



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

HIPPERHOLME GRAMMAR SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Hipperholme Grammar School

Full Name of School	Hipperholme Grammar School
DfE Number	381/6006
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Telephone Number	01422 202256
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Email Address	headmaster@hgsf.org.uk
Headmaster	Mr Jack Williams
Chairman of Governors	Mr Christopher Redfearn
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	353
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (189 boys; 164 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 88 3-5 (EYFS): 49 11-18: 216
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Louise Reynolds
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	30 Apr 2013 to 03 May 2013

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 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, 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.

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.

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', 'satisfactory' 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 chairman of governors and the EYFS link governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Marion Gibbs

Reporting Inspector

Mr Martin Lloyd

Assistant Reporting Inspector

Mr Graham Gorton

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Mr Keith Knight

Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)

Mrs Julie Thompson

Team Inspector
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Miss Mary Regan

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hipperholme Grammar School was founded in 1648 as a free grammar school and became an independent school in 1985. It is now a co-educational day school for pupils aged from 3 to 18 years. In 2003, the governors purchased a nearby preparatory school, which has become the junior school of the Hipperholme Grammar School Foundation. The junior and senior schools are approximately half a mile apart in the small village of Hipperholme, close to the town of Halifax. The Hipperholme Grammar School Foundation is a charitable trust with its own governing body. The current headmaster has been in post since January 2012. Since the previous inspection, a new hall and dining room have been added to the junior school.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide academic excellence and high quality teaching, and to develop and promote positive relationships and pupils' independence, confidence, creativity, as well as their understanding of environmental and social issues, and of the relative values of competition and co-operation. It also seeks to provide a safe, secure and caring environment, based on Christian values and a family ethos, where pupils can express their feelings and opinions freely while learning to listen to and respect the views of others.
- 1.3 The school has 353 pupils on roll: 189 boys and 164 girls. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is situated within the junior school. The EYFS comprises 49 children in the Nursery and Reception classes and the junior school has 88 pupils aged from 5 to 11. The senior school has 178 pupils aged from 11 to 16 and 38 pupils in the sixth form. The pupils come from a very wide catchment area in Calderdale, Bradford and Kirklees, and from a range of backgrounds. About a sixth of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; none have English as an additional language. Admission to the senior school is by formal tests and interview. Candidates for entry to the junior school spend a day at the school and are interviewed and assessed more informally.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the junior school is above the national average, with most pupils having ability that is in line with or above the national average. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with over three-quarters of pupils having an ability that is at least above average. The ability profile of the sixth form is in line with the national average. The school has identified 43 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mostly of a mild dyslexic nature, and provides 21 of these with specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school provides a good education for pupils of all ages within a secure and caring family environment. From the Nursery to the sixth form pupils are articulate and confident. They have strong literacy and numeracy skills and creativity. Pupils of all ages show very positive attitudes. They are eager to learn, behave very well and show sustained concentration. Highly committed and knowledgeable teaching contributes positively to pupils' academic progress. Pupils with SEND benefit from specialist support of high quality. In the junior school, including the EYFS, pupils of all abilities achieve high standards and make good progress. Pupils in the senior school also make good progress and GCSE and A-level results have improved significantly in recent years. Pupils of all ages achieve well in extra-curricular activities, especially in music and sports. The broad and balanced curriculum supports the aims of the school well and is suitable for pupils all ages and abilities.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent at all ages and is well supported by excellent pastoral care throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual and moral development is excellent. They are keen to contribute to the school community and have mature social skills. Pupils of all ages respect the beliefs and values of others. In the EYFS, the children understand the importance of considering the feelings of others and the need for co-operation, respect and sharing, and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Sixth-form pupils serve as excellent role models for younger pupils. Pupils are very well cared for at all times; they trust their teachers and feel well supported by them. The school is very effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. The arrangements for safeguarding, and for welfare, health and safety are good. The school has not met the regulatory requirement to make back-up copies of the admission register at least monthly and to keep the copies for three years, but is now addressing this.
- 2.3 The governing body provides effective oversight of the school and carries out its responsibilities well. Leadership and management are good. The senior management shares a clear vision for the school and appropriate priorities have been set. All the recommendations from the previous inspection have been carried out. The school has recently undergone a period of rapid change and not all of the new arrangements in the senior school are fully understood and embedded. The school has a good and constructive relationship with parents and provides numerous opportunities for them to be actively involved in its life as well as in the work and progress of their children.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- make back-up copies of the admission register not less than monthly and keep the copies for three years [Part 3, paragraph 17., under Welfare, health and safety].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that the many existing examples of excellent teaching are extended throughout the school, so that the needs of pupils of all abilities are fully met.
 2. Ensure that management at all levels is effectively supported, monitored and reviewed.
 3. In the EYFS, provide opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning records.

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 overall.
- 3.2 Pupils of all ages are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. From the Nursery to the sixth form they are articulate and confident, and listen well to one another and their teachers. Their literacy skills are strong: they produce high quality creative and factual writing. Pupils' numeracy skills are very good and they apply these well. Those with SEND develop good skills, benefiting from the high quality specialist support. Creativity is a strength throughout the school, with outstanding examples in music, art and drama. Pupils of all ages develop very good physical skills. They are competent users of information and communication technology (ICT) from an early age, becoming increasingly confident in research and producing documents and presentations. In the junior school, pupils develop strong independent and critical thinking skills, showing much initiative. Senior school pupils demonstrate high levels of independent abstract and critical thinking and very good powers of analysis, although opportunities to develop these skills are sometimes limited. Pupils of all ages show very positive attitudes. They are eager to learn, behave very well and show sustained concentration, settling to work quickly. Pupils work with enthusiasm, both independently and in collaboration, co-operating very well with one other and with their teachers.

Junior School

- 3.3 All children in the EYFS, including those with SEND, reach the expected levels of development and the more able exceed expectation. They are extremely well prepared for the next stage of education, making excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points. In the Nursery they follow a story with sustained concentration, identify initial sounds in familiar words and use phonetic knowledge to sound out simple words. They recognise and order numerals to 10 and are confident using numbers in games. In Reception, children write short independent sentences in a meaningful context. They are developing good mathematical vocabulary, confidently identifying and naming the properties of three-dimensional shapes, and can recognise numbers in and out of sequence to 20, with the more able reaching 50. They use interactive technology with confidence.
- 3.4 In standardised tests in English and mathematics, junior school pupils achieve results that are higher overall than national norms. Evidence from pupils' work and interviews confirmed that their attainment is good in relation to national age-related expectations. Standardised measures of progress, supported by inspection evidence, indicate that pupils, including those with SEND, make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The more able pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. Pupils reach high standards in extra-curricular activities, including sporting successes, for example in water polo. A quarter of pupils take individual music examinations and they achieve well.

Senior School

- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been similar overall to the national average for maintained schools, but show improvement from 2009 to 2011. In 2011 the results were above the national average for maintained schools and in 2012 this improvement was maintained. The vast majority of pupils achieve at least five C grades or above, including English and mathematics. At A level, the relatively small numbers make statistical analysis less meaningful. Results have been improving and in 2011 they were similar to the national average for maintained schools; in 2009 to 2010 they had been below the national average for maintained schools. In 2011, 60% of all A-level entries were graded A* to B. The 2012 A-level results were again significantly better than those of 2009 and 2010. Nationally standardised measures of progress indicate that pupils make broadly appropriate progress to GCSE in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. Based on inspection evidence, the high proportion of effective teaching and the quality of the pupils' work, the inspectors judged that the progress of pupils, including the more able, is good in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND make good progress and achieve well. Almost all Year 13 leavers proceed to their first-choice university course.
- 3.6 Pupils achieve highly in a range of activities. Teams and individuals have regular success in regional and national sporting competitions, especially athletics, cross-country running and netball. Pupils have been national champions in cheerleading for the past five years, and the school supports individual participation in international snowboarding. Pupils achieve many successes in music examinations and individual success was gained as best instrumentalist in a national brass band festival in 2010. Pupils secure bronze and silver awards in national physics and mathematical challenges.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good overall.
- 3.8 The curriculum supports the aims of the school well and is suitable for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. It is broad and balanced, and enables pupils to experience all the required areas of learning. A whole-school curriculum working group helps to ensure a smooth transition for pupils from the junior to the senior school. Since the previous inspection the provision of personal, social and health education (PSHE) has been reviewed and improved, with timetabled lessons introduced throughout the school. Almost all the parents and pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied both with the subjects offered and the range of extra-curricular activities available. A very small minority of parents expressed concern regarding homework. Inspectors found that appropriate homework is set.

Junior School

- 3.9 In the EYFS, children have many opportunities to develop appropriate skills and to reach their expected levels of development. Their needs are very well met. The excellent, well-equipped outside learning area and woodland learning environment offer exciting opportunities for learning through play. In Reception, children enjoy music and movement lessons and participate fully in all physical education (PE) activities.
- 3.10 The time allocated to each subject throughout the junior school is good, with a strong focus on studying the core skills of English and mathematics. Specialist teaching in areas such as French, PE and design and technology benefits the pupils. The PSHE programme equips and prepares the pupils well to understand themselves and the world around them. Curriculum planning is of a high quality in all subjects. Most of the curriculum is taught by the class teachers, who know the pupils extremely well. They structure their work very effectively to meet the needs of those pupils with SEND, as well as providing challenge for the more able. Subject co-ordinator files in all curriculum areas provide valuable resources for class teachers.
- 3.11 A good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, music, drama, chess, cookery and gardening, complements and enhances the curriculum. Music is particularly strong, with regular choral and instrumental performances. An excellent range of trips and visits, including residential excursions for older pupils, makes a strong impact through excellent follow-up work. As well as substantial local community links, the junior school has successfully established a number of international projects; these all enrich the pupils' experiences.

Senior School

- 3.12 The curriculum is well planned and is supported by appropriate schemes of work. The core subjects are augmented by both French and German from Year 7 and business studies in Year 9. At GCSE, the provision is further increased and includes the three separate sciences, psychology and sports studies. Sixth-form pupils are offered a good range of A-level subjects and all their individual choices are accommodated. Preparation for the next stage of education and adult life is good and includes specialist careers advice. A sixth-form enrichment programme provides pupils with effective preparation for life beyond school. Pupils with SEND have high quality individual specialist support lessons. Good provision is made in many areas for those pupils identified as gifted and talented; however, opportunities for appropriate challenge for the more able are not yet fully embedded across the curriculum.
- 3.13 An excellent range of extra-curricular activities enriches the pupils' experience. Provision in music, drama and a variety of sporting activities is strong and has increased since the previous inspection. Activities are well supported and appreciated. Among the high quality music activities are several choirs, including an all-boys' choir, bands and musical ensembles. A highly successful biennial gym and dance evening involves every pupil in the school. Two-thirds of Year 10 pupils are enrolled on The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and several older pupils are progressing to gold level.
- 3.14 An extensive variety of visitors and visits to local places of interest, including museums, art galleries and theatres, enhances the curriculum. Pupils benefit from residential trips, including visits to France and Germany and an annual ski trip. Community involvement is well developed and links with the local community, churches and businesses are strong. Established links with schools overseas are actively supported.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good overall.
- 3.16 Highly committed teachers, who have strong subject knowledge and skills, contribute positively to pupils' academic progress and help to fulfil the school's aims. They know their pupils extremely well and give generously of their time to assist them outside of lessons. Teaching is well planned and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Since the previous inspection, the appointment of a special educational needs co-ordinator has significantly enhanced support for pupils with SEND. Throughout the school pupils with SEND receive very effective one-to-one support. They are given individual profiles containing appropriate targets that are regularly reviewed and well used by teachers. A small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire did not agree that more able pupils receive appropriate support. Inspectors found that the needs of these pupils are appropriately challenged and supported in many areas, but that practice is not yet consistent.

Junior School

- 3.17 The vast majority of the teaching observed in the junior school was good or better, with over half of all the teaching being excellent. In the EYFS, teachers demonstrate high expectations of the children's behaviour and learning. They motivate them successfully and engage them in well-planned activities. Teacher-led activities with high quality resources promote children's learning very effectively, and many opportunities are provided for children to take the initiative and to follow areas of personal interest. Teachers use assessment well to ensure children's progress.
- 3.18 Teaching is extremely well planned throughout and is based on a thorough understanding of pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND are encouraged to give of their best and appropriate support strategies are used. The needs of the more able pupils are met through thorough planning that incorporates challenge and extension work to develop their higher order thinking skills, although such activities are sometimes only available when basic class work is complete. While they may have their own subject expertise, class teachers are extremely knowledgeable in all areas. They bring flair and passion to their work, which in turn captivate the attention of the pupils and foster their interests and independence and encourage them to think for themselves. The majority of lessons proceed at a brisk pace and the teachers make good use of time. They punctuate their lessons with fun and humour, to which the pupils respond very positively. Good use is made of the available resources and ICT is employed well to support some curriculum areas, such as English.
- 3.19 A robust assessment scheme enables teachers to track pupils' progress carefully and to identify areas for further development. The marking and on-going assessment of the pupils' work are exemplary. Work is regularly and thoroughly marked with supportive comments that celebrate the pupils' achievements and identify ways to improve. Pupils appreciate the time, care and consideration given to the marking of their work; they read the comments carefully and take note of them.

Senior School

- 3.20 Almost every lesson observed in the senior school was judged to be at least sound and almost half were excellent. Teaching is knowledgeable and well planned, and includes careful consolidation of previous learning. The best teaching is characterised by clear objectives, regular checking of pupils' learning and effective time management. In such lessons, the pace is brisk; teachers set high expectations and use a wide variety of resources and tasks, including group and pair work, to sustain pupils' interest. In the small minority of less successful lessons observed, a teacher-led approach predominated and opportunities for independent thinking were limited, while the slow pace led to some pupils losing concentration. Classroom-based resources, including artefacts, data projectors, a range of textbooks and stimulus material, support learning well, although sometimes worksheets are overused. The effective use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers provide resources and assignments online through the school network, which pupils are also able to access from home. Teachers respond appropriately to the needs of pupils with SEND, so that they make good progress. In many lessons, although not all, the more able pupils are offered work that provides extension and challenge.
- 3.21 The school uses a range of standardised tests that provide valuable data to aid planning. A tracking system monitors individual pupils' progress and enables targets for improvement to be set that are shared with parents and pupils. The revised

school marking policy is clear, but its implementation is not yet consistent and the quality of marking overall is variable. All marking is regular, but the quality of feedback is inconsistent and some is too cursory. Some high quality marking was seen in a range of subjects, where teachers' comments helped pupils to understand how to make progress.

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 Pupils' spiritual awareness and development are outstanding and support the school's aim to be a community where individuals are encouraged to thrive. Pupils of all ages have a mature regard for non-material aspects of life and welcome opportunities to reflect on these in lessons, in assemblies and in their daily school life. Pupils in both the junior and senior schools discuss the nature of faith and trust sensitively in religious education lessons, and respect the views of classmates of different faiths. Through art and other studies, pupils gain an excellent appreciation of the beauty of the natural world's co-existence with man-made designs, and demonstrate this in their work. They also develop a strong understanding of the world beyond the physical through the study of music and literature.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is very strong in all sections of the school. They demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong, and understand the significance of rules for a community. They showed a clear sense of morality in discussions about identifying and dealing with bullying. In lessons, older pupils reflected sensitively on issues such as war and propaganda. Pupils demonstrate a good level of awareness of and concern for those less fortunate than themselves. They participate successfully and enthusiastically in significant charity fund-raising, in such activities as the senior school's sponsored reading and the penny trail organised by the junior school council.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is outstanding. They are willing to take on positions of responsibility and are keen to contribute to the school community. The head girl and head boy confidently act as ambassadors for the school. Pupils enjoy celebrating one another's achievements through the regular achievement assemblies. They have mature social skills that are very evident around the school during play times and lunch breaks. In the EYFS, children understand the importance of considering the feelings of others and the need for co-operation, respect and sharing, and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils of all ages are well mannered and considerate. Relative to their age, pupils show good knowledge and understanding of social, political and economic issues in the world around them and from the junior school onwards develop a keen awareness of environmental concerns. Older pupils participate in a local leadership training programme and community projects which, along with work experience, make a significant contribution to their personal development. During interviews with inspectors, pupils were eager to discuss the ways in which the school fosters a sense of community and an awareness of the needs and viewpoints of others.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. From the EYFS to the sixth form, they are very self-confident and understand the importance of consideration for the beliefs and values of others; they show a high level of respect for different faiths and traditions. Pupils appreciate their own culture and are happy to embrace cultural diversity. They develop their understanding through presentations by visitors to the school and trips to museums, art galleries and literary events. Pupils also enhance their understanding of other cultures through participating in a range of international projects, including links with Italy, France, Germany and India.

4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils have a very high standard of personal development. They are courteous, friendly and articulate. They listen with respect to the views of others, take responsibility for their own actions and make the best of opportunities to contribute to their school community.

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

4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

4.8 Care, support and guidance are at the heart of the school, fulfilling its aim of providing a safe, secure and caring environment that develops and promotes positive relationships. Pupils are very well cared for at all times. They trust their teachers and feel well supported by them.

4.9 Teachers know their pupils well and provide excellent role models. The electronic day book, used throughout the school, provides an efficient and comprehensive way of sharing any pastoral concerns. Older pupils provide excellent role models for younger ones, for example through the sports leaders programme, taking clubs and mentoring. Sixth-form pupils provide guidance in academic areas as 'subject officers' and pastorally through the 'listening ear' initiative. Warm and friendly relationships exist between year groups, encouraged by the strong house system.

4.10 Children in the EYFS enjoy positive relationships with adults and are very well cared for, forming secure emotional attachments. Each child is allocated a key person as a point of welcome and contact, who supports the child in school and ensures that their needs are met. Children behave well and feel secure and happy. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet and physical activity. They drink water frequently throughout the day and enjoy healthy lunches.

4.11 Pupils of all ages are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise. The new outside gym facility in the senior school is well used and greatly valued by the pupils, as is the outdoor equipment in the junior school. Sports clubs and activities are well attended and appreciated. Pupils appreciate the school's initiative to provide high quality, locally sourced food. However, responses to the pupils' and parents' questionnaire and discussions with pupils indicated significant dissatisfaction with the compulsory school meals, introduced in 2011. Inspectors found that the food is nutritious and that second helpings are readily available, but recognised that some of the menu choices are somewhat overly sophisticated.

4.12 Pupils' views are sought through the school councils. The junior school council meets fortnightly and provides an excellent forum for the discussion of issues. Its work is well supported by an 'eco-council' focused on improving the school environment. The senior school council, led by the sixth form, actively seeks the views of pupils, but meets less regularly and publishes no advance agenda. In their responses to the questionnaire, senior school pupils indicated strongly that their views are not listened to. Discussions revealed that this was mainly related to the catering arrangements. Inspectors found that the school gives serious consideration to pupils' views.

4.13 The school is very effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Behaviour in the junior school is exemplary. The vast majority of pupils agree that the school deals with bullying effectively. A significant minority of pupils' responding to the questionnaire did not agree that teachers are fair in the way they give sanctions. Inspectors found that the school deals fairly and constructively with unacceptable behaviour.

4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.

4.16 Throughout the school, including the EYFS, the pupils' welfare is effectively promoted and their safeguarding is carefully ensured. Safeguarding arrangements for all age groups have regard to official guidance, and all staff, including the designated officers, have received appropriate child protection training. The school has a detailed and effective safeguarding policy. Safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed.

4.17 Health and safety policies are thorough and well implemented. The school has effective arrangements to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. All members of staff receive fire awareness training annually. Regular fire drills are held and recorded. Fire detection and fire fighting equipment is regularly tested and maintained. Risk assessments, both generic and specific, are detailed, effective and reviewed regularly. They cover educational visits and all aspects of the premises and potentially hazardous activity, and include, where appropriate, reference to pupils with medical conditions and SEND.

4.18 Appropriate provision is made for pupils who are ill or injured and records are carefully kept. The junior school now has a suitably located and equipped medical room. The majority of staff are trained in first aid at a basic level and an adequate number are trained at a higher level and in paediatric first aid. First-aid boxes are available at key points on the school site and are well maintained. Suitable first-aid policies are in place.

4.19 The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained, but, historically, separate archive copies of the electronic admission register have not been made at least once every month and stored for three years as required. The school has now set up a system to ensure that this will happen. Printed archive copies of attendance registers are produced and appropriately stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body provides effective oversight of the school, maintaining a clear focus on its aims. Governors are well aware of their responsibilities for educational standards and financial planning, and ensure that appropriate investment in staff, accommodation and resources is maintained. The governing body carries out its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils, safe recruitment of staff, and health and safety throughout the school effectively. Individual governors visit the school to review procedures and records, and discuss them with the relevant members of staff. Reports on safeguarding and health and safety are discussed and arrangements reviewed at least annually by the full board.
- 5.3 The board has recently reviewed its structures and procedures, and is committed to ensuring that governors are well informed and active in their support of the school. New governors have been recruited with expertise in a range of appropriate areas. Sub-committees with specific responsibilities monitor areas such as staffing and curriculum, finance, and health and safety effectively. They meet regularly and include senior members of staff. They receive and discuss detailed information and present reports to the full board. A small group of governors carries out performance management of the leadership, focusing on target setting and review. A designated governor for the EYFS setting visits regularly, is well informed about EYFS requirements and reports back to the full board, enabling effective oversight. Other governors attend events at the school and staff appreciate their support.
- 5.4 The board has identified governor training as an area for further development, although some individual governors have had relevant training in areas such as safeguarding. The governors have been appropriately involved with the whole-school development plan, which is currently being reviewed.

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 school has been undergoing a period of fairly rapid change since the previous inspection with the appointment of a new head of the junior school, including the EYFS, and, more recently, a new whole-school headmaster. The foundation management team meets regularly and has effective oversight of the whole school. The senior management shares a clear vision for the school and appropriate priorities have been set. The five-year whole-school development plan was under review at the time of the inspection and a new version is being prepared for September 2013. The current version has clear objectives, with timescales and personnel responsible.
- 5.7 As recommended at the previous inspection, the status and role of the junior school management have been clarified and defined. The head of the junior school has significant operational responsibilities but liaises closely with the headmaster, and is well supported by recently appointed key stage co-ordinators. Roles and

responsibilities have been more clearly defined and planning is rigorous and well co-ordinated. The junior school site has been significantly improved, with a new hall and dining room, and the outside space has been reorganised, with a dedicated woodland learning area and provision for numerous age-appropriate activities. Within the EYFS setting, the leadership and staff demonstrate a commitment to evaluating practice and effectively managing continuous improvement. Educational programmes are regularly monitored and staff are appropriately qualified and supervised. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated. Appropriate priorities for improvement are set within the context of a clear vision for the setting. A detailed EYFS action plan highlights areas for attention and identifies staff to be involved, enabling improvements across the setting. The current whole-school development plan does not take sufficient account of the specific needs of the children in the EYFS, but this is being reviewed. Positive links have been established with the local authority and teachers participate in the authority's moderation of the profile scores. The setting has made good progress since the previous inspection. Children's safety and security are ensured in a stimulating and welcoming environment. Throughout the junior school, staff appraisal is carried out effectively and continuous professional development is encouraged.

- 5.8 In the senior school, the roles and responsibilities of senior staff have been reviewed and are being adjusted. Members of the pastoral leadership team work extremely well together: they demonstrate strong commitment, ensuring a high standard of care for the pupils. The previous curriculum committee is being reformed as a smaller curriculum working group. All heads of department complete reviews and self-evaluation of their department's progress and achievements annually, and use this to aid their future planning. Heads of academic departments and subjects have clear job descriptions. Leadership and management at this level are strong in some cases but less proactive in others. Changes have recently been made to the marking, assessment and reporting system and to the curriculum; a two-week lesson timetable has been introduced and sixth-form pupils' responsibilities and privileges have been reviewed and adjusted. At the time of the inspection, not all of these changes were embedded and some were not fully understood by staff, pupils and parents. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the appraisal system for all staff has been carried out effectively in the senior school in recent years. Clear targets have been set for staff and training needs have been assessed and appropriately prioritised. Following the change of leadership, the appraisal schedule in the senior school is now being resumed and an even greater focus on professional development has been established. A new programme of lesson observation by senior management has been set up and peer observation throughout the school has recently been introduced. These are being reviewed and further developed.
- 5.9 Care is taken to recruit high quality staff, and a well-organised and thorough induction programme is in place. The support provided for newly qualified teachers is effective. All staff are appropriately trained in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety. Safer recruitment procedures are followed, and pre-appointment checks are appropriately carried out and recorded in a centralised register for staff, governors and volunteers.
- 5.10 The school has a good and constructive relationship with parents, and provides numerous opportunities for them to be actively involved in its life and in the work and progress of their children. In the EYFS, teachers work very closely with parents and ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure. Parents are supportive of the setting, reading regularly with their children at home and contributing written

comments to reading record books. However, at present, they do not have an opportunity to contribute to their children's individual learning record by including learning experiences and observations made at home. Throughout the junior school, parents accompany groups on trips and visits, join pupils and teachers regularly in the woodland learning environment and give talks to groups of pupils about customs and traditions from other cultures. Parents are invited to class and achievement assemblies, information evenings, concerts and many sporting events. A few parents expressed in questionnaire responses dissatisfaction with the information provided about their children's progress. The inspectors found no evidence to support this view, and that parents are kept well informed about their children's achievements and progress. Parents receive a detailed and informative written report at the end of the summer term, and have opportunities to speak to teachers at termly parents' evenings and informally at the start and end of each school day. Parents of pupils in the senior school attend an annual parents' evening with their children's teachers, and receive regular progress reports and a full report annually. Information evenings are also organised about option choices and other relevant topics.

- 5.11 Active parent-teacher associations are involved in organising a wide range of social and fund-raising events in both the senior and the junior school. Regular newsletters are distributed electronically and are available in hard copy if required. The school website is currently being redesigned, but includes all the required information. The annual whole-school magazine is much appreciated.
- 5.12 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. A very large majority agreed that the school is well led and managed, that information about the school and its policies is readily available, that they receive timely responses to questions and that the school encourages them to be involved in events and aspects of its work. A very small minority did not agree that the school has handled their concerns well. The inspectors examined related records and found that the vast majority of concerns have been dealt with effectively. The school handles any formal complaints from parents with care, investigating thoroughly and following its published procedures. Meticulous records are kept.

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