



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

LAMBROOK

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Lambrook

Full Name of School	Lambrook		
DfE Number	867/6003		
Registered Charity Number	309098		
Address	Lambrook Winkfield Row Bracknell Berkshire RG42 6LU United Kingdom		
Telephone Number	01344 882717		
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Email Address	headmaster@lambrookschool.co.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Jonathan Perry		
Chair of Governors	Mr Charles Donald		
Age Range	3 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	519		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (319 boys; 200 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	70	5-7: 100
	7-11:	250	11-13: 99
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	472	
Number of Boarders	Total:	47	
	Weekly:	4	Flexi: 43
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Nina Kingsmill Moore		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	09 June 2015 to 12 June 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 an interim inspection in January 2010. The school had an intermediate boarding inspection in September 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.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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

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

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

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

Mr Graham Sims	Reporting Inspector
Mr Jonathan Atkin	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Rachel Eaton-Jones	Team Inspector (Head of Prep Department, ISA school)
Mr Stephen McManus	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Ian Raybould	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sally Cunliffe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Kia Jackson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Lambrook is a co-educational day and boarding preparatory school for pupils from the ages of 3 to 13. The school is divided into two sections: the pre-preparatory (pre-prep) school, which comprises the EYFS and Years 1 and 2, and the preparatory (prep) school, for pupils in Years 3 to 8. The school has two boarding houses, one for boys and one for girls. It was founded in 1860, and is run as a charitable trust, administered by a governing body. It occupies a 50-acre site close to the towns of Ascot, Bracknell and Windsor. The headmaster was appointed shortly after the previous inspection, since when the school has embarked on a major building development programme, including: a new performing arts centre, an extension to the library, a new classroom block and a new 25-metre swimming pool.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide the highest standard of education for each pupil, enabling them to gain entry to a range of independent schools in the UK, which have high standards of entry. It seeks to offer a broad spectrum of opportunities to boys and girls, encouraging them to fulfil their potential both as individuals and as a community and to ensure a high quality of pastoral care, allowing them to flourish within a happy school environment. It aims to enable all pupils to take part in competitive sport and to prepare them for the ever-increasing challenges of the outside world, ensuring that they leave the school as confident, engaging, mature and thoughtful young adults.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 519 pupils on roll, of whom 70 children were in the EYFS setting, which comprises a Nursery and three Reception classes. Approximately three-fifths of the pupils are boys. Three hundred and fifty pupils are in Years 1 to 6, and 99 pupils are in Years 7 and 8. The school has very flexible boarding arrangements. Four pupils are weekly boarders, but 43 others board for one, two or three days each week to suit their families' arrangements. Most pupils come from families with professional and business backgrounds and live within a ten-mile radius of the school. Four-fifths of the pupils are of British heritage, but the other one-fifth are from 26 different nationalities.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school, as determined by standardised tests, is above the national average, although, in most year groups, there is a relatively wide range of abilities. The school provides additional support for 52 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 29 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to provide the highest standard of education for its pupils. It provides an outstandingly wide range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities and excellent teaching, both of which enthuse and engage all the pupils including those in the EYFS, enabling them to achieve high academic standards and preparing them extremely well for their future senior schools. Occasionally, the feedback from teachers is not helpful enough and pupils do not respond to teachers' marking; and in the EYFS, there is not always enough opportunity for children to choose activities which match their own interests. However, the breadth of opportunities available to the pupils, the vibrant learning environment and the pupils' excellent attitudes to study ensure that all pupils receive an extremely well-rounded education and make excellent progress throughout the school.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Strong, supportive relationships between pupils and staff throughout the school contribute strongly to every aspect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils develop into thoughtful, well-informed, courteous and extremely well-behaved individuals. Pupils from many different nationalities live and work together in friendly harmony, embodying the very best of British values. The pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, contribute well to the local and wider communities and value the democratic processes through which their voices are heard and decisions are made. The overwhelming majority of pupils enjoy the school. For those who board, the experience makes an excellent contribution to their personal development, and boarding staff now have more opportunity to meet regularly, as recommended at the previous inspection. Pastoral care is extremely strong, and rigorous attention is given to matters of welfare, health and safety, which are of high quality.
- 2.3 The governing body fulfils its legal responsibilities extremely well and provides strong support for the school's leaders. Its astute financial management has given rise to major improvements in the school's facilities. Excellent leadership and management has enthused staff and instigated a much wider range of educational opportunities for pupils. Leaders have dealt effectively with recommendations from the previous inspection, by providing more focus to the school development plan, improving monitoring and planning in the EYFS, and giving more opportunities for problem-solving for the youngest children. The school has made many further improvements. Educational provision is monitored carefully. Leaders ensure that the school provides extremely well for all groups of pupils, including those in the EYFS. There are individualised programmes for some of the school's most able pupils and excellent support for pupils with SEND or EAL. Links with parents are excellent. The school communicates frequently with parents, keeping them well informed about their children's progress, and ensures parents have the opportunity to be fully involved in the life of the school. Parents are extremely positive about almost every aspect of the school but, in particular, the way the school looks after their children and keeps boarders safe, the range of experiences provided for them and the quality of leadership and management.

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.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve the effectiveness of feedback to pupils when marking their work to ensure pupils respond to this and enable them to learn from their mistakes.
 2. Strengthen the bonds between the Nursery and Reception classes to ensure that there is sufficient choice in free-flow activities to reflect children's interests.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school meets its aims, to help pupils fulfil their potential and to prepare them for the ever-increasing challenges of the outside world, extremely well. Both academic standards and extra-curricular achievement have improved since the previous inspection. Responses to pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that almost all pupils and parents greatly appreciate the high standards achieved by the school.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, almost all children reach the expected levels of development by the end of the Reception year, and a large majority exceed these expectations in many areas. All make at least good progress and some, especially those with SEND or EAL, make excellent progress relative to their starting points. The children all read simple books, and some write full sentences. They are keen to write for a variety of purposes and most form their letters and words well by the time they start Year 1. They know numbers up to 100, and write and calculate addition and subtraction sums to ten. They enjoy using logic to solve problems. They concentrate and work well independently. They enjoy being active learners, exploring, investigating, being creative and engaging enthusiastically in a wide range of sports.
- 3.4 The pupils in the rest of the school, including the most able and those with SEND or EAL, show a good and often excellent level of knowledge and understanding, and the teaching challenges them well, resulting in excellent progress overall. As they get older, the pupils take increasing responsibility for their learning, organise their own participation in the school's extensive revision programme and show initiative in completing independent tasks. The pupils have well-developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills which are used to good effect in many subjects. Their creative and performing skills, particularly in music and drama, are exceptionally high; pupils in every year group take part in dramatic performances. Artwork throughout the school is imaginative and inspiring, and design and technology (DT) projects showcase excellent design standards. Sports skills are extremely well developed. Throughout the school, the pupils are highly articulate. They engage well in thoughtful discussion, analyse and debate with confidence, and ask questions to further their learning. Most pupils have good, and often excellent, literacy and numeracy skills, and write fluently and with imagination. They work logically in mathematics, and many have quick mental mathematics recall. The pupils present their work well and show enthusiasm and effort. Over the last three years, all pupils in Year 8 have achieved the school's ambitious aim of entering the senior school of their choice, the destinations including many schools which have high standards of entry. Between one-quarter and one-third of pupils have gained a wide variety of scholarships each year.
- 3.5 The pupils participate enthusiastically in the many extra-curricular activities with considerable success. Pupils achieve high standards in drama, dance and music instrumental examinations and festivals. Teams and individual pupils take part in local, regional and national competitions in a range of sports, winning various national age-group titles. All pupils have the opportunity to represent Lambrook in sports fixtures; during the inspection, for example, almost every pupil in Years 2 to 8 played for a school team in a wide variety of matches against other schools. Musicians of all abilities perform with enthusiasm and skill in highly competent ensembles, selective and non-selective choirs, with an extremely high standard of

singing produced by the chapel choir, which frequently performs in interesting locations in the United Kingdom and abroad.

- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged by observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and curriculum discussions with pupils, indicates that they make good, and often excellent, progress over time in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. The outstanding level of support given by the learning development centre, which provides excellent individual tuition and highly relevant learning tasks, enables pupils with SEND and those with EAL to make excellent progress. The most able pupils also make excellent progress, especially in Years 7 and 8, where the programme for potential scholars provides them with a very high level of challenge in their academic work.
- 3.7 The pupils exhibit an excellent work ethic. The school's commitment to developing the whole child helps the pupils to develop extremely positive attitudes to their academic work and their extra-curricular pursuits. Constructive, collaborative working across all levels of ability is evident in the classroom, where the pupils generally show excellent levels of concentration, behaviour and enjoyment. All aspects of school life help the pupils to become the confident, engaging, mature and thoughtful young adults to which the school's aims aspire.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The broad and diverse curriculum covers all of the requisite areas of learning and more, and is complemented by an extremely rich and varied extra-curricular programme, which makes a strong contribution to the achievement of pupils. It enables the pupils to gain a deep understanding of the concepts and subjects they are studying, is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, and supports very well the aims of the school. The curriculum is planned thoroughly and actively promotes fundamental British values. Most subjects from Year 3 onwards, and some in Years 1 and 2, are taught by subject specialists, whose excellent subject knowledge has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. French is taught throughout the school, Latin is introduced in Year 5, and taster classes in Spanish are offered to older pupils on Saturday mornings. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils and parents feel the school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- 3.10 In the EYFS, the curriculum not only covers all the areas of learning but also includes specialist teaching in swimming, dance, physical education, music and movement, French and music. It helps almost all children to reach at least expected levels of development, and the large majority to exceed these levels in many areas. Those who need extra support to reach the expected levels, especially those with EAL, are given targeted help to enable them to make at least good, and in some cases excellent, progress. Those with SEND are quickly identified. Their needs are sensitively discussed with parents, and the children are provided with excellent support from staff. The most able children are encouraged to challenge themselves, for example, by learning the names of three-dimensional shapes.
- 3.11 In the rest of the school, the curriculum is greatly enhanced by initiatives such as the 'Lambrook Leadership Challenge' for pupils in Years 5 and 8, which seeks to

develop a wide range of life skills, such as public speaking, first aid and manners. An extensive programme on Saturday mornings prepares pupils extremely well, among other things, for transfer to their next school. An ambitious expedition programme and a vast number of day and residential trips enrich pupils' learning. In October 2014, there was a cricket tour to South Africa during which pupils also supported a disadvantaged school in the region. In addition, outside speakers, such as the first female fighter jet pilot, visit the school, enabling the pupils to gain a deeper insight into future careers and the world around them. Every pupil, from Year 2 upwards, has the opportunity to play sport competitively, the school fielding as many as seven teams for a given sport in some year groups. Overall, the breadth of sporting opportunities available to all pupils is outstanding. The pupils also benefit from an extremely broad range of opportunities in the performing arts. In drama, all year groups are involved in performances, both large and small scale. In music, the very large majority of pupils learn to play a musical instrument, and many have opportunities to play in orchestras or ensembles or to sing in one of the choirs. There are also different dance classes for girls and boys.

- 3.12 The curriculum is tailored extremely well to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. A diverse leavers' programme, put together in close consultation with the pupils in Year 8, not only makes the leavers' last few weeks in school memorable, but provides them with opportunities to learn new skills, such as orienteering. When necessary, pupils at the top end of the school have individualised learning programmes to prepare them for entry to their next school. Potential scholars, for example, learn Greek. Provision for pupils with SEND and EAL has improved markedly since the previous inspection, and the learning development centre has an enormously positive impact on the progress of these pupils through well-tailored programmes of individual tuition and occasional support within the classroom.
- 3.13 The personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme is excellent and, along with the comprehensive general studies curriculum, contributes strongly to pupils' personal development. Current affairs are discussed in a balanced way so that pupils have the opportunity to consider opposing views on political issues and to gain an understanding of fundamental British values. Links with the community also enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils have had the opportunity to take part in services and concerts for people within the local community, and continued liaison with local schools provides many opportunities for pupils to participate in sports matches. Links with local and national charities help pupils to learn mutual respect and tolerance for others as they organise fund-raising activities and choose which charities to support.
- 3.14 Excellent resources and facilities greatly enhance curricular provision. The new performing arts centre and swimming pool offer pupils first-class facilities. Tablet computers are widely used across the curriculum to support the pupils' learning. The vibrant library supports pupils' needs well and helps to instil a love of reading.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, staff have high expectations of the children, both in terms of their academic work and their behaviour. They know the children well and use this knowledge to provide activities which are matched well to children's abilities and needs. The teaching and the use of good-quality resources engage and motivate the children to be enthusiastic learners who enjoy solving problems. All staff are involved in continuously evaluating their practice and its impact on the children's progress, then using this information to make plans for learning in the future.
- 3.17 In Years 1 to 8, the teaching in subject lessons is nearly always at least good and is frequently excellent. The teaching is well planned and shows a good understanding of the pupils' needs. It caters extremely well for the aptitudes and interests of all pupils, offering sufficient challenge for the most able and providing support for those with SEND or EAL. The teaching is well paced, and generally provides a variety of lively tasks and activities which foster independence, encourage good behaviour, and enable pupils to make excellent progress in developing their skills. Enjoyable learning games are used very effectively in some lessons. For example, in a mathematics lesson for lower-ability pupils, the pupils leapt to the board to answer questions, worked competitively in teams at their desks and then split into pairs to work on fractions and equivalent fractions on the floor, all in one 35-minute period. The teaching employs a good balance of individual, paired and group work, with the result that pupils learn to work particularly well together, and listen and respond to each other's ideas with enthusiasm. The teaching makes effective use of a range of resources, such as tablet computers, interactive whiteboards, and mini whiteboards.
- 3.18 The additional teaching support provided by the learning development centre for pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent. Each pupil receives a laminated sheet outlining targets, which are individually tailored to meet the pupils' specific needs. These continue until they are met, when progress is reviewed and new targets are agreed. Pupils speak highly of the lessons, show excellent understanding of the work that they have covered, and demonstrate understanding in areas where they had previously struggled. All feel that they are making huge strides as a result of their sessions in the centre.
- 3.19 The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' work and keeping track of their progress. The marking of pupils' work is often good. It gives pupils encouragement and clear guidance on how to improve. However, this is not always the case. Some of the marking is cursory and provides little helpful feedback. The pupils are not always encouraged to spend enough time going over their work, responding to their teachers' comments, learning from their mistakes and reflecting on their learning.
- 3.20 Overall, the teaching creates a very positive environment for learning which supports the aims of the school and promotes pupils' progress extremely well. The very positive relationships between pupils and teachers promote tolerance and respect and ensure that any coverage of political issues is non-partisan. The pupils are comfortable asking and answering questions, and do so with genuine interest. The responses of both parents and pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicate an extremely positive view of the quality of teaching. The very large majority of pupils find their work interesting, feel that their teachers help them to learn and that they give them individual help when needed.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school's stated aim is to take an active approach to the development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of its pupils' education, and it does so exceptionally well. By the time pupils leave the school, they are self-confident, excellent listeners who can discuss issues with sensitivity and maturity with their peers and adults.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children develop their skills for the future extremely well. They have a high level of emotional development, recognising the feelings of others, and respecting and tolerating each other's differences. They play and work co-operatively, are keen to help and are kind to one another. The children share well and discuss their ideas with each other. They are happy to explain what they are doing and why they are doing it. They enjoy the excellent surroundings of the school and are keen to explore. They play imaginatively and involve others in their creative play. Children gain self-confidence in an environment where they are known well and valued for being themselves. They are extremely well prepared for their transition from Nursery to Reception and then on into Year 1.
- 4.4 In the rest of the school, the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The pupils show high levels of self-esteem, are emotionally mature and display a sense of purpose during discussion. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of faith and have the ability to reflect, gained through their participation in assemblies and chapel services and their active engagement during pastoral sessions. The pupils show concern for those who are less fortunate than themselves by organising charity days and through their ongoing support of a school in South Africa.
- 4.5 The pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of British values and public institutions and services, which is developed through, and reinforced by, the pupils' code of conduct known as the 'Lambrook Pupil Charter', the work of the school council, PSHCE lessons, the general studies programme and school assemblies. Pupils fully appreciate fundamental British values and the processes of democracy; their active participation in a mock election at the time of the general election heightened this awareness.
- 4.6 Pupils' moral development is extremely strong. They listen carefully to the views of others and are extremely articulate when expressing their opinions. They have a strong understanding of what is right or wrong and show knowledge of and respect for the civil and criminal law of the country. This is developed extremely effectively through discussion during pastoral time, and the topics studied in PSHCE and religious studies (RS) lessons. Pupils accept responsibility for their behaviour and are supportive of the school's rewards and sanctions; they believe them to be fair and evenly administered.
- 4.7 The pupils' social development is excellent. Whatever their age, they thrive on the responsibility given to them in positions such as school prefects, sports captains, or members of one of the various sections of the school council. Pupils show excellent co-operation with each other when working in the classroom or during playtime. The many opportunities for pupils to take part in team sports or to collaborate in music and drama productions help them to develop excellent teamwork skills. They are

friendly and polite, are keen to help and are particularly proud to help new pupils integrate into the school.

- 4.8 The pupils' cultural awareness is of a high quality. Their strong understanding of, and sympathy for, the differing standpoints of world religions and the diversity of other cultures is developed very effectively through many subject areas. Pupils have an extensive knowledge of western culture, and their excellent all-round cultural development is enhanced by visiting speakers, trips to museums, attendance at concerts and drama performances, and overseas expeditions. Pupils from many different nationalities and a wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds enjoy excellent relationships with each other.
- 4.9 Pupils develop a strong understanding of promoting diversity and combatting prejudice through the comprehensive PSHCE programme. The integration of the most able pupils and those with SEND or EAL is excellent. These pupils benefit from many of the same opportunities for personal development as other pupils because staff are highly effective in handling any difficulties that they encounter. The school is an extremely harmonious society which ensures that pupils have a very high standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 The staff provide very effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's stated aim to ensure that a high quality of pastoral care is available to both boarders and day pupils.
- 4.12 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is excellent. Each child has a key person who monitors and records their progress. The welcoming atmosphere for both parents and children helps children to settle quickly. Positive relationships between staff and children and within the team promote the children's happiness and help them to feel safe and secure. The staff's high expectations promote high standards of behaviour. The excellent opportunities for physical development help children to learn how to lead healthy lifestyles. They are very keen to participate in all forms of physical activity such as rugby, ballet, multi-sports and swimming. They are provided with a good variety of healthy food and, even in Nursery, know that vegetables such as courgettes are good for them to eat. The children are independent and reliable in managing their own hygiene.
- 4.13 In Years 1 to 8, staff know the pupils extremely well, and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and pupils themselves contribute strongly to the high levels of achievement and personal development. Pupils are keenly aware of the supportive pastoral guidance provided by staff, and they feel sure that there is always someone to turn to if needed. The school has excellent systems to review pastoral issues. These include weekly staff meetings, the availability of a school counsellor, regular meetings of key pastoral personnel, and procedures to reflect upon pastoral incidents. The school is adept at helping pupils in the choice of their future school, and senior pupils receive excellent guidance about possible future careers.
- 4.14 The school is highly effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare but, when they do occur, they are dealt with promptly, constructively and in accordance with the school's procedures; careful records are kept of the misdemeanour and the

sanctions. The pupils feel very safe in school and greatly value the care provided by the staff.

- 4.15 The pupils are encouraged to be healthy. The school provides nutritious, well-balanced meals. The pupils develop an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise through the PSHCE programme, science lessons and the extensive curricular and extra-curricular sporting provision.
- 4.16 The school employs effective methods to seek the views of pupils. For example, members of the prefect body meet with the headmaster on a weekly basis and, in Years 3 and 4, 'Bubble Time' provides an opportunity for pupils to indicate that they want to talk to their teacher. Pupils confirmed that the school council, which is split into four sections, is an excellent forum that enables them to express their views and receive a response.
- 4.17 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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 In the EYFS, the children are exceedingly happy at school and feel safe and secure. Their welfare is promoted effectively and all requirements related to safeguarding are met in full. The staff understand how to deal with any concerns they may have about a child's welfare. Good security measures, regular risk assessments and an awareness of potential dangers ensure that the setting is safe. Lively, child-centred displays make the setting a welcoming and interesting environment.
- 4.20 Throughout the school, detailed policies and thorough procedures to safeguard pupils take full account of the latest official guidance. All staff have received appropriate training as required, and they are fully aware of their responsibilities. Senior staff who have specific responsibility for safeguarding update their training every two years and attend other courses to ensure the school is up to date with the latest requirements and best practice. The school keeps meticulous records of any safeguarding incidents. There are excellent and productive links with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Procedures to ensure safe recruitment of staff are followed rigorously.
- 4.21 The school pays very careful attention to all aspects of health and safety. Equipment, appliances and machinery are maintained and tested regularly. There are detailed risk assessments for on- and off-site activities and for extended visits. Effective measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire exits, routes and procedures are clearly displayed. Following earlier advice, arrangements for evacuating the buildings in the case of fire have become more rigorous: fire drills are carried out regularly and at different times of the day.
- 4.22 Sick and injured pupils receive excellent medical care from fully qualified nurses, and facilities for accommodating such pupils are good. There are meticulous procedures for administering medicines and ensuring that staff have all necessary first-aid items for individual pupils when they leave school for matches or visits. Senior staff monitor records of accidents and the first aid administered to identify patterns and trends. Parents are informed of any action taken. Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils with SEND are also meticulous. All staff have received basic first-aid training, and many have undertaken more advanced training.

- 4.23 Admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and are securely stored over the specified period for future reference.
- 4.24 Almost every parent who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their children feel safe in school and that they are well looked after. Inspection findings concur with these views.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.25 The quality of boarding education is excellent.
- 4.26 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Their personal development is promoted extremely well by the boarding experience. Staff expect high levels of behaviour and, as a consequence, boarders are polite, courteous and confident in their dealings with adults and each other. Boarders and staff enjoy relaxed and positive relationships and boarders feel valued and supported. They are proud of their house and all the opportunities it has to offer. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of boarders confirmed how much they enjoyed their boarding experience, and this confirms the very positive views expressed by parents. Pupils with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported by staff, and help is available outside teaching hours. The school council actively listens to the views and ideas of pupils. Boarders can pass on their suggestions through their house representative, and feedback is prompt. A small minority responding to the pupil questionnaire felt that their views are not responded to; however, in interview, it was agreed that appropriate mechanisms are used. Older boarders feel a sense of responsibility towards the younger boarders by including them in their activities and ensuring that they feel welcome. Boarders have a clear understanding of current affairs via newspapers, television and the internet, all of which are readily accessible.
- 4.27 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Pastoral care is a real strength. Boarders are confident in knowing there is someone to whom they can turn for help, and the telephone numbers of outside agencies are clearly displayed on noticeboards and in handbooks. In addition, the school counsellor offers a specialist service twice a week, and the chaplain is also available for informal chats. Further support is given to boarders by a tutor who oversees their academic development. Boarding staff at all levels show interest and pride in boarders' achievements and are keen to support them in furthering and widening their skills. A well-structured induction programme for new boarders, along with a buddy system, helps them to settle in quickly. Detailed handbooks give plenty of useful information.
- 4.28 The two boarding houses offer a weekly, flexi or occasional boarding system for pupils in Years 3 to 8. This arrangement gives the pupils a taste of the boarding experience. Boarders said how much the experience had influenced their next choice of school and that boarding would now not seem so daunting. The boarding accommodation is clean, comfortable and well maintained, and each house has been made to feel homely with appropriate décor. The rolling programme of improvements is evident in the updated social areas. Common rooms are well furnished and equipped with televisions, DVD players and other recreational resources. The laundry service is good, and boarders are expected to take responsibility in organising themselves to maximise its efficiency, a valuable skill for later in life. All boarders have a suitable lockable space.

- 4.29 The carefully structured activities programme, which runs at various times of the school day, provides a wide range of opportunities for the development of pupils' interests. Boarders speak with great enthusiasm of this provision and appreciate the opportunity to learn a new skill, while spending time away from their academic work. The medical provision is excellent. Qualified medical staff are on hand during the school day and those with first-aid training cover thereafter. The surgery is well equipped, and all policies and protocols are followed rigorously. Boarders too ill to attend school are cared for in the sick bay. Unannounced fire drills are standard practice termly in boarding time, and records are accurately maintained. Electrical checks are completed annually. Boarders can contact their families using mobile phones, landlines and internet devices. Communication from the school to parents, carers and guardians is highly effective.
- 4.30 Nutritionally balanced meals of high quality are prepared daily in hygienic facilities. Meals are served in the school's dining room which is light, airy and attractively decorated. Published menus operate on a four-week rotation. Staff and boarders eat together which enhances the family atmosphere and allows monitoring of what each pupil is eating. Throughout the year, a number of themed days celebrate different cultures and traditions, and these are thoroughly enjoyed by children and adults alike. Suitable provision is made for special dietary needs. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food and provision of snacks outside meal times. Interviews with boarders, observations of menus and snacks provided during the day, and sampling of meals did not support this concern. The catering manager attends the school council meetings to receive feedback on the catering provision.
- 4.31 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. Procedures and practices ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed well at all levels. All staff recruitment procedures are correctly undertaken. Risk assessments are carried out and are reviewed regularly. All boarding staff receive regular training in safeguarding and are confident in responding, in accordance with the procedures, should a child protection issue arise. Care is taken to register the pupils, and the procedures for tracking the whereabouts of pupils are fully understood, including what to do should a pupil go missing. Boarding staff sleep on the premises and are always available close at hand should they be needed during the night. The behaviour of boarders is exemplary; rules are clear and understood. Internet usage is monitored and controlled, and any incidents of bullying are rare. Should they occur, they are dealt with swiftly, and boarders report that there are very few problems. Pupils speak very positively about how well they are cared for and that they feel safe in the boarding environment. They know how and when to report any concerns and are confident that they will be resolved constructively.
- 4.32 The effectiveness of leadership and management is excellent. The school works extremely hard to nurture, encourage, challenge and support every boarder in its care, in line with its stated boarding principles and practice. Since the previous inspection, the boarding management structure has been enhanced with the appointment of a head of boarding and a head of pastoral care. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was advised to create more opportunities for the whole boarding staff to meet regularly in order to discuss and plan boarding development; this recommendation has been met. All boarding staff have appropriate training, and senior boarding staff demonstrate excellent leadership and management qualities. The pastoral teams meet regularly to discuss the needs of the boarders, which ensures that they are well cared for and enjoy their boarding experience. Job descriptions are clear, and procedures for training and appraisal

are effective. Boarding documentation and policies are reviewed regularly, and clear priorities have been identified to ensure ongoing improvement. The communication between pastoral and academic staff is highly effective in encouraging boarders to fulfil their potential at all levels. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are highly delighted with the school's boarding life and recognise the excellent contribution it makes to the boarders' progress and development.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body has excellent oversight of the life and work of the school and ensures the school fulfils its various aims extremely well. It has played a major part in overseeing the school's rapid improvement over the last few years and in shaping the school's strategic direction for the future. The governing body's astute financial management has resulted in major improvements to the school's facilities, such as the new performing arts centre, an excellent new swimming pool and the provision of new classrooms, all of which make a major contribution to the quality of education provided. It has also ensured the school has a sufficient number of well-qualified staff and specialist teachers, and excellent resources for academic subjects and the school's wide-ranging extra-curricular programme.
- 5.3 The governing body gains an excellent insight into all aspects of school life through the meetings of its various committees and reports from the school's senior leaders and heads of department. They use their wide-ranging professional expertise to provide strong support for the school's leaders, while at the same time holding them to account for the quality of education provided. A governor with suitable knowledge and experience provides effective oversight for the early years setting.
- 5.4 Governors are carefully selected, and receive rigorous induction and regular training to help them carry out their roles effectively. The governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities effectively and ensures the school meets all statutory requirements. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are monitored carefully, and the governing body conducts a thorough and rigorous annual review of the school's safeguarding procedures.

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 excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management at all levels are highly successful in ensuring that the school fulfils its aim to provide the highest standard of education for each pupil from Nursery through to Year 8. Changes in senior management since the previous inspection have promoted a new sense of purpose and educational direction. All recruitment checks for school personnel and governors are carried out meticulously, and school policies relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including that for safeguarding pupils, are fully implemented and systematically checked to ensure that they meet all requirements.
- 5.7 The school's leaders provide highly focused educational direction and have a positive presence, which have enthused staff and led to many improvements since the previous inspection. The range of innovations which have been implemented over recent years have had an exceptionally positive impact on both staff and pupils, and this is reflected in the excellent standard of pastoral care and the outstandingly high quality of the pupils' personal development. A caring, tolerant ethos permeates all sections of the school, which encourages respect for oneself and others. The

principles of democracy are actively promoted and apparent throughout the school; for example, all pupils from EYFS to Year 8 have the opportunity to stand for election to one of the sections of the school council.

- 5.8 The leadership and management of the EYFS is excellent. Senior leaders take an active role in overseeing the early years, and this has enabled the setting to make excellent progress since the previous inspection and implement significant improvements under their enthusiastic and supportive leadership. For example, there are many more opportunities for children to solve problems and to think and act independently, and there is much more use of the outdoor areas for learning and play, especially through the 'outdoor explorers' programme. However, the excellent outdoor facilities are not yet used sufficiently well to enrich and raise standards even further in all areas of the curriculum. Ambitious plans for the setting and structures to monitor and evaluate practice are evidence of the strong, shared vision to continue to improve children's learning. Self-evaluation is demonstrated in the weekly meetings both of the whole department and of the separate year groups. Staff are encouraged to develop their own skills and set ambitious targets. The work of the department is closely monitored through supervision, and peer observation is encouraged to improve practice and to promote consistency within the department. However, the Nursery and Reception classes do not always work or plan together as closely as they could, with the result that the range of free-flow activities for children to choose themselves does not always cater for the interests of each individual child.
- 5.9 Senior managers have introduced a thorough system of appraisal for all teachers and clear procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching by heads of department. However, as these are not yet fully embedded, some departments are more thorough than others in ensuring that all staff follow the school's stated policy on the marking of pupils' work. A need to raise standards in a few aspects of some teaching was identified by senior leaders, and new arrangements for a rigorous programme of peer observation are already having the desired positive impact.
- 5.10 The recommendation from the previous inspection, that the school should provide focus to the school development plan and enable all staff to contribute to its fulfilment, has been fully implemented. The senior management team has a clear vision for the development of the school and has placed great emphasis on securing contributions from all staff. Ideas from pupils and parents gathered from surveys and the school council have also been incorporated, helping to ensure that the latest development plan involves all stakeholders. Self-evaluation takes place at all levels which helps to identify and prioritise areas where the school can improve. Areas for development are regularly reviewed to ensure that progress is being monitored and targets achieved.
- 5.11 Since the previous inspection, the school has been very successful in recruiting new high-quality teachers who have complemented and strengthened the existing staff. Induction for all new staff is comprehensive, and the detailed staff handbook provides clear guidance on all aspects of school life, including clarification of requirements relating to health and safety and safeguarding procedures. Training and development needs are identified for all staff, and wide-ranging continuing professional development is provided. Appropriate attention is given to issues of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety in staff training.
- 5.12 The school's links with parents are excellent. These start in the EYFS where staff form strong partnerships with parents, establish excellent lines of communication and, when necessary, facilitate liaison with external agencies when a child needs

extra support. Parents have email access to their children's key worker and are kept informed of their children's progress through the home diary.

- 5.13 Parents are extremely satisfied with the education and support provided for their children by the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents agree strongly that the school keeps their children safe. An overwhelming proportion of parents strongly agree that the school is led and managed well, and are pleased with the progress of their children, the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities, and the support and challenge provided for the most able. Almost all would recommend the school to another parent.
- 5.14 Relationships with parents are excellent. The school works hard to ensure that parents feel welcome as a full part of the school community. The school is sensitive to the views and suggestions of parents and has implemented many ideas for improving communication. The school recognises that different people may wish to receive information in different formats, and so provides a weekly newsletter and bulletins through the parent portal on the website, email and social media. All required information is made available. The school is welcoming to parents and there are many ways for them to share any concerns they may have both formally and informally; the school handles any concerns with great care and in accordance with its published policies and procedures.
- 5.15 Parents have excellent opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They contribute to the life of the school by supporting games fixtures and drama and music performances. The parent-teacher committee welcomes all new parents and organises a wide range of charity and school fund-raising events, which provide money for such luxuries as the grand piano in the new performance arts building and lighting for the all-weather pitch. They also arrange social events for children and parents such as the leavers' tea.
- 5.16 Parents receive a helpful welcome pack on joining the school and a school calendar each term. Parents of prospective pupils receive a colourful and well-produced prospectus, which gives a good insight into the life of the school. All parents receive informative, useful and clear reports of their children's work and progress each term. These give helpful advice for the next steps in learning in each subject. In addition, half-termly effort and achievement grade sheets are sent to parents.

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