



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
GREAT BALLARD SCHOOL**

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Great Ballard School

Full Name of School	Great Ballard School
DfE Number	938/6174
EYFS Number	EY388419
Address	Great Ballard School Eartham Chichester West Sussex PO18 0LR
Telephone Number	01243 814236
Fax Number	01243 814586
Email Address	office@greatballard.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Richard Evans
Proprietor	Mrs Susan Jay
Age Range	2 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	111
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (58 boys; 53 girls)
Numbers by Age	2-5 (EYFS): 39 5-11: 60 11-13: 12
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 109
Number of Boarders	Total: 2 Full: 1 Weekly: 1
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr Edward Bryan
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	10 Nov 2015 to 13 Nov 2015

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 boarding intermediate inspection was in November 2012 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in March 2011.

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 the proprietor, 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

Mr Steven Popper	Reporting Inspector
Mr Dominic Crehan	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Miss Rosemary Walker	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	4
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	4
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
(d) The quality of boarding	12
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
(a) The quality of governance	14
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	14

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Great Ballard School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from two to thirteen years. It provides flexible boarding facilities from the age of seven and Nursery provision during term-time and school holidays. The school was founded in 1924 and based originally in New Milton, Hampshire. It moved several times, settling at its present location at Eartham House in the South Downs National Park in 1961. Teaching accommodation is centred around a restored listed mansion set in 30 acres of wooded countryside. The school includes a separate pre-prep block, playing fields and two artificial surface sports facilities, while classroom facilities include a specialist science laboratory, and food technology and art rooms. The school is administered by a proprietor, advised by a board of governance which also comprises two other directors, along with senior managers, and legal and educational members. There has been a period of changing senior leadership since 2011. The current headmaster formally took up his position in September 2015.
- 1.2 The school aims to create a happy and safe environment where pupils can feel cherished. It seeks to provide pupils with exciting and appropriate challenges and the highest possible standard of learning experiences, so that they can achieve their potential across a wide range of academic and non-academic areas. The school sets out to build a Christian community that respects all its members and encourages them to do their best and make the most of their talents.
- 1.3 Most pupils are of white British origin and come from professional families who reside in the local area, though a number have international backgrounds. At the time of the inspection there were 111 pupils on roll, of whom 58 were boys and 53 were girls. There were 39 children on roll in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which, along with Years 1 and 2, forms the pre-prep. There is one boarding house which includes separate provision for boys and girls, currently used by one full boarder, one weekly boarder and thirty-nine pupils boarding on a flexible basis. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist help. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Fourteen pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). Overall, the ability profile of pupils is above the national average, though pupils demonstrate a wide range of abilities.

- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school for the EYFS and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school for Years 1 to 8 and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6
Form 7	Year 7
Form 8	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils' achievement is excellent. They receive highly effective teaching and make excellent progress, including in the EYFS. Pupils demonstrate a love of learning and considerable maturity as they move through the school. Teachers display excellent subject knowledge and give pupils, including the most able, a substantial level of challenge. Staff provide highly effective support for pupils with SEND or EAL. The excellent curriculum is supported by substantial use of the school's woodland areas and information and communication technology (ICT) to promote learning. Leaders have successfully addressed the recommendation made at the standard inspection in 2011, so that sufficient time is devoted to the teaching of history, geography and religious education (RE), and to games in Years 3 and 4.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. The school promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Pupils are self-assured, mature and confident. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and pupils' behaviour is exemplary. A few pupils who responded to the questionnaire were dissatisfied with the school's use of rewards and sanctions. Inspection evidence showed these to be effective. Boarding care is of a high standard. Boarders are encouraged to be healthy, considerate and kind. The recommendation from the previous boarding inspection has been met, so that records of boarders and risk assessments are easily accessible to staff. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The school conducts appropriate risk assessments and takes careful precautions to reduce any possible risks. Prior to the inspection the school had not carried out the required pre-employment checks on the medical fitness of all staff. All staff had been checked for medical fitness by the end of the inspection.
- 2.3 Governance is sound. Governors meet with leaders to keep themselves informed. Recent appointments of senior staff have been highly effective. The regulatory action point from the previous boarding inspection has been met, so that safer recruitment procedures are appropriately recorded and timely barred list checks are carried out. However, the proprietor has not ensured that all the required pre-employment medical fitness checks have been carried out. The recommendation from the previous standard inspection to improve the expertise of the governing body has been met. Governors support the school's aims in relation to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and personal development, and the community ethos of the school. Their support for boarding and EYFS provision is satisfactory. The school is well led. Leadership staff provide strong educational direction, including through a new, precise school development plan. Leaders have improved the information offered to parents and met the recommendation from the previous standard inspection, so that parents are fully informed about the EYFS. The school has an appropriate complaints policy that is implemented effectively, although logs of informal complaints received by the school are not kept systematically.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to take the following action.

- Ensure that all staff are checked for medical fitness before commencing work [Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(c)(ii) and (f), and (3), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason Part 3 paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), and 8.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection, and National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].

2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, as described above.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the proprietor and board of governance consistently monitor compliance with regulatory requirements and fully support all aspects of the school.
2. Ensure that all informal parental complaints are logged systematically.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully meets its aim to enable pupils to achieve their potential in a wide range of academic and non-academic areas.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS achieve well and make excellent progress relative to their wide range of starting points. Highly focused and activities suitably varied in challenge, accompanied by well-targeted support, enables all children, including the most able and those with SEND, to make rapid advances. All children, including those with SEND, reach the expected levels of development typical of their age, and by the end of Reception many children exceed the Early Learning Goals, particularly in literacy. Children with EAL develop confidence and extend their English vocabulary very well.
- 3.4 The EYFS children develop excellent knowledge and skills relating to phonics, and some can write simple words independently and make excellent attempts at more challenging words. Children develop excellent mathematical understanding and can compare the values of numbers, sizes and other quantities. They learn to count and recognise numbers, and use the correct mathematical symbols for processes such as addition. Children develop artistic skills and knowledge of how to use tools to manipulate materials and colours to good effect. They use resources independently to promote their learning and display high levels of concentration. Their work demonstrates creativity and careful thought.
- 3.5 In other year groups, pupils develop substantial knowledge, confident understanding and a wide range of skills across the curriculum as they progress through the school. They read with considerable appreciation of the meaning of texts and understand how language can be used to good effect. Pupils are very articulate, and their verbal explanations are thorough and demonstrate much logical and careful thinking. Their work and discussions show strong mathematical, scientific and historical understanding. Pupils demonstrate particularly strong creative abilities in art, drama and music, and they apply technological skills very well.
- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate success in sports tournaments, and a number have represented the county in cricket. Pupils also achieve regular success at high levels in external music and drama assessments.
- 3.7 While pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, it is judged to be excellent based on evidence from standardised tests, scrutiny of pupils' books, lesson observations, interviews with pupils and leavers' destinations. All school leavers consistently succeed in gaining places at the senior schools of their choice. A high number of leavers have gained scholarships over time, and a very large majority of leavers in 2014 achieved academic, art or all-round scholarships. The school's assessment data shows that pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved since the previous standard inspection.
- 3.8 This level of attainment, as judged, shows that pupils make excellent progress across the curriculum because of the very effective teaching that they receive. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress as a result of careful and precise target setting and individually tailored support. Pupils with EAL also make excellent

progress, partly because of the extra support they receive to strengthen their skills in English when appropriate.

- 3.9 In response to their pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents were dissatisfied with the support given to the most able pupils. Inspectors found that these pupils are given high levels of challenge that enable them to make excellent progress and demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding. All pupils who responded to their pre-inspection questionnaire considered that they make good progress.
- 3.10 Pupils' achievement is greatly supported by their strong love of learning and their pride in their work. They demonstrate considerable concentration and sustained levels of engagement. Pupils work together well to develop their learning and understanding. They are confident and have a strong ability to work on their own initiative and take responsibility for their work. They are very thoughtful and reflective, and show a maturity which equips them extremely well for successful learning and later life.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 This supports the aims of the school in providing the highest possible standard of learning experiences for all pupils, so that they may achieve their potential in a wide range of academic and non-academic areas. The school has fully met the recommendation of the previous standard inspection to increase the allocation of time for history, geography and RE in Years 3 and 4, and to make the time allocated to games in those years and Year 2 more comparable.
- 3.13 In the EYFS, well-qualified staff provide an excellent range of child-initiated and adult-led activities, both indoors and outside. These activities ensure complete coverage of all the required areas of learning. Staff carefully consider the needs of each child, including those with SEND or EAL, and provide well-focused support that ensures these needs are met exceptionally well. Classroom activities develop children's ability to learn independently, while outdoor learning, particularly in the school's woodland areas, enables children to develop imagination and creativity.
- 3.14 In Years 1 to 8, the curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents showed overwhelming satisfaction with the range of subjects and experiences provided by the curriculum.
- 3.15 The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects, providing all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and those who are more able, with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education. The curriculum actively promotes fundamental British values such as tolerance and fairness. It includes opportunities to make excellent use of the school's own woodland to enhance learning.
- 3.16 Emphasis is placed effectively on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. All pupils are encouraged to use ICT as a valuable tool to support aspects of the curriculum, particularly through project, research and presentation work. For younger pupils, most teaching is delivered by form tutors; specialist teaching is introduced in music and physical education from Nursery and increases in frequency as the pupils move up through the school. Pupils benefit greatly from staff expertise.

- 3.17 A comprehensive and carefully planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum introduces pupils to a wide range of relevant and challenging issues, and effectively prepares them to become responsible citizens in modern global society, including the world of work. Knowledge and understanding of democratic services and institutions are enhanced by current affairs discussions, mock elections and pupils' involvement in the school council. Weekly RE lessons broaden pupils' understanding of a range of faiths and religious traditions. By engaging the older pupils in balanced discussions about moral issues such as gender equality and capital punishment, they develop reflection and empathy.
- 3.18 The curriculum is enriched by an afternoon activities programme that gives pupils an element of choice in opting for activities such as knitting, off-road cycling and tap dancing. It is also supported by a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including a variety of sports, drama, dance, art and debating opportunities. A range of trips enriches the pupils' understanding of curriculum subjects, for example to art exhibitions and science fairs. These outings add to the cultural richness of the education provided. In their responses to questionnaires, pupils showed overwhelming satisfaction with the range of activities on offer.
- 3.19 Links with the community are excellent. The school supports many local good causes, such as the Get Active Festival, a village dog show and the Stonepillow charity for local homeless people.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.21 Teaching across the school effectively supports the school's aims. Throughout, teaching is positive and purposeful. It sets high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour, and is highly successful in preparing pupils for their senior schools.
- 3.22 All EYFS staff relate to children well and are skilled at providing activities that stimulate and engage them, and extend their learning. Staff respond to children's own interests in a way that enthuses children in their learning. Staff celebrate the different backgrounds of children and ensure that they feel equally included and valued in all activities. They provide excellent support for all children, particularly those with SEND or EAL. Staff give children time to consider and reflect upon their learning and extend their thinking. Effective formal and informal assessment ensures that teaching strategies are well matched for every child. Teachers and assistants provide more able children with tasks and questions that contain a high degree of challenge and enable them to progress rapidly. Staff make excellent use of rich and attractively presented resources to promote children's learning.
- 3.23 Relationships in the classroom between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent. The atmosphere is one of respect and consideration for others. Teaching displays substantial knowledge of the pupils, and teachers' genuine, caring approach is recognised and appreciated by pupils and parents. In their discussions with inspectors, pupils consistently expressed the view that their teachers are approachable and supportive. Praise and encouragement are given regularly, with the reward system, consisting of house points and points for effort, proving an incentive for pupils to persevere and to take a pride in their work.
- 3.24 Teachers throughout the school display excellent subject knowledge and hold high expectations for their pupils. Teaching is characterised by commitment and fervent enthusiasm, which engenders the whole-hearted enjoyment of lessons by the pupils.

Small class sizes enable teachers to give pupils a high level of attention and support, helping them to develop in confidence and to fulfil their potential. This results in the older pupils in particular developing an unusually mature attitude towards their learning; they enjoy working independently.

- 3.25 Lessons are well planned and delivered at a brisk pace, with a variety of teaching methods taking account of pupils' individual needs. At the previous standard inspection it was found that there was sometimes a lack of challenge for the more able pupils. Much evidence from work scrutiny, lesson observations and discussions with pupils shows this no longer to be the case. Teachers show considerable expertise in meeting the needs of pupils from a wide range of abilities.
- 3.26 Marking is of a high standard throughout the school. Comments in books are consistently positive, commending pupils for the strengths of their work but also indicating areas for improvement. Verbal feedback is regularly used to further support understanding, as confirmed in pupils' discussions with inspectors. Pupils also said that homework is useful as it helps them to consolidate their learning.
- 3.27 A system of diagnostic assessments and internal examinations enables the progress of individual pupils to be tracked and for information to be shared among the relevant staff. Strengths and weaknesses of pupils are identified in order to inform teachers' planning.
- 3.28 The learning support department is highly effective in communicating with staff and in matching provision of need so that pupils with SEND or with EAL make excellent progress. Monitoring is rigorous and precise, with pupils benefiting from careful planning for their needs in all lessons and from specialist help. The school makes excellent provision for any pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

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 school successfully fulfils its aim to build a Christian community where all pupils and adults are respected and cared for by each other. It has maintained the excellent standards reported at the previous standard inspection in this regard.
- 4.3 The personal development of children in the EYFS is excellent. They make appropriate choices and decisions, co-operate with each other, and listen carefully and respectfully. Staff actively promote fundamental British values through, for example, work about the significance of Remembrance Day and of why poppies are worn.
- 4.4 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. The school's Christian values support all pupils in their search for meaning in life. Staff and pupils join together for prayers in assembly, and services are held regularly in the village chapel adjacent to the school. Pupils' spiritual development is also enhanced through non-religious means. The school encourages pupils to appreciate and reflect upon the value of the natural world. Pupils demonstrate extremely high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.
- 4.5 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils show a substantial awareness of right and wrong, and considerable understanding of the importance of rules and English laws. Moral values are fostered through the example of staff, the effective behaviour policy, class discussions and the PSHE curriculum. Pupils debate contemporary issues, such as about the justification of war, in a way that shows respectful consideration of different points of view.
- 4.6 The social development of the pupils is excellent. House activities and competitions foster team loyalty and collaboration. Residential trips help the pupils to develop confidence and social skills, and sports fixtures promote teamwork and mutual endeavour. The school nurtures pupils' maturity and leadership in many ways, including opportunities for them to take on positions of responsibility. Pupils from Year 2 are elected to the school council, which has successfully lobbied for new initiatives, such as the woodland 'Hobbit House'. The older pupils act as excellent role models to the younger. Pupils of all ages work and play harmoniously. Staff enable pupils to develop their consideration of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are involved in the school's regular charitable and outreach work, such as the annual whole-school 'Reindeer Run' and a baking contest.
- 4.7 The cultural education of the pupils is excellent. It raises awareness of different ways of life through subjects such as RE, music, French and PSHE. Pupils learn about different religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, in RE and assemblies. School trips and excursions to local, national and international destinations, such as the annual Year 7 trip to France, encourage pupils to be aware of their own community and the world beyond. The presence in school of international pupils, with summer visits by additional pupils from European countries, further develops this awareness.
- 4.8 Pupils develop mature social, political and economic awareness, and knowledge of the public institutions and services in England, through the PSHE curriculum, mock

elections, class discussion and visits from local dignitaries and officials, such as a mayor, police officers and members of the fire brigade. This work serves to deepen pupils' understanding and appreciation of the significance of democracy and the rule of law. The school develops pupils' economic awareness through charitable work and curriculum activities involving working to a budget.

- 4.9 All pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 The school has a welcoming, caring ethos, in accordance with its aim of creating a safe, happy environment within which all pupils feel cherished. Parents appreciate the care provided and pupils are very happy to be at the school, as indicated in their responses to the questionnaires.
- 4.12 Each child in the EYFS has a key person who ensures that he or she is able to develop well emotionally and socially through forming positive relationships. All staff have the best interests of the children as their primary aim. Adults encourage and praise children for making healthy choices relating to behaviour, exercise and diet. Children's behaviour demonstrates their confidence that the EYFS staff look after them well and keep them safe.
- 4.13 In other year groups the staff provide effective support and guidance in a nurturing environment where all pupils are valued and encouraged to develop as individuals. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school. In discussions pupils stated that staff are friendly, approachable and always happy to listen to them.
- 4.14 The school grounds offer many opportunities for outdoor play, activities, sports and exercise. The school promotes healthy eating and provides pupils with nutritious, freshly prepared meals. Snacks provided during breaks include fruit, and drinking water is readily available during the day.
- 4.15 Behaviour around the school is exemplary, with pupils demonstrating kindness and tolerance towards one another and respect towards adults. In discussions, pupils said that unacceptable behaviour is always taken seriously and that the rare incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and fairly. Clear rules and boundaries help pupils to develop a feeling of safety and security. A small minority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire expressed some lack of confidence in the school's use of rewards and sanctions. The inspectors observed consistently fair behaviour management, and the school's records show that it has dealt effectively and objectively with behavioural incidents over time. Pupils who spoke with the inspectors thought that the rewards and sanctions systems work well.
- 4.16 In response to the questionnaires, a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions and respond to them. Inspectors found that staff listen and respond to pupils well. The school gives pupils many opportunities to put forward their ideas, whether formally through the school council or informally during lessons. In discussions pupils said that staff listen to them, take their opinions seriously and value their suggestions.

- 4.17 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.19 Effective arrangements enable the school to meet its aims. In the EYFS the responsibility for promoting children's welfare is taken extremely seriously, and increased clarity concerning the requirements for supervision during playtimes means that these are now met. Regular attendance is promoted and effective strategies are in place to prevent radicalisation and extremism.
- 4.20 The school places much importance on providing a healthy, happy, safe and caring environment for pupils throughout. New staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, updated at suitably regular intervals. Staff are aware of the correct procedures to follow if a concern arises. The school safeguarding policy had some omissions at the start of the inspection. These were swiftly rectified when identified to the school. The school has successfully carried out the action required by the previous boarding inspection. It has ensured that records of safer recruitment are accurately entered on a central register of appointments, and that all staff who are employed under supervision before criminal checks have been received are checked against the barred list before commencing work. Prior to the inspection, the school had not carried out required checks of the medical fitness of staff before they commenced work. The school has now ensured that all current staff have been suitably checked.
- 4.21 The school takes careful and effective precautions to reduce the risk from fire and other potential hazards. Fire drills are practised regularly, and fire detection equipment is checked and maintained appropriately. The risk assessment policy contains helpful advice for staff. There are appropriate risk assessments for the school site, external visits, transport and potentially hazardous activities.
- 4.22 The school has good arrangements to care for pupils who become unwell or who have specific needs. All staff receive regular training in first aid, and a high number of staff are trained in paediatric first aid in the EYFS. The attendance and admission registers are suitably maintained and stored.
- 4.23 All pupils and parents who responded to the questionnaires thought that pupils are well looked after by the school.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.24 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.25 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders develop confidence, and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where their individual welfare and well-being needs are identified and met. Opportunities to interact with others of different backgrounds and abilities within the boarding community are limited by the number of boarders. Nevertheless, relationships are close among those of different cultures and the boarders benefit from the individual attention they receive. A statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is available on notice boards and on its website. First-time boarders are welcomed and receive suitable induction. The more experienced boarders naturally assume responsibility within the house, when the opportunity arises, under appropriate supervision.
- 4.26 Boarders are articulate and well mannered. They are at their ease in the boarding environment and demonstrate their accommodation with pride. They feel that their views about boarding are heard and responded to. Relationships are friendly among boarders and with staff. Pupils enjoy their boarding experience and talk about it with enthusiasm. Flexi-boarders look forward to boarding after participating in high quality activities at school, such as drama.
- 4.27 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are encouraged to be healthy, considerate and kind. Their behaviour is exemplary and they thrive in the nurturing atmosphere of the boarding provision. House staff know the boarders extremely well as individuals and respond to their needs. Access to telephones ensures ease of communication with parents. Contact numbers for helplines and the independent listener are provided. The sleeping accommodation has been furnished to a high standard and is spacious, clean, bright and airy. Bathrooms are well appointed and ensure the boarders' privacy. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their dormitories and are consulted about the decoration of the boarding area. The entrance hall and social areas are welcoming, homely, and equipped with a variety of games and entertainment equipment. There is a wide range of planned activities and appropriate choice is given to the small number of boarders.
- 4.28 The catering provision is excellent. Experienced, knowledgeable catering staff plan varied menus, making special arrangements for individual dietary needs and also preparing breakfasts and evening meals that take account of the personal preferences of the boarders. The meals provided are of high quality and much appreciated by all boarders. Snacks and drinking water are readily available in boarding hours. The kitchen areas are efficient, clean and well managed, as are storage areas and dining rooms.
- 4.29 Medical matters are overseen well by senior boarding staff. The storage and administration of medication are competently managed. The pupils' rights to privacy and confidentiality as patients are respected. Record keeping and handover are thorough. In most cases, boarders who are taken ill at school are transferred home. A specified, pleasant room is available for the rare occasions when a boarder is ill in house, and is appropriate for the needs of the setting. The school maintains good communication links with parents about the boarders' medical history and any current health issues. There is ample storage for the boarders' possessions. Boarders are discouraged from bringing valuable or electronic items but these can be securely stored if required. Laundry is undertaken in school.

- 4.30 The effectiveness of the arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is good. Appropriate procedures ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed effectively. Contractors and visitors are well supervised. Any use of CCTV cameras does not impact on boarders' privacy. The school's anti-bullying and behavioural policies and procedures ensure that any rare bullying concerns or the infrequent incidents of unkindness are swiftly resolved. The atmosphere in the boarding house is open and friendly, and boarders consider that any difficulties are quickly and amicably resolved. The school has met the requirement of the previous inspection but there has been a deficiency with regard to pre-employment medical checks for all staff. The safeguarding policies and procedures are understood by all staff. Boarders feel secure, and confident that any concerns — personal, academic or to do with their boarding life — are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
- 4.31 All boarders' records are kept centrally, and the school has effective systems to share information readily between academic and pastoral staff to ensure the boarders' well-being and safety. Communication with parents is frequent. Appropriate risk assessments operate for the boarding areas and activities; boarders are always well supervised by experienced staff. Boarders are taught to consider risk management as part of their boarding routine. The procedure to follow should a boarder go missing is understood by all staff. Health and safety and fire safety policies and procedures are efficiently implemented. They are reviewed and evaluated to inform improvement plans. New boarders are briefed in fire evacuation procedures, and drills are regularly carried out during boarding hours.
- 4.32 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. Boarding is well led and managed. This is apparent from the smooth running of the boarding house and boarders' enjoyment. Staff are highly committed and effectively share expertise and enthusiasm. The experienced leadership staff monitor and review provision well and priorities have been set for improvement and development. Policies are suitable and records appropriately kept. All boarding staff benefit from clear job descriptions. A new system to ensure opportunities for regular appraisal and discussion of training needs is being implemented. Parents' responses to pre-inspection questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive concerning boarding provision.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governance successfully supports the school's aims in relation to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and personal development, and the community atmosphere of the school. However, the governing board offers limited support relating to the monitoring of compliance, boarding provision and the EYFS. Governors monitor the school's finances carefully. They explore ways of enhancing its accommodation and resources as much as possible and have a vision for their expectations of the school. Recent appointments of senior staff have been highly effective.
- 5.3 Governors meet with senior leaders regularly to support them and keep informed about school matters. They offer these staff some challenge over several key aspects of the school. Governors maintain an informed insight into the working of the school through regular reports from the leadership. They consider parents' views carefully by scrutinising their responses to the school's questionnaires.
- 5.4 The board of governance has successfully improved its educational and legal expertise, as recommended at the standard inspection of 2011. There is an agreed plan to reform governance in order to improve its effectiveness.
- 5.5 The proprietor ensures that health and safety provision is excellent. The full board of governance conducts an annual review of the school's safeguarding work. However, the proprietor and other governors rely heavily on external consultants and senior leaders to check that safeguarding and safer recruitment arrangements meet requirements, and do not monitor these closely for themselves. As a result, the safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and some procedures required attention at the beginning of the inspection.

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 good.
- 5.7 The leadership team is successful in ensuring that the school meets its aims. The leadership and management of the EYFS are committed to ensuring that the children and their families are welcomed to a safe and stimulating setting. All staff understand and share the clear, ambitious vision and priorities for improvement that have been identified through effective self-evaluation. Leaders mentor and support staff and encourage their professional development, including through dialogue with other local settings to share practice and experiences. The recommendation of the previous standard inspection for parents to be fully informed about the structure, content and principles of the EYFS, has been met. Informative notices, booklets and consultation meetings now ensure that parents have appropriate information.
- 5.8 Leaders ensure that all departments, including the EYFS, strongly promote fundamental British values through their work, in line with the school's positive ethos. The school creates a happy environment where pupils feel safe. However,

safeguarding and safer recruitment policies did not meet regulatory requirements, including reference to medical recruitment checks before the inspection. All required amendments to policies had been made and implemented before the end of the inspection.

- 5.9 Senior leaders provide very strong educational direction to the school. A careful and accurate evaluation of the school's situation and priorities has been undertaken since the arrival of the new headmaster. This has resulted in the initiation of a precise school development plan that demonstrates a clear, realistic vision for the school's future. Leaders give staff good opportunities to attend relevant professional training and are introducing a new formal appraisal system to ensure that staff performance meets expectations. The improved educational direction provided by leaders has increased staff commitment and confidence. As a result, leaders and staff are strongly united as a team and work together well to promote the school's highly positive and respectful ethos, and to ensure for pupils an excellent standard of achievement and personal development.
- 5.10 Leaders successfully recruit and retain effective and suitable staff. They ensure that all new staff receive effective induction training, including their roles and responsibilities towards safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.11 Leaders ensure that any formal complaints are recorded and responded to appropriately. Informal complaints are dealt with effectively but not always logged systematically. In their responses to the questionnaire a very small minority of parents disagreed that the school is well led and managed. Additional comments made by parents ascribe this view to a recent, concluded period of uncertainty.
- 5.12 In questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents were extremely satisfied with the education and support that the school gives their children, particularly the care that pupils receive and the progress they make. Parents spoke enthusiastically about the way the school enables their children to develop as well-rounded, confident individuals. They were also highly pleased with the easy contact with staff facilitated by the school.
- 5.13 Parents are encouraged to attend performances and events such as for Remembrance Day. They are invited into school to share experiences with pupils.
- 5.14 A small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were not satisfied with the information they receive about their children's progress. Inspection evidence showed that clear, detailed reports provide parents with a summary of their children's attainment and achievements. These reports also provide targets and next steps so that parents can help and support their children's educational progress. Contact books, reading journals and homework diaries provide a day-to-day means for parents to involve and engage themselves in their children's learning. The required policies and information for the parents of prospective and current pupils are available on the school website and on request.
- 5.15 The school has recently introduced an electronic monitoring system that links observations to the assessment of pupils' progress. This system strongly adds to the effectiveness of communication with the parents of EYFS children, as observations can be shared almost immediately so that parents can participate and respond to their children's activities and progress. For any concerns, such as about a child's development of speech, this partnership enables appropriate interventions to be put in place.

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