress that are available shows that pupils make progress that is good and often excellent in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. These results, considered alongside the pupils' work and achievement in lessons, indicate that this level of progress is consistent across all year groups and is especially excellent in the sixth-form where the ability profile can be wider. The majority of Year 13 pupils go on to their first choice of university. Analysis of achievement shows that pupils with SEND make excellent progress across all ages. This reflects the high quality individual support the school provides both from specialist teaching and from teachers who know their pupils well. Pupils who are designated as most able also

demonstrate high levels of progress because they are identified early and ability data are successfully used to monitor their progress and encourage their use of extension activities.

- 3.6 Pupils are enthusiastic learners enjoying the majority of their lessons and participating fully in all that the school has to offer. They are conscientious and motivated to work hard for themselves and their teachers. They persevere to do their best and have high expectations for themselves. They are caring and supportive of each other and enjoy each other's success.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 A broad and balanced curriculum offers pupils of every age, ability and need full access to all areas of learning. Underpinned by Christian values and designed to 'educate the whole person', the curriculum allows the Catholic ethos to be a subtle presence in everything the school does. The academic curriculum is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities that includes strong links with the local community. Following recommendations in the previous report, the school is continuing to improve the location of subject teaching areas, and has increased the length of lessons. This has allowed a better use of teaching time, without making any significant difference to the balance of the curriculum or the efficacy of the extra-curricular programme.
- 3.9 Pupils with particular interests gain from the increased specialisation that is available as pupils move up the school. A very flexible option system, both at GCSE and A level, ensures that pupils are able to choose any combination of subjects, with new subjects recently added in response to requests from pupils, for example, government and politics. Similar flexibility is evident in the excellent new sixth form enrichment programme which can lead to qualifications in areas such as listening and counselling, first aid and stable management.
- 3.10 The curriculum is under constant review and pupils have gained from recent changes. The arrangement for SEND pupils is excellent, with strategies that are responsive to their needs. In mathematics, for example, less able students are helped by generous staffing in Years 9 to 11 and such pupils no longer have to take a second modern language from Year 9. An emphasis on provision for the more able and talented pupils allows them to be suitably challenged. Mixed age groups of academic scholars meet in form time and after school activities to exchange ideas, and younger pupils often benefit from involvement by older pupils in teaching their activities. Pupils of all ages and ability gain from a programme that includes regular visiting speakers to 'Think Tank', who attract large audiences when they lecture on such topics as Kodaly music. The range of creative opportunities within both the academic and extra-curricular programme is excellent, and the comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) course covers a wide range of personal issues and is a strength of provision.
- 3.11 A well-developed careers programme, which includes assessments, university visits, outside speakers and appropriate advice, prepares pupils well for the transition from sixth-form to university or work. A large number of day and residential trips encourage pupils to look at the world beyond the school. Visits abroad develop their personal skills, subject skills and awareness of other cultures, such as an expedition to Malawi to assist with a charitable project.

- 3.12 The extra-curricular programme is good and almost all of the parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire praised the provision. Sporting options, both specialist team games and more informal alternatives, balance the diverse programme already offered within the timetable. A number of musical groups include opportunities for pupils and staff to perform together, often at a high standard. Time limitations can sometimes limit the rate at which groups progress, but many work well within the restrictions. The list of thriving activities includes many creative outlets, debating, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) and an impressive radio station run by the sixth-form, primarily for the benefit of younger pupils.

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

- 3.13 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 Teaching is very effective in supporting pupils' progress throughout the school and supports its aim to aspire to academic excellence and to give pupils a sense of fun and enjoyment in their learning. A recommendation of the previous report was to improve resources to aid teaching and learning in all subjects. The school has successfully implemented this recommendation and the quality of teaching has improved.
- 3.15 A significant teaching strength is the excellent relationships and rapport between the pupils and teachers, which helps to create a very positive and supportive learning environment. In the many excellent lessons, the pupils are encouraged to play an active part in their learning and to explore the subject beyond the specification. They are encouraged to think critically and challenge ideas. Good lessons are secure in teacher knowledge and safe in methodology although, occasionally, pupils are not encouraged to develop their thinking skills and follow the argument to satisfy their curiosity. In the very small number of lessons which give less satisfaction to the learner, the pace is more sedate, learning is more passive and the teachers underestimate the pupils' knowledge and abilities, all of which limits progress. By contrast, the great majority of lessons are planned in great detail which ensures that the pace of learning is appropriate and the progress is excellent for all pupils.
- 3.16 Teachers are committed and generous with their time. Pupils speak warmly of the help, support and encouragement they receive in enabling them to achieve highly and enjoy their studies. This was particularly commented on by sixth-form pupils who greatly valued the on-going support offered freely by their teachers and the individual attention they received due to small class sizes.
- 3.17 Resources to support teaching are plentiful, including the much valued contribution of support staff, and are effectively used by teachers to foster interest and vary methodology. The library is valued as a resource centre and technological resources continue to be developed. Some teachers use ICT creatively, as exemplified in a lesson where pupils were challenged to sort substances using an interactive whiteboard programme, but the potential of technology to enhance learning is not yet fully realised in all departments. Some heads of department are successfully exploring new initiatives in teaching and learning which is making the lessons more exciting. Remote access to support materials for subjects is available for the pupils. Some teachers are starting to use these systems to support learning outside the classroom.

- 3.18 Pupils with SEND are identified at an early stage and provided with highly effective individual support from the learning support department which ensures that the progress of these pupils is excellent. Excellent communication between the learning support and subject departments ensures that all teachers have access to detailed and personalised guidance on how to support the pupils in their lessons. Able, gifted and talented pupils are identified at an early stage and staff have received recent whole-school training on how to stretch and challenge these pupils, although in a small number of lessons, opportunities were missed to build upon these special abilities and skills.
- 3.19 Regular marking provides support and encouragement to pupils across the school. The marking is characterised by frequent use of praise, target setting and specific advice to aid improvement, and the quality of marking is monitored by departments at regular intervals. Whilst a small minority of pupils raised a concern about homework in their pre-inspection questionnaire, inspectors found that many pupils confirmed that the tasks set consolidate their learning in the classroom and the amount of time needed to complete them is reasonable. Assessment data are used well by teachers throughout the school to assist their planning. A clear system of recording tracking data ensures that the progress of all pupils is easily monitored and enables support to be put in place for those pupils who are not making the expected rate of improvement.

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

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. By the time pupils leave the school they have developed into young women who show initiative and develop a sense of identity, self-worth and emotional maturity ready to play a full and responsible part in the wider community.
- 4.3 Spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are keen to discuss matters that affect their lives as individuals and explore their role in the wider community through active participation in many discussion groups. They grow in their own beliefs and develop compassion for others as they willingly contribute and lead prayers in form time, chapel and assembly and through the inclusion in their prayers of other members of the community, such as those who are ill. A small group of pupils, when interviewed, reflected how their personal development had encouraged a commitment to a Christian way of life. The beautiful school environment helps pupils to appreciate and respect the world around them and gain an awareness that there is more to life than that presented by the material world. They enjoy the environment for moments of reflection and serenity and their personal development is nurtured by participation in the special moments in the life of the school, by supportive relationships and the sense of feeling valued that pervades the community. Pupils are happy in their school and, as a consequence of this, they are confident and have high self-esteem. Pupils feel well prepared and ready for the challenges that lie ahead of them once they must leave.
- 4.4 The moral development of pupils is excellent. Pupils show a very strong moral sense and understand the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They display a clear sense of right and wrong, which is reflected in their care and consideration for each other. Younger pupils acknowledge the influence of the standards set by the staff and older pupils, who lead by example. An atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance prevails and they exhibit outstanding standards of behaviour and discipline. Pupils reported they understand the need for a code of conduct and they display a keen sense of justice. Moral awareness is developed through their discussions in lessons, debates in clubs and activities, as well as through their contact with visiting speakers. Pupils display a generosity of spirit in supporting a broad range of charities and develop consideration for others through significant fundraising projects.
- 4.5 The social awareness of the pupils is extremely well developed. They respond positively to the encouragement they are given to contribute to the community of the school. Their skills in leadership are well developed by willingly leading clubs and activities and acting as prefects and mentors. Pupils of all ages interact well encouraged by participation in house activities and when sixth-form pupils give guidance and serve as role models. Pupils acknowledge the need to act as responsible citizens and be sensitive to their impact on the world. Consequently, they embrace several green initiatives as part of a wide-reaching sustainability programme. In recognition of the importance of forging strong links with the local community they have volunteered their services to a number of programmes. An outreach programme called 'SHINE' involves children from local primary schools coming to have some 'Serious Fun on Saturdays' when sixth formers act as mentors. Teaching Latin in the local junior school and visiting a residential home to

offer their services, have helped develop their awareness of the world around them in social, political and economic terms.

- 4.6 Pupils display a strong cultural awareness. From their work and from informal discussion, they gain a clear understanding of citizenship, UK institutions and the Western cultural tradition. The comprehensive programme of educational visits, including trips to the theatre, places of worship, art galleries and historical sites, allows pupils to build an appreciation of their own tradition and culture. Pupils have a keen understanding of other cultures, appreciating their achievements, for example when learning about music and artists from other parts of the world and through a suitable focus on other faiths. They readily expand their horizons by taking part in events such as the European Day of Languages and enjoy many trips abroad. As a result, they demonstrate harmonious relations with pupils drawn from families different from their own.

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

- 4.7 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The staff provide effective support and guidance for all pupils in accordance with the aim to educate the whole person in a supportive environment. Excellent procedures are in place to ensure consistency of care across all ages. In the pre-inspection questionnaire almost all parents felt that their child is well looked after by the school.
- 4.9 Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and the pupils are well known to the staff. Relationships between pupils themselves are also very positive and supportive and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils said they like being at the school. The questionnaire also indicated that a small number of pupils felt that teachers do not help them to manage their work load but the inspectors found no evidence of this. Pastoral staff are seen by pupils as accessible, helpful and approachable. Form time and PSHEE lessons provide excellent opportunities for dialogue between tutors and pupils to make sure workloads are managed appropriately. The pupil questionnaire indicated that a small number felt that their views were not heard but the inspectors judge there is a very good range of opportunities for pupils to express their views through form captains, house captains, and informal chats with the headmistress, as well as the school council.
- 4.10 The school has clear expectations of good behaviour. The pupils helped to write the school's behaviour policy and they have clear ownership of its principles. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a few felt that rewards and sanctions are not given fairly, however, the inspection team found no evidence of this. Rewards are provided by a wide range of methods suited to different year groups. There are sanctions for unacceptable behaviour such as uniform detentions but pupils found it difficult to remember when they were last needed. A very small minority of pupils also reported that they had concern regarding how bullying is handled. Records show that the rare cases of bullying have been handled quickly and with care in accordance with the school's policy and procedures. Pupils reported in inspection interviews there is very little bullying and that they are confident in the school's ability to handle it should it occur. All concerns regarding behaviour and bullying are recorded fully and monitored.
- 4.11 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and lunches are plentiful and nutritious. The extensive site and a broad programme of sport and other activities

ensure that regular exercise is undertaken. There is excellent support and an appropriate access plan for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety throughout the school is excellent.
- 4.13 The school's aim to provide a happy, safe and secure environment is achieved through excellent management of the welfare and health and safety procedures and this makes a significant contribution to the pupil's excellent personal development.
- 4.14 Pupils' welfare is carefully managed and supported. Welfare policies are clear, implemented efficiently and reviewed annually by members of the management team and by the governing body. Particular attention is paid to safeguarding and child protection. Staff, volunteers and governors are suitably trained in child protection including staff new to the school through their induction training. A governor has oversight of child protection matters and maintains close and regular contact with the child protection designated person to monitor the implementation of the correct procedures. Any concerns regarding the welfare of pupils are recorded carefully and followed up rigorously in line with school policy.
- 4.15 The school has highly effective procedures for monitoring health and safety. Detailed risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school and activities; these are reviewed regularly. The required fire prevention procedures are in place and equipment is tested frequently. Fire drills are carried out each term and are evaluated to assess how improvements can be made. The school is well maintained and the grounds are kept in good order. An annual review is conducted to plan for future maintenance needs and refurbishment. New building projects on site are well managed for health and safety.
- 4.16 A comfortable medical centre with a qualified nurse in attendance provides valued support on health matters. Records are stored securely and carefully maintained. A number of staff are trained in first aid. The school has improved its access for pupils with restricted mobility by installing hand rails around the school and a suitable plan is in place to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is fully committed to the success of the school and governors are very effective in achieving their aim to be in a creative partnership with the staff, parents and pupils and together seek educational excellence for the pupils. The interest they show in Farnborough Hill's life and work is appreciated by all.
- 5.3 The governors have designated responsibilities and work effectively through committees for education, finance and general purpose. Their wide range of skill and experience provides practical support and guidance to ensure sound financial management and consistent improvement in educational standards, resources and facilities. Minutes of meetings show that they fully understand their role and maintain strong oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities. When newly appointed, they attend training for their specific areas of oversight, including child protection, which they review each term as a body. Similarly, the welfare, staff recruitment, and health and safety arrangements are regularly reviewed, monitored and assessed by the full governing body.
- 5.4 Strategic development planning is thorough. The governors have a clear vision for the future development of the school. The finance and general purpose committee ensures careful financial management and plans for, and oversees, improvement of the facilities and the refurbishment of many of the school's older buildings. The education committee has helped in the appointment of key staff and constantly reviews attainment levels and the curriculum. They improve their understanding of the work in school by attending presentations from the senior leadership team and other staff.
- 5.5 The chair of governors maintains good communication with the head and bursar and is made aware of concerns and developments through regular meetings and detailed reports. Suitable appraisal is in place for the head. Good support for the school staff and pupils is shown by the governors' preparedness to learn and their willingness to attend events.

### **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 Strong leadership, clear vision, and excellent management by the SLT enable the whole staff to work together to fulfil the school's aim of educating the whole person in a happy, caring community. Care for the individual is evident in every aspect of the work of the school. Leadership roles are well defined and the appointment of assistant heads since the previous inspection has strengthened the management and monitoring of pastoral care, teaching and learning. In the parent pre-inspection questionnaire almost all parents said the school is well led and efficiently managed.
- 5.8 Self-evaluation is accurate and is used well to guide school development planning. The views of staff, pupils and parents, including those from a parental survey, have



been incorporated within a comprehensive plan with well-defined key targets. Since the previous inspection the SLT has successfully worked on many new initiatives to improve the educational experience for pupils. In response to a previous inspection recommendation, an improved management information system has been introduced to increase efficiency and this has enabled better monitoring of pupils' progress and the use of assessment data. The SLT continues to extend the use and availability of ICT in teaching and learning, although the impact of this has not yet been maximised in all areas.

- 5.9 The responsibilities of middle management have been more clearly defined. However, there is still variation in the extent to which middle managers seek to improve their areas of responsibility. Heads of year know the pupils in their charge very well and are a highly effective channel of communication between the SLT and the staff as a whole. Development planning by heads of department has improved to ensure that progress is monitored within academic departments, but not all departments reflect the excellent practice seen in the best cases. Some department leaders are undertaking a middle management training qualification and this is strengthening their practice. The excellent staff professional development programme supports and motivates the school's high quality staff and identifies training needs. A working group has been instrumental in improving teaching quality since the previous inspection and has now been replaced by a curriculum development group to extend learning opportunities.
- 5.10 Very good relations between teaching and non-teaching staff ensure that all staff work harmoniously as a team. Management of the estate is efficient and procedures for ensuring the health, safety and security of the pupils are effective. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are comprehensive and induction of all new staff is thorough and includes familiarisation with the child protection policy and its implementation. Checking procedures to ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors to work with children are secure. There is effective communication between all sections of the school and all records are carefully maintained.
- 5.11 The school has an excellent relationship with parents, carers and guardians. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a high proportion of parents expressed their satisfaction with the quality of communication with the school and the information provided for them. They value the caring environment and how well their children are looked after and educated. The required information for parents is provided on the school web site which also supports a useful parent portal. High quality publications, including a newsletter each term, provide information on developments and highlight the pupils' achievements. Informative and encouraging reports and grade sheets are provided for parents throughout the year with details of attainment and progress. Parents are also informed of their child's attitude to learning and their contributions to lessons. Many opportunities are provided for parents to attend school for progress reports or to enjoy the many music and drama performances and sport events. There is an active parents association involving parents in school social events and fund-raising. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure which is carefully implemented if needed.

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