



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

HALLIFORD SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Halliford School

Full Name of School	Halliford School
DfE Number	936/6503
Registered Charity Number	312090
Address	Halliford School Russell Road Shepperton Middlesex TW17 9HX England
Telephone Number	01932 234925
Fax Number	01932 229781
Email Address	sec.head@halliford.net
Headmaster	Mr Simon Wilson
Chair of Governors	Mr Kenneth Woodward
Age Range	11 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	395
Gender of Pupils	Boys 11 to 16; Mixed 16 to 18 (391 boys; 4 girls)
Numbers by Age	11-16: 319 16-18: 76
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 395
Inspection Dates	22 Sep 2015 to 25 Sep 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 inspection was in May 2009.

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.

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, 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

Mr Robin Gaff	Reporting Inspector
Miss Katherine Haynes	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Mark Heywood	Team Inspector (Headmaster, SofH school)
Dr Sarah Welch	Team Inspector (Principal, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Halliford School is a charitable educational foundation. The school's work is supervised by the board of governors, which has established committees with delegated powers, for education; finance; premises, health and safety; staffing; and marketing. The current headmaster was appointed in January 2015.
- 1.2 The school's aim is to enable pupils to fulfil their potential by creating a welcoming, friendly and supportive environment in which all pupils are known and valued as individuals, irrespective of their background or ability. It sets out to provide pupils with a broad liberal education, an extensive range of extracurricular activities, a clear and well-understood moral framework and a high level of pastoral care.
- 1.3 The school was founded in 1921 on its present site in Shepperton, about 15 miles south west of London. The school has completed a substantial building programme since its previous inspection, with new accommodation for the art and music departments, and the sixth form, and has increased its provision for information and communication technology (ICT). It has also reviewed and substantially revised its systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- 1.4 The school enrolls boys aged between 11 and 18 and, in the sixth form, girls aged 16 and above. Pupils are admitted if the school assesses that they are suited to its academic programme. The school is divided into four houses, each with its own head of house and tutorial team. In the senior school, from Year 8 onwards, pupils normally remain with the same tutor until the end of Year 11. Pupils in the sixth form have separate tutorial arrangements. At the time of the inspection, there were 395 pupils on roll, including seventy-two boys and four girls in the sixth form.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, reflecting those typically found in the local area. The ability profile of pupils aged from 11 to 16 is above the national average, with most pupils having ability that is at least above average. The ability of pupils in the sixth form is above the national average for pupils in sixth form education, but has varied from year to year.
- 1.6 The school has identified 107 pupils as having SEND. These include a range of additional needs, the highest proportion being dyslexia. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan, and another has a statement of special educational needs. Thirteen pupils receive specialist support according to their individual needs. There are currently no pupils on roll for whom English is as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.7 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 Pupils' achievement is good. The school succeeds in meeting its aims by enabling pupils of different abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential. Pupils, including those in the sixth form, make good progress in their studies and show positive attitudes to learning. They reach particularly high levels of attainment in art and in sporting activities. The school has developed its curriculum so that it is well-matched to pupils' individual abilities and interests. Pupils benefit from a broad range of extra-curricular activities which enhance their personal and academic development. Teaching is good, with a few examples of outstanding practice. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subjects they teach. They establish cordial and productive working relationships with pupils. In a few lessons, teachers do not make effective use of assessment information to ensure that lesson activities correspond closely enough to pupils' abilities, or are sufficiently challenging.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is good. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It ensures that pupils grasp the importance of treating others with respect, courtesy and consideration, regardless of their background or beliefs, in line with the values inherent in modern British society. They gain a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils benefit from excellent pastoral care, which reflects the school's ethos of valuing and nurturing pupils as individuals, including those with SEND. This enables pupils to develop into mature, well-rounded and resilient young people. The school makes good arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school's safeguarding arrangements required some minor amendments, but now meet current official guidance. A very high proportion of parents express favourable views about the ways in which the school looks after their children and keeps them safe.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of governance is good. Governors know the school well and they are dedicated to maintaining its distinctive character and are ambitious for its future development. They have enabled the school to address a recommendation of the previous inspection by providing much-improved facilities for art, music and the sixth form. The leadership and management of the school are good. Leaders share the governors' strong commitment to the school's ethos and to furthering its aims and communicate this vision to the staff. The senior leadership team has made some progress in remedying the relative weaknesses identified by its previous inspection. They have established a clear framework for monitoring the impact of teaching on the pupils' academic achievement, but this has not yet ensured consistent practice across all departments. Links with parents are good and they express positive views about the school. The school provides parents with all the required information and responds appropriately to any concerns.

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.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that all teaching includes sufficient challenge to engage pupils' interest, enabling them to make sustained progress.
2. Use assessment information more effectively in lesson planning in order to raise pupils' achievement still further.
3. Ensure that leaders at all levels regularly and rigorously monitor the effectiveness of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement.

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 good.
- 3.2 Pupils develop good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects and they are educated in accordance with the school's aims. This is evident from their written work, as well as in their responses to teachers' questions. Pupils' contributions to classroom discussions show their good listening skills and powers of reasoning. Pupils express themselves with increasing clarity and accuracy, both orally and writing, as they progress through the school. They gain a secure grasp of mathematical principles and processes, which enables them to solve a variety of sophisticated problems. Pupils use their well-developed ICT skills in investigations, researching topics and presenting their work.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate good levels of achievement across many subjects and disciplines, sometimes to a high level. Pupils' art work, in particular, shows their excellent creative skills; the displays of examination work in a variety of media, include paintings, drawings and sculpture of a high standard. Pupils also achieve considerable distinction in sport, where many have gained regional and international honours, especially in rugby. Pupils are keen to emphasise the extent to which the school enables those of all abilities to fulfil their potential in sport and physical activity. Pupils compete successfully in other areas at a regional level, such as public speaking. These show the school's success in fostering pupils' individual gifts and talents, in line with its aims. The qualifications they gain and the skills they develop enable pupils, when they leave the sixth form, to proceed to courses at a variety of universities and other higher education institutions, some with very demanding entrance requirements. Those pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 11 gain entry to A-level courses, usually at local maintained sixth form colleges.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Pupils' performance at GCSE has been above the national average for maintained schools. Performance in the IGSCE has been broadly similar to worldwide averages. In the sixth form, A-level results have been similar to the national average for maintained schools.
- 3.5 Their levels of attainment at GCSE and at A level show that pupils in past years have made at least sound progress. The trend in results over time is upwards, and initial analyses of the results at all levels in 2015 point to higher progress. The evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions show that the pupils have made good progress from their different starting points.
- 3.6 The achievement of pupils with SEND is in line with that of other pupils. They make good, and sometimes excellent, progress in relation to their levels of attainment when they join the school. This is because teachers understand their needs and have improved their ability to meet them. The most able pupils also make good progress in reaching the standards of which they are capable. Girls who enrol in the sixth form adapt successfully to their new environment and achieve well, in line with their abilities.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are usually good, and often excellent. Pupils take pride in their work, which is well-presented and organised. This shows that the school has made good progress in addressing the recommendation from the previous inspection report relating to pupils' behaviour in class and the presentation of their work. Pupils are focused and attentive during lessons, respond promptly to teachers' instructions and questions, and show their ability to work successfully with others. They make good use of opportunities to work independently, and show resilience and perseverance in doing so, for example in completing project work in a range of subjects. On the few occasions that pupils are less engaged and make slower progress, this is usually because the work they have been given is not sufficiently demanding, or because the pace is too slow.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The school offers a broad-based academic curriculum enriched by a wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities, which is in line with the school's aims. The curriculum succeeds in meeting the needs of pupils of different ages and abilities and needs, including the most able and those who have an EHC plan or statement of special educational needs. The school's leaders have developed the curriculum and considerably improved provision for ICT, music and art. In doing so, they have addressed the weaknesses identified by the school's previous inspection. Most parents who responded to pre-inspection survey expressed favourable views about the range of courses and activities available to pupils, as did pupils themselves.
- 3.10 The curriculum covers all the required areas of learning for pupils up to the age of 16. Classical and modern foreign languages are especially well represented; pupils throughout the school are able to study French, German and Spanish. Computing has replaced ICT as a taught subject and is now offered at both GCSE and A level. This has given pupils the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in this area to a high level. Pupils make good use of the library, which is a well-resourced facility for book borrowing and for private study. The improvement in facilities has resulted in increased achievement in the sixth form, as well as in art and music. These factors demonstrate the school's success in responding to the previous inspection report's recommendations.
- 3.11 Sixth form pupils benefit from a good range of academic and general courses. The school has been flexible in adjusting individual pupils' programmes in response to, for example, pupils' changing aspirations. The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) broadens pupils' experience by enabling them to apply their learning across different subjects.
- 3.12 Since the previous inspection there has been a review of provision for pupils with SEND so that the school now enables appropriate levels of support to be matched to pupils' needs. The school has also shown that it is prepared to adapt academic programmes to match pupils' individual interests and abilities. The most able pupils are identified and some lessons offer different tasks with appropriately challenging material, especially at sixth form level.
- 3.13 The school's effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme contributes well to pupils' personal development. It enables pupils to gain a balanced view of different political standpoints, by taking part in discussions about current affairs and in events such as mock parliamentary elections. The programme

successfully encourages pupils' adherence to British values such as respect and tolerance of others' views. The provision of careers guidance and financial awareness is good, and this prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and for future employment.

- 3.14 The good range of extra-curricular activities extends throughout lunchtimes and after school. There is strong provision for sport, and many inter-house competitions, which pupils enjoy. Many take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme at bronze level and in the regular music performances and drama productions. Pupils' involvement in the extra-curricular programme is valued by pupils and parents alike, as it enhances the development of pupils as individuals.
- 3.15 Many pupils undertake charitable and voluntary work readily, and raise significant sums of money for charitable causes each year. The school has developed a variety of links with outside organisations, including with a local special school and a number of companies broadening their experiences, and preparing them well for their adult lives.
- 3.16 Pupils have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of trips through sporting tours and cultural trips, museum and gallery visits and overseas exchanges. This enables them to appreciate different cultures and develop their communication and social skills.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 The quality of teaching helps the school to fulfil its stated aim of providing pupils with a sound liberal education, and effectively promotes their good achievement and personal development. The school has responded to recommendations in the previous inspection report by providing teachers with improved facilities, and increasing their opportunities to share good practice.
- 3.19 Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, and their approach is purposeful and engaging. These high levels of enthusiasm usually result in pupils showing good engagement with their learning. The majority of teaching observed was good or better. Most lessons benefit from a variety of different teaching methods, and are characterised by highly positive relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to collaborate on tasks, as well as to work individually. This helps to promote independence and ensures that pupils of different abilities to make good progress from their starting points. Teachers provide good role models for their pupils, including in their promotion of tolerance and respect for others' views and beliefs, and their balanced and non-partisan coverage of political issues.
- 3.20 Lessons are generally organised well, with imaginative planning which stretches pupils by moving quickly onto tasks that keep them focused and engaged. Resources are used effectively. Provision for the most able pupils is good, especially in the sixth form where pupils have good opportunities to discuss and evaluate information in a creative manner, for example through the EPQ. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not use time or the available resources effectively, or provide activities which are not well-suited to capturing the interest of pupils, and consequently they do not make good progress. As a result, pupils' behaviour can occasionally be poor.

- 3.21 Lessons often feature questioning where pupils are challenged to justify and make links between ideas under discussion, strengthening their understanding. Most teaching is securely based on a good knowledge of pupils' different levels of attainment. In a few cases, teachers do not take account of previous assessment information in their planning. The tracking of pupils' progress is overseen by tutors and housemasters, but not all heads of department closely monitor pupils' progress towards their academic targets by, for example, routinely scrutinising samples of their work.
- 3.22 Teachers give good support to pupils who encounter difficulties in their studies. Pupils speak warmly of how much help teachers provide during lunchtimes for individual or group help. Teachers receive detailed written guidance about how they can help pupils with SEND and respond appropriately to individuals' needs. This enables teachers to make suitable provision for pupils who have statements of special educational needs or EHC plans.
- 3.23 Teachers throughout the school make good use of regular effort and achievement grades to assess pupils' progress, whilst tutors and house staff monitor patterns and advise pupils on how to overcome any barriers they may encounter. A whole-school grade review meeting takes place after each report is sent to parents, and tutors provide additional academic support for those pupils who may be at risk of underachieving.
- 3.24 Teachers and tutors know their pupils well. Most teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and give them detailed advice about how they can improve their work. Many examples of good marking were seen, with supportive and detailed comments on strengths and weaknesses, as well as setting specific individual targets. Examination of pupils' work revealed that this is not consistent. Pupils find that the award of merits for good pieces of work and their broader contributions to school life motivating, and departments and house staff use these widely to good effect.

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 good.
- 4.2 The school's success in developing pupils' individual qualities makes a positive contribution to the fulfilment of its aims. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development well. Pupils have a keen awareness of their spiritual lives and appreciate the regular assemblies, which cover wide-ranging themes. Pupils' experience of art and music plays an important part in enhancing their appreciation of beauty and their understanding of how it is created. Pupils of all ages, including those with SEND, display good self-esteem and they also gain in confidence from participation in the range of extra-curricular opportunities available to them. A number of parents commented very positively on the way the school had helped their children develop their confidence and self-belief.
- 4.3 Pupils' good moral development is evident from their ability to distinguish right from wrong, their respect for good conduct, justice and fairness, and their understanding of the civil and criminal law of England. They learn to appreciate the importance of trust, perseverance and fair play, most notably in their sporting activities. Pupils appreciate the purpose of rules and values within their community, and have good opportunities to discuss them in tutor periods and through the PSHE programme. Older pupils act as positive role models for younger pupils.
- 4.4 Pupils develop a good sense of social responsibility in roles such as mentors and prefects and work effectively together. Pupils show initiative in contributing to whole-school activities and through membership of the school council, and are proud to support and represent others in this way. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils indicated that they believed that they would welcome greater opportunities to take on responsibility. Inspectors found that they have a good range of roles available to them. Pupils display a good understanding of modern British society, as well as a good knowledge of public institutions in England, which they acquire through their PSHE and citizenship lessons. Most pupils, despite occasional lapses, show consideration in their behaviour towards each other, within the school's caring community. They are prepared to support those less fortunate than themselves through charity work and community service.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural development is good, and benefits from the range of activities in art, music and drama. These have been enhanced by the new, purpose-built theatre, and music facilities. Their art work is of a high standard. Trips to the theatre, as well as visits abroad and exchanges, enhance their cultural awareness and are embraced by many pupils.
- 4.6 The pupils demonstrate a strong sense of the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect inherent in modern British society. Pupils from different backgrounds relate well to one another. They respect others' views, and there is no evidence of discrimination. The topics discussed in house and school assemblies play an effective role in giving pupils opportunities to extend their social development. They show a good knowledge of, and respect, for different faiths and cultures.
- 4.7 By the time they leave the school, pupils mature into considerate, well-balanced and thoughtful individuals with a good level of personal development.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim of providing a friendly and supportive ethos in which every pupil is known and valued. Highly positive relationships between pupils and staff are the norm. The senior team and other pastoral leaders provide very effective care and guidance. Staff demonstrate high levels of concern for the pupils, and these excellent arrangements contribute strongly to their personal development. Regular pastoral meetings focus strongly on meeting individual pupils' needs, carefully review the relevant policies and procedures and monitor the effectiveness of their implementation. The school has a suitable plan in place, which is updated as necessary, to improve the educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.10 All pupils are encouraged to be physically active and a very high proportion take part in extra-curricular sport. Pupils thoroughly understand the importance of keeping healthy, and appreciate the range of nutritious food on offer. Any special dietary requirements are fully met.
- 4.11 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour and preventing bullying. Pupils are generally well-behaved and extremely well mannered. They are aware of the dangers posed by the internet and the misuse of ICT. Rewards and sanctions encourage this good behaviour and take appropriate account of any related additional need or disability. In their response to the questionnaire, some pupils expressed concerns about how fairly sanctions were given. Inspectors found in discussions with pupils that they feel that staff award them appropriately.
- 4.12 Pupils report positive relationships within and across year groups. They feel safe and very well supported. A few concerns were raised about the school's response to bullying. Scrutiny of records, observations and meetings with both staff and pupils indicate that such instances are rare. Inspectors found that pupils show an excellent understanding of the nature and causes of bullying, and confirm that the school deals appropriately with any rare occurrences. Younger pupils value highly having sixth form mentors. Pupils of all ages know that they can turn to adults for help and that any issues will be dealt with appropriately.
- 4.13 The school council provides effective representation for each tutor group and issues raised in this forum and in pupil questionnaires are routinely considered by the school's leaders.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good.
- 4.15 The safeguarding arrangements are effective. Staff receive regular and appropriate training in child protection. The school has established strong links to local child protection agencies. Pupils report that they feel safe and secure in the school environment and their parents concur with this view. A small number of minor discrepancies with regard to the most recent regulatory requirements were drawn to the school's attention and were addressed either prior to or before the end of the inspection.
- 4.16 Health and safety measures are thorough and implemented well. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures covers all aspects of health and safety. Thorough

risk assessments are in place for activities that take place on site, for the use of nearby playing fields and for educational visits. The site and premises are regularly checked and any maintenance requirements addressed. Testing and maintenance of electrical, water and gas supplies and equipment take place at the required times. Suitable measures are in place to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular emergency evacuation drills are carried out and appropriate records are kept.

- 4.17 The school has clear and effective procedures and suitable accommodation for pupils if they become unwell or injured, so that they receive the care and attention they need. Staff benefit from regular, good-quality training and an appropriate number have first aid qualifications. Medicines are stored securely, and staff promptly record and inform parents of any accidents or injuries. The school makes good provision for pupils with SEND, working well, when appropriate, with outside agencies.
- 4.18 The attendance and admission records are correctly maintained and stored. Effective systems are in place to follow up pupils' absence and lateness.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors provide a good level of support and challenge to the school's leaders. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the school, including the sixth form, acquired through their regular visits to the school, as well as from the detailed reports they receive from the headmaster and other members of staff.
- 5.3 The wide range of expertise and experience which governors bring to their role, and the effective committee structure, enables them to exercise a good oversight of the school's activities and pupils' academic performance. They are strongly committed to furthering the school's aims and to promoting its ethos, and act as an effective stimulus for its future development. They also ensure that the school has the staffing, financial and other resources it needs to further its aims. This is particularly evident from the way in which the governing body has responded to recommendations from the previous inspection by enabling the provision of well-designed new school buildings and up-to-date facilities.
- 5.4 Governors keep themselves informed about developments in education and welfare by undertaking appropriate training. They regularly review policies and procedures, including those for dealing with complaints, and the success with which they are being implemented. Governors liaise closely with the school leaders responsible for safeguarding and conduct an annual review of the arrangements. This has not ensured total adherence to all the most recent requirements; governors have made sure that any shortcomings have been rectified. They have ensured that arrangements for promoting pupils' health and safety, and for recruiting new members of staff, are robust and effective.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.6 The senior leadership team strongly supports the school's ethos and its aim of providing a broad, liberal education in a friendly, supportive environment. School leaders successfully promote the value of democracy, and of respect and consideration for others.
- 5.7 The school's leaders have accurately identified the school's strengths as well as priorities for further development. A well-devised plan provides a clear framework for the school's future development and focuses appropriately on how its wide-ranging aims are to be achieved.
- 5.8 The senior leadership team provides clear educational direction to the staff. Heads of department are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their roles. The pastoral committee successfully oversees the care of pupils. Tutors work closely with heads of department to check that pupils are making at least the progress expected of them. Senior leaders have recently introduced new systems for assessing pupils' attainment when they join the school and the progress they have made. These

processes have not had time to have their full intended impact on raising pupils' academic achievement.

- 5.9 In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has significantly enhanced the support it provides for pupils with SEND by ensuring that staff have both the necessary expertise and an increased amount of time to ensure that these pupils receive the specific help they require. Specialist staff support pupils with SEND both during and outside of lesson time. There is increasingly good liaison between the special needs department and all teachers, including with regard to those pupils who have individual education plans.
- 5.10 The school's leaders keep the curriculum under close review. They have been successful in ensuring that pupils benefit from an increased range and variety of extracurricular activities, including in music and drama. School leaders have also established productive links with outside bodies, including other local schools and sports clubs, with which the school shares its expertise and facilities. These links work to the benefit both of pupils in the school as well as the local community.
- 5.11 The school has succeeded in recruiting staff who are well qualified, appropriately experienced, and firmly committed to the school's aims and values. All members of staff are suitably trained for their role in promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, and in meeting the needs of the pupils. New staff undertake an effective induction programme. There are robust arrangements in place for checking the suitability of staff, including volunteers and governors.
- 5.12 In accordance with another recommendation of the previous inspection, all academic staff are encouraged to contribute to a teaching and learning committee. This group is active and enthusiastic about sharing good practice between departments, which has resulted in some improvements. This is not fully established across the school, and school leaders recognise that they have as yet not fully addressed the recommendation of the previous recommendation.
- 5.13 The teachers' appraisal system currently involves self-evaluation as well as review by a senior leader. Some monitoring of teachers' performance, which includes lesson observations and work scrutiny, is carried out by heads of department. These arrangements have not been consistently effective across departments in eliminating variability in the quality of teaching, the use of assessment and ensuring that activities engage all pupils in their learning.
- 5.14 The school has established good links with parents. Relationships between the school and its families are constructive, and parents strongly support the school's aims. Comprehensive information for current and prospective parents about the school and its policies is provided in the prospectus, a parents' handbook and communicated via the website and newsletters. Teachers make good use of pupils' planners to sustain regular contact with parents.
- 5.15 Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that parents are positive about the school, its leadership and staff. They are confident that their children are happy and safe at school and are offered an appropriate range of subjects and areas of experience. A very small minority of parents indicated that they were not satisfied with the information they were given about their children's progress. Inspectors found that parents are kept generally well-informed of their children's progress and achievements. Half-termly grade cards and two full reports per year are provided, and parents are invited to and regularly attend consultation evenings.

Pupils' written reports demonstrate teachers' clear understanding of pupils' progress and attainment.

- 5.16 Inspection evidence found that concerns raised by parents are handled promptly and effectively. Complaints are suitably recorded and handled in accordance with the school's complaints policy.
- 5.17 The school has an active parent teacher association. Parents organise highly successful fundraising activities for the school and are keen to support open mornings and other events. Parents enthusiastically attend sports fixtures, theatre and music productions and art exhibitions, and make a valuable contribution to the annual careers fair for older pupils. This gives parents good opportunities to become involved in the work of the school.

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