



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

HANFORD SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hanford School

Full Name of School	Hanford School	
DfE Number	835/6001	
Registered Charity Number	2572565	
Address	Hanford School Child Okeford Blandford Forum Dorset DT11 8HN	
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Head	Mr Rory Johnston	
Chair of Governors	Mrs Lucinda Sunnucks	
Age Range	7 to 13	
Total Number of Pupils	85	
Gender of Pupils	Girls	
Numbers by Age	7-13	85
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	24
Number of Boarders	Total:	61
Inspection Dates	03 Mar 2015 to 06 Mar 2015	

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 January 2012.

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.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', '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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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Reporting Inspector

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Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hanford School is an independent boarding and day school for girls aged from seven to thirteen years. The school was founded in 1947 as a proprietorial school for girls. In 2004 it became a charitable trust with a board of governors. The school is based in a Jacobean house in rural Dorset and set in grounds which include stables and a walled kitchen garden, which provides much of the fruit and vegetables used by the school. Boarding accommodation is organised into two houses, Main House and Fan's House, which is adjacent to the school chapel. Since the previous inspection, a new head master has been appointed.
- 1.2 The school aims to value individuality and to provide the opportunity, encouragement and support for each pupil to pursue and expand their interests within and beyond the classroom, enabling them to achieve the very best they can across a breadth of academic capabilities. They aim to cherish childhood and help their pupils to look beyond themselves, to learn about living with others, being part of a wider group and taking care of each other's needs; whilst providing their pupils with the time, opportunity and environment for free play.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 85 pupils on roll, 61 of whom were boarders. Hanford is predominantly a boarding school with 24 pupils who attend daily; most day pupils board on a flexi basis, usually one or two nights a week. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, and a small proportion from overseas.
- 1.4 The school has identified nine pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support. There are nine pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), five of whom receive additional support.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Preparatory Department

School	NC name
Third form	Years 3 and 4
Fourth form	Year 5
Fifth form	Year 6
Lower sixth form	Year 7
Upper sixth form	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school, pupils are extremely successful in their learning and personal development. The school successfully meets its aim to cherish childhood, nurture talent and value individuality. Excellent teaching contributes to the excellent achievement of pupils, although in a small number of lessons their progress is limited because of lack of pace and opportunities for discussion and collaboration. The use of assessment data to track pupils' progress across the school has been introduced but is in its early stages of development. The pupils' achievements are well supported by the excellent, broad curricular provision, the range of extra-curricular activities and the use of the outdoor environment and visits provided. At all stages, the pupils' achievements are enhanced by their positive attitudes to their studies, by the high-quality skills they develop during their time in the school and by their generally exemplary behaviour. They are interested in their studies and both day pupils and boarders appreciate the opportunities which are offered to them, both within and outside the curriculum.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development, including that of boarders, is excellent throughout the school. Their spiritual development is outstanding and they have an excellent awareness of moral issues. They display a mature social responsibility and their cultural development is strong with regard to British standards and values; however, they have less knowledge of other cultures and religions. Pupils of all ages have a clear sense of right and wrong, and they demonstrate a high level of mutual respect and support for each other and for all members of the school community. Through the school's committee system, they willingly take on responsibility and make a valuable contribution to the school, of which they are proud. Arrangements for both pastoral care and measures to safeguard and promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The provision strongly supports the boarders' personal development and sense of well-being. In responses to pupil questionnaires, a small minority of pupils indicated that they did not feel that staff were fair in their sanctions and rewards and that bullying was not dealt with. However, after careful consideration, interviews, observations, and scrutiny of records, inspectors found no evidence to support this.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is sound. A new sub-committee structure for governance provides clear terms of reference for oversight of key areas. However, in the past the monitoring of policies and their implementation has not been sufficiently rigorous. Procedures are now in place to rectify this. Governors did not respond to all the recommendations of the last inspection with regard to the sharing of management responsibilities. The newly formed senior management team, together with the new leadership, have already established a whole-school direction and a clear vision for the future. Much is in its early stages of development and roles have yet to be clearly defined. The day-to-day management of safeguarding is good. Links with parents are good. Parents greatly appreciate the approachable and engaging leadership. The overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of the school and are happy with the education and care provided. They are especially pleased with the way that their child is well looked after, the high standards of behaviour and how the school is led and managed. Almost all parents agreed that their children are happy and safe whilst at school.

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:
- ensure that the required recruitment checks, including from the barred list, are made on all staff, supply staff, governors and volunteers as applicable, before they begin work at the school [Part 4, paragraphs 18(2) (a) and (f), under the Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors]; and, for the same reason, [Part 3, paragraphs 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety of pupils] and, for the same reason, [National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults]; and NMS 11 under child protection.
 - ensure that the leadership and management of the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently [Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(b) under Quality of leadership in and management of schools].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, 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. Establish a comprehensive system for monitoring teaching and learning and sharing the excellent practice within the school.
 2. Broaden the pupils' knowledge of other cultures and religions.
 3. Clarify the roles of the senior management team and identify their areas of responsibility within the new school development plan.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils are well educated in line with the school's aim to recognise the breadth of academic capabilities and requirements and enable each pupil to do the very best that she can. Pupils develop their understanding, knowledge and skills effectively in all subject areas and in their extra-curricular activities.
- 3.3 Pupils' literacy skills across the school are exceptional. In all lessons, interviews and informal conversations, the pupils are open and interesting in their input. Pupils are extremely articulate when answering questions and presenting their ideas; even when dealing with sophisticated topics. They demonstrate a wide and mature vocabulary for their age, and they frequently ask perceptive questions to further their knowledge. They listen with extreme care to their teachers and because of this, they digest information quickly. This attribute was common in all lessons observed. They listen equally well to instructions as well as to the ideas and opinions of their peers. Pupils write to a very high level. They are able to write in various styles and with a legibility and concision which speak of pride and careful thought. In and out of lessons, pupils seize with alacrity the many opportunities for the sharing of ideas.
- 3.4 Pupils' numeracy skills are of a high order and are applied particularly well to investigation and mathematical challenge activities. Pupils' scientific knowledge is excellent and is acquired through a wide range of activities which include many opportunities for independent thought and reasoning. Their computer skills are well developed from an early age and applied across a broad range of subjects.
- 3.5 Pupils' creative skills are extremely well developed, particularly in music, art and handwork, which are a strength of the school: almost all pupils in the school play at least one instrument with many pupils achieving particularly high grades in music examinations. They regularly listen to appreciate and discuss music by famous composers. There is a good range of ensembles and choirs, and pupils play and sing with a high level of confidence relishing the opportunities provided to perform in concert.
- 3.6 Pupils engage enthusiastically in physical activities and do so to a high level of accomplishment across many sports and activities including cross-country, riding, netball, athletics, hockey and swimming.
- 3.7 The school does not enter pupils for National Curriculum tests. The ability profile of the school is above the national average overall. Ability is measured using verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests. Pupils also take standardised tests of attainment in reading and spelling. Results in standardised tests of attainment indicate that pupils' performance in reading and spelling is higher than national norms. The evidence gained from lessons observed, the scrutiny of pupils' work and data produced from assessments, indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. All pupils gain entry to the senior school of their choice, with a significant number gaining scholarships.
- 3.8 Pupils with SEND or EAL make excellent progress because of the support they receive, both from their teachers and from the specific help from the learning support department, who regularly monitor their progress. The more able pupils make

excellent progress because they are set for all subjects and teachers regularly plan work appropriate to their needs. Scholars are identified and they are given individual plans of work.

- 3.9 Pupils' achievements are supported by their excellent attitudes to learning, their exemplary behaviour and care for each other, and the extremely good relationships they enjoy amongst themselves and with staff. Pupils are organised, show initiative and co-operate exceedingly well. They are well motivated, concentrate well and persevere with their work.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The broad curriculum is highly stimulating and strongly supports the development of the pupils' individual talents, in line with the school's aims. It is highly effective in covering the requisite areas of learning, and facilitates the attainment of high standards. The provision of French from Year 4 and Latin throughout the school enhances the pupils' linguistic skills. The programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is comprehensive and encompasses topics that further the pupils' personal development. This is supported by current affairs lessons which provide many opportunities to discuss issues at home and abroad. Excellent opportunities in the arts foster pupils' accomplishment in creative and performance skills. Weekly art appreciation classes and pottery add much to pupils' creative development and the number of choirs and ensembles offers many pupils the opportunity to perform and work as a team, including at the daily act of worship in the school's chapel. Since the previous inspection, the provision and use of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, and it is now used across the curriculum, as seen in a Year 6 geography lesson where pupils were sorting and filtering data using spreadsheets. Cross-curricular links are strong and staff work together to ensure that music and art, particularly, span the curriculum.
- 3.12 Excellent specialist support is provided for pupils with SEND or EAL and their needs in the classroom are very well met. The use of setting throughout the school provides the opportunities for them to work at a level suited to their abilities. The developing tracking system, although in its early stages, is enabling a more comprehensive knowledge of pupils and their academic development. Pupils have access to 'pop in' sessions where they can receive individual support. More able pupils also benefit from the setting arrangements and there is an excellent individualised programme for them.
- 3.13 The extensive sporting programme focuses on the development of excellence and opportunities for all to represent the school. A comprehensive range of well-attended clubs and activities for all ages stimulates the pupils' interest in wider learning and supports their personal and social development. These include equestrian pursuits, choirs, ensembles, pistol shooting and a gardening club that sells their own home-grown produce to parents at a 'Veggie Market'.
- 3.14 The curriculum is enriched through visits both locally and abroad, as well as through visiting speakers including the local beekeeper. Visits include the Roman Baths and a weekend trip to London galleries and fashion museums.
- 3.15 The curriculum is further supported by excellent links with the community, 'Riding for the Disabled' for example, uses the school's equestrian centre: the pupils lend out their own ponies and through this they gain an appreciation of children who are less

fortunate than themselves. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 have the opportunity to display their work at an art exhibition in the local community. Money is also raised for a local hospice, and local primary school children are invited to watch the dress rehearsal of the Hanford school plays. These experiences enrich pupils' understanding of the world around them.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching is highly effective in meeting the schools aim's of fulfilling potential, nurturing talent and valuing individuality. Teachers' enthusiasm and a desire to share the enjoyment of a topic with their pupils are apparent in most lessons. Teachers, many of whom are subject specialists, demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and provide a depth of knowledge for which the pupils thirst. They teach confidently and give clear explanations and instructions, using subject specific and technical vocabulary. The teachers have high expectations of their pupils and the pupils eagerly rise to the challenges set them, applying themselves well and often independently challenging themselves. This results in motivated and successful learners, who persevere to achieve success as can be seen in the pupils' handwork lessons, where they strive for perfection.
- 3.18 Lessons include a variety of stimulating activities that encourage the pupils' interest and challenge all abilities so that all pupils are highly engaged. The pupils are given many excellent opportunities to work individually, in pairs and small groups, enabling them to use high levels of discussion to develop their understanding and collaboration skills. In a small number of less successful lessons observed the lack of pace and opportunities for discussion and collaboration affected the rate of pupils' progress.
- 3.19 Teachers generally encourage lively debate and discussion between pupils. The pupils routinely ask pertinent and searching questions to further deepen their understanding. Teachers skilfully pose open-ended and probing questions. This approach fosters the pupils' engagement with the lesson content and further develops their reasoning, critical and independent thinking skills. Furthermore, the pupils thrive with this style of teaching and their infectious enthusiasm and enjoyment in lessons are unmistakable. Teachers use creatively a wide range of resources to support the activities planned and the pupils particularly enjoy using ICT to research and extend their learning.
- 3.20 Assessment is an area that is being developed. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and English. A comprehensive and manageable whole-school recording and tracking system that is used by all teachers is yet to be developed. Praise and reassurance are used to excellent effect and this develops the pupils' self-confidence. Regular individual assessment and oral feedback in lessons quickly clear up pupils' misunderstandings, challenge their thinking and increase their rate of learning. Marking at its best indicates practical steps to further improvements; however, this is inconsistent across year groups and subjects.
- 3.21 Provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and are acutely aware of the needs of every child. Teachers plan effectively to cater for the individual needs of every pupil in their lessons and they are supported by specialist staff who oversee a comprehensive programme of

support, which is personalised to accommodate individual needs. Pupils' particular interests and strengths are nurtured and developed and time is taken to foster those talents. Setting throughout the school allows the teachers to more effectively cater for the pupils' needs so that they make the maximum progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly effective in fulfilling its aim to help its pupils to look beyond themselves, to learn about living with others, being part of a wider group and taking care of each other's needs.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent and a strength of the school. Pupils are confident and self-aware. They have strong levels of self-esteem and place a high value on their effort in school. Through lessons and activities across all age groups, pupils develop as responsible individuals, aware of who they are. Daily chapel services provide opportunities for pupils and staff to come together for collective worship during which pupils and choirs sing, listen to music, show respect and learn to be aware of the needs of those around them. As a community, they have time to reflect and consider the consequences of their actions during their daily lives. Wide-ranging artistic and creative activities and displays across the school further enhance pupils' spiritual awareness and appreciation of their environment and the world around them. Through their participation in the many outdoor activities, pupils learn to become independent and organised; they gain a sense of self-belief and an appreciation of the efforts of others. They gain some understanding of other faiths beyond Christianity through the religious education (RE) programme, although this is limited and strongly focuses on Christianity.
- 4.4 The pupils' excellent moral awareness is at the heart of the life of the school. This goes beyond a simple notion of rules and is grounded on a sense of mutual and collaborative responsibility. It is carefully nurtured through the many opportunities to discuss moral issues through scripture and current affairs lessons and throughout the curriculum. For example, in an English lesson pupils confidently discussed the rights and wrongs of Machiavellian characteristics and their effects on other people. Pupils have a great sense of being in a school family and are well aware that their actions have consequences and may affect the rights and needs of others. During lessons pupils are highly supportive of each other.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate excellent social awareness which is encouraged by the close community spirit within the school. They undertake roles of responsibility with pride and understand the importance of this as part of a community. Older pupils delight in the opportunities they are given to help the younger pupils, particularly in the boarding house routines. The committee system which underpins much of the life in school gives pupils the opportunity to learn about democracy. Pupils have many opportunities to vote and to make decisions that affect school life. The recent committee dinner gave these committees opportunities to discuss their roles and how they can better serve the school.
- 4.6 All pupils are keenly aware of the needs of others within and beyond their school. They support a variety of charitable events, both locally and abroad, showing an understanding of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are currently enthusiastically raising money in aid of a donkey sanctuary.
- 4.7 The pupils develop good cultural awareness, particularly of British culture and values, through art, music, history and theatre. Although Western cultural traditions and other cultures are touched upon, none are studied in depth. Pupils know about

British institutions and current affairs lessons and discussions help them understand these further. This is supplemented through the many opportunities to visit famous places of interest, for example, art galleries and museums and places of historical note.

- 4.8 By the time they leave the school, pupils' personal development is excellent. This is evident in their ability to empathise with and understand individuals different from themselves.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 All members of the school community are wholly committed to the pastoral care of the pupils, in line with the school's aim of 'Cherishing Childhood'. There is a culture of kindness and relationships between staff and pupils during lessons and in the wider context of school life are excellent and are typified by ideals of respect for others. Staff share any concerns about pupils, discussing them during the school day and at staff meetings. They are strongly committed to providing effective, high-quality support and guidance and realise their importance to the overall well-being of pupils.
- 4.11 Pupils are appreciative of this and hold the family atmosphere in high regard. In interviews both boarders and day pupils reported that they feel confident that there is an adult to whom they can turn should they have a problem. A form tutor and pastoral tutor system are in place. Pupils see their form tutor every day and pastoral tutor once a week, and this ensures that any problems that arise are dealt with quickly. In response to the pupil questionnaires, a small minority of pupils felt that there were incidents of bullying. In interviews, pupils stated that there is no bullying in the school. Inspectors found that on occasion, pupils do fall out but that disagreements are resolved quickly, and that bullying is not a widespread problem.
- 4.12 The committee system that exists within the school allows pupils to have a voice. These pupil-run committees cover many aspects of school life and staff listen to and respond to the suggestions that are made.
- 4.13 Meal times continue the family feel of the school. Staff and pupils eat together and the pupils have access to a wide variety of healthy foods; fruit is always available and meals are well balanced and healthy, with a good choice. Pupils have infinite opportunities to take fresh air and plenty exercise and, in line with the school's aims, Hanford pupils climb trees, ride before breakfast in the summer and are 'free spirits' who enjoy the freedom that school life provides them with.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.15 The school has a well-developed and effective system to provide for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils and this has a significant effect on ensuring pupils' welfare and happiness.
- 4.16 Effective attention is paid to safeguarding pupils and promoting their health and well-being. The school's child protection policy has been recently updated, meets the latest requirements and it is appropriately reviewed by governors. In the past, the policy has not always been correctly implemented when recruiting staff. A robust

system is now in place and all required checks have been completed and recorded in line with official guidance.

- 4.17 All staff know the child protection procedures and they have regular training to update their understanding. Those with specific responsibilities are trained to a higher level. The school has good links with the local authority, which ensures that it is able to give very high priority to the protection of children throughout the school.
- 4.18 The school has thorough arrangements for reducing the risk from fire and accidents. It holds regular fire practices and the relevant equipment is checked at appropriate intervals. Health and safety are given a high priority, with detailed risk assessments for all areas of the school and its activities. Arrangements for health and safety are well managed by the health and safety committee, which meets regularly. The school has excellent arrangements for any pupils who are ill or injured. It gives careful attention to any pupils who have particular medical or learning support needs.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are completed correctly and archived as required.
- 4.20 All the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarders have ample opportunities and space to play and enjoy the natural life in line with the school aims. They are lively and active and enjoy being outdoors. They develop confidence and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where their individual welfare and well-being needs are identified and fully met. Riding and the care of the ponies are an important part of the school experience. Boarders (known as Catchers) get up early to go out to catch the ponies and bring them into the stables before breakfast in the morning. More experienced boarders accompany the less experienced and share their enthusiasm and expertise. Such care and respect for one another and the animals is an integral part of the atmosphere in this school.
- 4.23 Boarders are confident, polite and articulate. They welcome visitors cheerfully and spontaneously show concern for their well-being. They happily talk about their boarding life with enthusiasm. A strong sense of community and traditional values pervades the whole school. Relationships between staff and boarders, and amongst the boarders themselves, are friendly and based on trust. A good example of this is the regular story time that the head master undertakes with the younger boarders in the newly refurbished and comfortable library before their bedtime.
- 4.24 Pupil questionnaire responses suggested that a small minority felt that sanctions were not being applied fairly. In-depth discussions were held with several groups of boarders who felt after consideration that their treatment was actually fair. Records indicate that very few sanctions have been necessary and observation provided evidence that boarders are thriving in the nurturing atmosphere. A similar number of boarders responded that the school did not ask for their opinions and respond to them. Investigation revealed that boarders have many avenues for expressing their views through committees and informal conversations with staff, including the head master, and readily do so.

- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. Boarders are encouraged to be fit, healthy, considerate and kind. They say that they feel safe and that they are well looked after. They confirm that they have a choice of adults with whom they can discuss personal matters. Contact numbers for help lines are readily available. A new independent listener has been appointed. A small minority of parents expressed concern about the comfort of the boarding accommodation through the parents' questionnaires. The current boarding area is in need of refurbishment but is homely and reasonably well-maintained. The bathrooms are adequate and ensure the boarders' privacy. Although a small minority of boarders felt that it was difficult to contact parents, a phone booth with landline and access to mobile phones enable communication with parents in the evenings. Boarders benefit from a wide range of organised activities and trips outside lesson time. They can also choose to participate in house-based creative activities, free play outside or quiet reading. In conversations with boarders, they said that they are enjoying the improved activity programme and appreciate the increased variety of opportunities at the weekends.
- 4.26 The catering provision is good. Experienced and knowledgeable cooks plan and execute varied nutritious menus, with alternatives taking into account boarders' preferences, and individual dietary needs. The kitchen areas are efficient, clean and well-managed, as are storage areas and dining rooms. The meals provided are prepared from high-quality fresh ingredients, which are locally sourced or home grown. A small minority of pupil questionnaire responses suggested that the food is not good. However, observation provided no evidence of this and several conversations with groups of pupils determined that the quality of the food is good but that they did not all like every dish all of the time. A minority of boarders were not happy with the availability of snacks outside mealtimes. Fruit is available on request after supper but otherwise no snacks are provided in the short time between tea and bedtime so as to encourage healthier eating habits.
- 4.27 Medical matters are overseen by experienced nurses. The storage and the administration of medication are careful and appropriate. Privacy and confidentiality are respected. Allergies and chronic conditions are identified and well managed. Boarders who may need to self-medicate are assessed and supervised. The residential matrons are on call to attend to boarders who feel ill at night. Record-keeping is thorough and careful. The accommodation for the isolation and care of sick boarders is cheerful and appropriate. A small minority commented that they were not well looked after when ill or injured, but inspectors found no evidence to support this view.
- 4.28 The laundry provision is efficient and effective. The boarders have lockable cases or tuck boxes in which they can secure personal items. Pocket money is kept securely in the office but is accessible to the boarders on request. A minority of boarders in response to the questionnaires felt that their belongings were not safe but inspectors found that reasonable care is taken of the boarders' possessions.
- 4.29 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are sound. Safe recruiting procedures are now in place, as are appropriate measures for safeguarding. The ethos of the school contributes to the effectiveness of the counter-bullying policy and procedures so that serious incidences of unkindness or bullying are very rare. Boarders say that they feel able to report any unkindness if it occurs and it is taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
- 4.30 Health and safety and fire safety policies are in place and implemented. There is a conscientious and effective health and safety committee. Appropriate risk

assessments are undertaken and regular review and evaluation are used to inform improvement plans. Appropriate procedures are followed in the planning and execution of trips and activities. Fire drills and procedures are efficiently implemented. The boarding house is secured at night, and all entrances manned or monitored by CCTV during the day.

- 4.31 The boarders are well supervised by a suitable number of appropriately experienced or qualified staff who know the whereabouts of their charges and the procedures for finding a missing boarder if it is ever necessary. All boarding staff have job descriptions and receive appropriate induction when new in post. The recent changes in the management of boarding have yet to establish a programme of appraisal and continual professional development.
- 4.32 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is sound. The current leadership team is maintaining the level of care and smooth running of the boarding house and continue to successfully fulfil the school's boarding aims. The plans for the development of boarding are currently embryonic and in abeyance waiting for the newly appointed housemistress to take up her post and contribute to them. Self-evaluation is not complete and so priorities for improvement have not yet been set.
- 4.33 The school has responded positively to the recommendations in the ISI Intermediate Inspection 2012 report.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Since the previous inspection, the board of governors has been restructured and there is a new Chair. The board has taken great care in the recent appointment of the head master. They are wholeheartedly supportive of both him and the school. They have a clear understanding of what the school is trying to achieve and what the constraints are upon it. They have responded to the recommendation to improve the use of ICT across the school. However, they did not respond to the recommendations with regard to the sharing of management responsibilities. With the appointment of the new head master and the development of a new senior management team, this has been rectified. The role of the subject leader in effectively monitoring teaching and learning is still to be consolidated.
- 5.3 Governors offer an extensive range of expertise and experience, and many are past pupils and past parents or have longstanding links with the school. They are therefore in a strong position to set appropriate aims and values in keeping with the school's ethos.
- 5.4 Governors have clear financial oversight and a strong strategic vision for the future of the school. They are determined to ensure the school's success and growth. All aspects of education, standards and care provided by the school are discussed and minuted by both the committee system and meetings of the whole board, as they oversee staffing, accommodation, resources and pastoral matters. A member of the board is a member of the school's health and safety committee.
- 5.5 The governing body is aware of its responsibilities for child protection and health and safety, and appropriate training has been undertaken to confirm their commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils. A specific governor has been allocated responsibility for this area ensuring that related policies are regularly and properly reviewed by the whole governing body. They recognise their responsibility for the school's compliance with regulatory and legal requirements and in the maintenance of a centralised staff register that records the recruitment checks undertaken on the appointment of staff, although the monitoring of safe recruitment procedures has lacked rigour in the past. This procedural deficiency has now been rectified.
- 5.6 Governors are committed to attending school functions and are well known by parents. Visits to the school to observe its day-to-day life are regular, contribute fully to the education of the pupils and are greatly valued by the school community.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents and others, is sound.
- 5.8 The newly appointed head has now established his management team. Their new roles are in the process of being clarified. There is a sense of purpose and direction and they have the aims of the school clearly in mind. There is a focused vision for the development of the school but this has yet to be formalised into a prioritised

development plan closely linked to a rigorous process of evaluation. The school's new direction and purpose have been welcomed by staff, and their enthusiasm for and appreciation of the many changes that have already been made are evident. The enthusiasm and energy of leadership have been a catalyst in moving the school forward so quickly.

- 5.9 The documentation for curriculum planning across the school is detailed and comprehensive, matching work well to pupils' differing abilities and needs. Subject co-ordinators generally have a good oversight of their subjects and manage them well, although, most are class teachers and have only a limited time to do this. There is no formal system in place for monitoring teaching and learning. Staff have few opportunities to observe others teach in order to identify and share more widely, across subjects and age groups, the excellent practice that exists within the school. At present there is no formal appraisal system in place and this limits the identification of areas for staff development. In this transitional period of the school many of these systems are under review.
- 5.10 Policies and procedures for most aspects of school life have been recently reviewed and improved. The safeguarding of pupils throughout the school is enhanced through the emphasis given to training in child protection and health and safety. In the past, procedures relating to a small number of staff appointments have not been rigorous. Revised measures now ensure that arrangements for recruiting staff adhere to all regulatory requirements.
- 5.11 The school develops and maintains good relationships with parents. In their questionnaire responses parents comment that they are extremely satisfied with the quality of education and support that the school provide. They cite the school's ethos as a particular strength, which supports their children's personal development extremely positively.
- 5.12 Channels of communication are efficient and parents feel that staff respond quickly and supportively to any queries or concerns that they may have. No complaints were on record at the time of the inspection.
- 5.13 Comprehensive information is provided on the school website and in the new parents welcome pack. Further information is available through newsletters and includes invitations to parent and teacher meetings, social events, performances and family activities such as Parents' Art Day and the Big Plant.
- 5.14 The reports for parents are clear and informative, being specific to each individual pupil and giving a clear view of her attainment, behaviour and progress across all subjects. They give useful guidance to improve performance.

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