



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

LIME HOUSE SCHOOL

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Lime House School

Full Name of School	Lime House School
DfE Number	909/6001
Address	Lime House School Holm Hill Dalston Carlisle Cumbria CA5 7BX
Telephone Number	01228 710225
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Email Address	headmaster@limehouseschool.co.uk
Head	Mr Nigel Rice
Proprietors	Mr Nigel Rice; Mrs Diane Rice; Mrs Jacqueline Fisher
Age Range	3 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	125
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (73 boys; 52 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 11 3-5 (EYFS): 2 11-18: 112
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 49
Number of Boarders	Total: 76 Full: 74 Weekly: 2
Head of EYFS Setting	Mr Craig Thompson
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	04 Feb 2014 to 07 Feb 2014

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 May 2011, with an intermediate boarding inspection undertaken in March 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) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. 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.

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

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

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

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

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

'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade. Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements.

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 proprietors, 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 Martin Bussey	Reporting Inspector
Miss Margaret Pepper	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Ms Elaine Purves	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Dr Stephanie Thomas	Team Inspector (Former Head of Learning Support, HMC school)
Mr Richard Gibbs	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Debbie Buckenham	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Lime House School is a co-educational independent boarding and day school. The school was founded in 1899 and moved to its present site close to the village of Dalston, on the outskirts of Carlisle in Cumbria, in 1946. It is a proprietorial school, overseen by the owners who are the headmaster, his wife and the bursar. There is no additional governing body.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a caring and successful school that is valued by parents, pupils and staff by: providing good quality education for boys and girls aged 3 to 18; ensuring that each pupil achieves their full potential both academically and socially, with each child being treated as an individual; sustaining a safe and caring boarding environment that produces successful, confident and happy children who are prepared for life beyond school.
- 1.3 Day pupils come from north Cumbria and the south west of Scotland. The majority of boarders are from Hong Kong and parts of China, with smaller numbers from other countries including Spain and Germany. A few come from within the UK. Most pupils come from families with professional, business or service backgrounds.
- 1.4 Boarders are housed in the school's dormitories within the main school building and two adjacent buildings. Since the previous inspection the school has made no major changes to its premises.
- 1.5 At the time of the inspection there were 125 pupils on roll in the school, of whom 76 were boarders, with boys slightly outnumbering girls. The junior department consisted of 13 pupils, with two being in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS children are included in a mixed-ability class of children up to the age of 7. There were 112 pupils in the senior school, and 46 of these were in the sixth form.
- 1.6 The school educates pupils with a wide range of abilities; overall, their ability profile is below the national average. A small number of international sixth-form pupils are of at least above average ability. Of 59 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), 56 receive support for their English. The school has identified 30 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 17 of these receive learning support from the school. Five pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is good. Progress in the EYFS and junior department is excellent, although very occasionally in the EYFS, when children lose concentration, the opportunity is missed for them to regain focus by choosing an activity themselves. The recommendation of the 2011 inspection with regard to the EYFS curriculum has been met. Throughout the school, those pupils with SEND and those with a statement of special educational needs achieve well. Many pupils with EAL achieve well across a range of subjects. A few, more recently arrived, find participation in teaching and learning difficult because their understanding of English is insufficient. A small number of more able sixth-form pupils from overseas make good progress in science and mathematics. Pupils show great application. They respond well to a curriculum which is broad and balanced given the size of the school. Good teaching enables good progress although some lacks imagination or relies too heavily on text books or course notes.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is good. Pupils show confidence and good moral and social development. Their cultural awareness is good overall although shared experience of the different cultures within the school is limited. The school provides good pastoral care; in the EYFS, all children share positive relationships with their key person and other children. The requirement of the 2011 inspection with regard to measures to guard against bullying has been met. Most pupils who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires confirm they feel they have someone to turn to if they have a personal difficulty. Good arrangements exist to ensure the pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The quality of boarding is sound. All recommendations and requirements of the 2012 boarding inspection have been met but recreational facilities do not encourage social gatherings to enhance the residential experience, there are very limited facilities for preparing snacks within the various common room areas, and poor wi-fi facilities hamper communication with home.
- 2.3 The proprietors provide sound governance and give each other good support and a limited degree of challenge. Oversight of pastoral care, including in boarding, has become more structured since the previous inspection and the requirement to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements has been met through appropriate oversight of those areas where the proprietors have legal responsibilities. In their dual roles as proprietors and senior managers they provide educational direction which enables the pupils' good achievement, including some monitoring of academic areas, alongside effective monitoring of pastoral care which ensures their good personal development. This monitoring meets the recommendation of the 2011 inspection. The whole school development plan recommended by that inspection has not been fully established. In part this is because self-evaluation is not rigorous enough to provide a firm basis for such planning, although effective planning exists in some areas, including the junior department and EYFS. The recommendation to institute staff appraisal has been met in part; a system has been initiated but it is operated inconsistently and is not linked to effective staff development and training, particularly with regard to the needs of pupils with EAL. Overall, leadership and management is sound, with good links established with parents, carers and guardians.

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

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure the needs of all pupils are met, especially those with EAL, through comprehensive staff training and improved planning of both curriculum provision and teaching.
 2. Use rigorous self-evaluation to identify areas for development which are shared with all staff, to implement improvement and to ensure that compliance with regulatory requirements is maintained.
 3. In boarding, improve wi-fi access and the quality of the communal accommodation provided for socialising and relaxation, including facilities to make snacks and hot drinks.
 4. In the EYFS, ensure that the balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is maintained throughout the week.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in response to a broad curriculum. The school is making good progress towards meeting its aim to enable pupils to achieve their full academic potential.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, all children, including those with SEND, make excellent progress relative to their starting points. Children reach high standards in reading, writing and number work. They know the days of the week and understand, and can identify, characteristics of the four seasons. Children are confident in counting up to 10 and sometimes 20. They listen and articulate their ideas well, are developing excellent phonic skills, and read confidently from the reading scheme, as well as free choice, books.
- 3.4 Junior department pupils have particularly strong skills in numeracy, literacy and information technology and communication (ICT). In the senior school, pupils demonstrate occasional excellence, for example when applying their skills in mathematics and science. They write well for pupils of their ability, although uncertainties in spelling and grammar remain in GCSE work. They produce effective creative work, for example in art, particularly when given structured tasks as a starting point. Pupils of all ages achieve good levels of physical development.
- 3.5 Pupils with SEND including those with statements of special educational needs achieve well. They participate fully in lessons in response to suitable tasks and well-informed teaching. Many pupils with EAL achieve well across a range of subjects, secure in their understanding of language, although occasionally their progress is hindered by uncertainty about subject-specific terms. A few, more recently arrived, find participation in teaching and learning difficult because their understanding of English is insufficient. A small number of more able sixth-form pupils from overseas make good progress in science and mathematics.
- 3.6 Pupils reach appropriate levels of achievement in activities. They perform well in instrumental examinations. They are members of local and county sports teams and a few pupils play in regional teams and attend national trials. Pupils enjoy success at regional level in science Olympiads, and mathematics and accounting challenges, and reach silver and gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE).
- 3.7 The pupils' attainment in the junior department cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good. This level of attainment, considered alongside the pupils' work in response to teaching in small groups, indicates that pupils make excellent progress. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE and at A level have been similar to the average for pupils in maintained schools. Results in 2013 maintain such attainment. This attainment, considered alongside the pupils' responses in written work and in lessons, indicates that they make good progress. Pupils who leave after Year 11 join maintained sixth-form education or other independent schools. Many pupils gain places at universities in the UK or on vocational courses.

3.8 Pupils throughout the school show great application. In the EYFS, children are well motivated, and respond to high expectations to become engaged in a range of activities, although sometimes they lose concentration. They enjoy thinking critically about the natural world. When encouraged to do so, pupils throughout the school work well independently, but such opportunities are limited. Most pupils' work demonstrates excellent presentation and a good volume. Pupils work successfully in pairs to help one another make progress.

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

3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is good.

3.10 The EYFS setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Broad programmes, which include specialist teaching in music, games and swimming, give children excellent opportunities to express their ideas confidently. Children have access to a wide range of experiences to enable them to understand the world; this meets the recommendation of the 2011 inspection. Children are prepared well for the next stage of development.

3.11 The curriculum provides a broad and balanced range of subjects for all ages and abilities given the size of the school. A strong focus on literacy and numeracy in the junior department creates ample opportunity to attain core skills, including ICT, taught by a class teacher. Specialist teaching is given in music, home economics, German, swimming and games. Teaching in small groups enables much personalised attention to be given.

3.12 From Year 7, pupils are taught by separate teachers for each subject, although these are not always specialists. The curriculum includes three sciences, ICT, personal, social and health education (PSHE), a range of creative options and physical education. German is available but is not compulsory beyond Year 9. Compulsory participation in games at all ages meets the recommendation of the 2011 report.

3.13 The school adjusts its curriculum planning to suit the needs of some pupils, for example, by offering vocational BTEC courses and by careful choice of other examination courses. Flexibility in the curriculum allows pupils with SEND and EAL to receive some specialist teaching during the timetabled day. Most pupils take a broad range of GCSE subjects. At A level, the majority of pupils, including the more able, study mathematics, science, ICT and business studies; a few select options such as English language, history, accounting and psychology, offered even when numbers are low. Most sixth-form teaching offers pupils much individual help and support.

3.14 The school has made good progress in careers provision since the 2011 inspection. Good arrangements include regular speakers and visits to higher education and apprenticeship fairs.

3.15 Pupils with SEND are identified and given appropriate provision. Their individual pupil plans are reviewed bi-annually and copied to parents, although individual pupils lack awareness of these plans or the targets they contain, and say they are not involved in the process of compiling them. Teachers are well informed of pupils' individual needs. Provision for those with a statement of special educational needs is reviewed annually.

- 3.16 Pupils with EAL benefit from specialist teaching. Each is placed on a course suited to his or her proficiency in English. These are increasingly challenging and culminate in examinations which recognise proficiency sufficient for university entrance. Additional support is the responsibility of subject teachers but not all have the skills to accommodate the needs of some newly arrived overseas pupils who lack sufficient language skills to participate fully in lessons.
- 3.17 The curriculum is enriched by trips and visits that may specifically support the syllabus or be simply for pleasure. In the EYFS, children visit an organic resource centre, and a local museum, to complement a topic about the history of toys.
- 3.18 There is a good range of extra-curricular activities embracing sport, and creative and special interest clubs. A distinctive feature is that after-school activities are open to all ages and abilities; the attendance of very young pupils, who engage comfortably alongside senior pupils, is a positive feature of the programme. The DofE award is well supported and creates opportunities for leadership and outdoor pursuits. Participation in national competitions such as the physics and chemistry Olympiads gives good opportunities for additional challenge to more able pupils; talented pupils perform in festivals or compete at local and regional levels in sports.
- 3.19 Improved links with the local community are now established. Senior day and boarding pupils play in local hockey and basketball clubs. The school has participated in a rock event with the local church and fund-raising activities in association with the local rotary club.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.21 This indicates that the school is making good progress towards meeting its aim to provide a good quality of education. In the EYFS, enthusiastic teaching demonstrates high expectations of children. Schemes of assessment operate well and contribute successfully towards planning for the children's learning and development. Very occasionally, when children show signs of lost concentration, the opportunity is missed for them to regain focus by choosing an activity themselves.
- 3.22 Teaching throughout the school is generally well planned. Most classes are small and most teaching demonstrates a keen understanding of each pupil's needs, with tasks instinctively tailored to provide for them. Pupils receive effective guidance. Those with SEND receive additional support which includes suitable activities to meet their needs; these enable good progress, particularly in the junior department. A good level of additional support is provided through the deployment of teaching assistants. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are provided for very well; teaching meets the requirements of their individual plans consistently.
- 3.23 Most teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge and caters for a variety of learning styles. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of pupils said they find the work they are given uninteresting, while a minority felt that homework does not help them to learn. Inspection evidence shows some support for these views. In the most successful teaching, subject knowledge is presented in a lively and engaging way. Other teaching, in the senior school, is often over-reliant on textbooks or course notes as a source of homework and classroom tasks, and of information; it often shows a lack of imagination. The most imaginative teaching enables self-reflection and discovery, for example in English. In the junior department the teaching of literacy, numeracy and ICT is particularly strong.

- 3.24 Good rapport and mutual respect between staff and pupils are a hallmark of the school, encouraging high standards of behaviour and levels of engagement. This gives pupils of all abilities and linguistic levels the confidence to ask questions and consequently to make progress. The progress of some EAL pupils is hindered by the inaccessibility of subject-specific vocabulary. New pupils with EAL sometimes receive tailored work, for example simplified worksheets and vocabulary lists, but this provision is not consistent. The most able pupils respond positively to high pace in some teaching, for example when explaining the spiral of debt in business studies.
- 3.25 The school has recently introduced baseline tests of ability in Years 7 to 11 which give staff good information about each pupil's potential. This lays firm foundations for tracking the performance of individual pupils. The data is already being used to help inform GCSE subject choices. However, such information is not available for sixth-form pupils, many of whom are new to the school. Pupils receive good feedback about their work, often verbally. Although sometimes inconsistent, marking is mostly completed regularly, helps to inform the pupils' future learning and is encouraging in tone. The school house point reward system, which leads to a special end-of-year outing for the winners, is used well to encourage effort.
- 3.26 There are well-established routines to reinforce learning beyond the classroom; homework is set regularly and Saturday mornings are dedicated to examination paper practice in Years 10 to 13. Following practice examinations, teachers discuss the pupils' individual performance in detail and identify areas for improvement and suitable strategies, such as attending additional coursework sessions.
- 3.27 Adequate resources, including a design and technology workshop and a pottery room, support learning. The EYFS includes appropriately resourced indoor and outdoor areas. Imaginative use is made of ICT in the junior department but limited access to wi-fi and other ICT facilities in the senior school constrains teaching. Pupils in examination classes often bring their own laptops to lessons and use them effectively to complete coursework and for private study. The school has a library area, but the stock is outdated; some pupils read the daily newspapers there and the room is well used for private study.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.
- 4.2 Pupils reach good levels of personal development by the time they leave the school. This represents largely successful fulfilment of the school's aim to produce confident and happy children.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children feel valued, settled and are very happy. They are confident to ask for help, can play co-operatively and enjoy what they are doing. They understand the need for respect, sharing and taking turns and enjoy being awarded stickers and house points for excellent work and behaviour. They are well prepared for their eventual transition into Year 3.
- 4.4 Most pupils throughout the school, particularly those with SEND, show good levels of confidence, although some international pupils are diffident. Many speak with enthusiasm about their lives at school, especially junior pupils. Pupils work well together in teams or in activities such as sewing club, helping each other with enjoyment. Pupils take pride in their school although the limited number of occasions when the whole school meets together restricts opportunities to develop a whole-school ethos or community spirit. Pupils develop good self-esteem, supported by celebration assemblies and good use of reward systems by staff. Older pupils conduct visitors around the school with confidence.
- 4.5 The pupils develop good levels of moral awareness. They develop a good understanding of the need for guidelines in response to the school's emphasis on clear rules of behaviour and conduct. Most respect each other's rights with ease. They are able to extend their moral awareness to other contexts when given the opportunity to do so. Pupils in GCSE English understood the social messages about racism in *Of Mice and Men* and commented on them sympathetically. Sometimes the pupils' ability to make moral judgements is hindered because they are not encouraged to see the relevance of such issues.
- 4.6 The pupils' social development is good. They mix well together, although often within distinct cultural groups. They listen to each other with care. They behave well around the school and show courtesy and friendliness. They study aspects of citizenship, such as local planning, with due respect, although some lack sufficient experience of British life to understand these in context. Senior pupils enjoy helping younger pupils, for example when walking junior department pupils to their activities. They participate in the student council in a willing manner. Pupils make good contributions to fund-raising for local charities through such activities as organising football matches.
- 4.7 Pupils develop a good cultural awareness overall. Tolerance and acceptance are hallmarks of the school. The school's international pupils develop a relaxed approach to life in a different culture while retaining links with home through visits to siblings at UK universities. Some begin to explore local life, for example a small group is writing a play scene for a local drama festival. Sharing of their culture with other pupils, for example by celebrating their own food and customs, is limited. Pupils are enthused by experiences of Western European culture. Younger senior school pupils responded to a schools' performance of *Macbeth* with interest, devising a challenging spelling test in their next lesson, centred on the play. Pupils

of all cultural backgrounds enjoy visiting local theatres and offer their reactions freely, often with well-developed critical responses for their age.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.9 Throughout the school, pastoral support and guidance for pupils is good and fully supports the school's aims. In the EYFS, all children share positive relationships with their key person and other children, as well as with older pupils. High standards of behaviour are expected. Children recognise the importance of healthy eating. They understand the importance of physical exercise, make good use of varied equipment, and enjoy dance, and regular swimming lessons at a local school. Children manage their own personal hygiene and understand the importance of washing hands. They understand how to stay safe.
- 4.10 Staff know the pupils extremely well throughout the school and show a genuine concern for their well-being. Class teachers in the junior department develop strong pastoral links with pupils. In the senior school, form tutors and individual personal development tutors, instituted since 2011, monitor each pupil's academic and personal development well and are pro-active should any difficulties arise. All parents, in response to questionnaires, said they feel staff are supportive and caring, and most pupils said they feel they have someone to turn to if they have a personal difficulty. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent.
- 4.11 Pupils are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle and are provided with a variety of good food, including hot, cold and healthy options. Displays in the dining room reinforce messages about healthy choices. Opportunities for regular exercise are many and varied within the curriculum and through activities.
- 4.12 The school has effective procedures to promote the pupils' good behaviour and to guard against bullying which meet the requirement of the 2011 report. Pupils do not consider bullying to be a problem. They are confident that if any occurs it is dealt with effectively. The school behaviour policy is clear and provision for sanctions is appropriate, understood by pupils and suitably implemented and monitored, with due regard to the pupils' individual needs. Rewards are used well; house points are awarded for good academic work and a positive contribution to the community.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, within the confines of the historic nature of many buildings.
- 4.14 In response to questionnaires, a minority of pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions and respond to them. Inspection evidence shows that, in conversation, day pupils do not consider this to be a problem. The school council, consisting of representatives from each year group, meets twice a term. Minutes are published and some improvements have resulted from the pupils' suggestions. Although some boarders feel that their views are not taken into account, this system provides a suitable forum for pupils to air their views.

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

- 4.15 The arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good.
- 4.16 The school has good arrangements to safeguard the pupils' welfare, including in the EYFS, where the required policies and procedures are in place to safeguard the children in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. Designated staff undertake regular child protection and inter-agency training. Child protection training is provided for all other staff at the required intervals and recorded centrally. Suitable induction training is given to new staff. Methodical recording of concerns about pupils and good lines of communication with local agencies promote the pupils' welfare well.
- 4.17 Registration of pupils is appropriately formal and an efficient system to follow up absence operates well. The school maintains an appropriate admission register electronically, which is backed up and stored correctly.
- 4.18 Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety are good. Pupils who feel unwell are cared for by trained first-aiders and good facilities are available. The first aid policy provides well for emergencies. Good numbers of staff are qualified in first aid, including in paediatric first aid in the EYFS. Due care is taken to ensure the health and safety of those with special physical or learning needs.
- 4.19 Measures to prevent risks of fire and other hazards are thorough and checks are recorded efficiently. Regular drills are held and recorded. Equipment is regularly checked and assessments of risk are thorough. Health and safety measures are regularly monitored and reviewed.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is sound.
- 4.21 The school has high aspirations for boarding and is making appropriate progress towards achieving its aims. The restructuring of boarding management has been largely successful. One of the proprietors is head of boarding, with a head of pastoral care resident six nights a week, but not during the day. A team of care and academic staff work on a rota to provide additional care for boarders. Boarders have use of the sports hall and dining room during evenings and at weekends. The school has fulfilled the requirement of the 2012 inspection with regard to ensuring its statement of boarding principles is met in practice.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are sound. Some sense of community exists; boarders are made to feel welcome on arrival and feel integrated into the school. This reflects a shared commitment to boarders amongst the care staff and the academic staff, strengthened by the role of personal development tutors, which meets the requirement of the 2012 report. Relationships across the boarding community are good and demonstrate that boarders regard the school as their term-time home. Interviews and questionnaires show that the majority of boarders enjoy each other's company and acknowledge the beneficial effect that boarding has on their independence and self-reliance; this was apparent in tours of the boarding facilities conducted by boarders. Boarders appreciate the opportunity to study in orderly surroundings and some take advantage of the various activities on offer, such as sewing, badminton, dance and Aikido. However, recreational facilities do not encourage social gatherings to enhance the residential experience. There is no

comfortably furnished common room in which all boarders may relax and socialise. There are some opportunities for them to develop their understanding of other cultures as part of their personal development, but these are limited in scope. Boarders are encouraged to contribute their views, meeting the requirement of the 2012 inspection, though some still feel that their opinions are not always acted upon. Flexi-boarding is available and a few pupils regularly stay over on Friday nights to be able to sit practice examinations on Saturday mornings.

- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is sound. The promotion of the boarders' safety and health is efficient. Arrangements for medical care are effective, with suitable overnight accommodation provided for sick boarders. Suitably qualified staff take responsibility for injured or unwell boarders and accompany them to the doctor's surgery or hospital if necessary, and make arrangements for specialist healthcare. Pupils feel that they are well looked after and confirm that there is access to a range of appropriate adults to discuss personal issues; these include care and academic staff, senior managers, two independent listeners (one of whom speaks Cantonese and Mandarin and meets all new overseas boarders) and the school doctor. A majority of boarders, in response to pre-inspection questionnaires expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of food. Inspection evidence shows that it is of suitable quality and generous in quantity. In discussion, boarders reported that the quality of food has improved considerably since the beginning of this school year and their suggestions are acted on. This meets the recommendation of the 2012 inspection. The dining room provides facilities for the preparation of toast and hot drinks in the evenings, but food and hot drinks are not allowed in dormitories and there are very limited facilities for preparing snacks within the various common room areas. Bedrooms and toilet provision are clean and well maintained and there are lockable cupboards for valuables. The laundry is efficient.
- 4.24 The school grounds are appreciated by boarders, and football and basketball are enjoyed outside in good weather. A range of activities is provided during weekday evenings and at weekends. This meets the recommendation of the 2012 inspection, but some popular activities, such as paintballing, are infrequent and spaces are limited, and others, such as visits to a local fitness centre are restricted to sixth formers. Boarders report that contact with parents and friends can be difficult due to problems with wi-fi, with variable strengths of the mobile phone signals and due to the fact that they are not allowed to have their mobile phones during the school day. The school's action plan for the development of boarding includes the upgrading of wi-fi, as well as new televisions being installed in dormitories, and various improvements to the décor. The school maintains good contact with boarders' parents, carers and guardians.
- 4.25 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. Procedures and practices ensure the safety of boarders. These are promoted and managed effectively by boarding staff, who are all suitably checked. Evacuation drills are practised regularly in boarding time, and overseas boarders receive instruction in this area in their own language on arrival. Effective anti-bullying and behavioural policies and procedures are in place. Boarders are aware of the inappropriateness of bullying and report that incidents are rare. Prefects and sixth form monitors are given training in safeguarding and provide support to younger boarders. All boarding house staff, including cleaners and catering staff, receive up-to-date training in child protection and know the procedure to follow should an incident occur or a disclosure be made. The whereabouts of boarders is monitored and all boarders are accounted for in their accommodation at the end of each day. The missing person policy is understood by all staff. Sanctions for misbehaviour are

understood by boarders and implemented fairly, though serious incidents are infrequent. Pupils feel that boarding staff are approachable and willing to provide help or offer guidance as necessary. Access to boarding accommodation is suitably restricted. Boarders feel safe, and CCTV and alarm systems do not unduly intrude on their privacy.

- 4.26 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. Boarding staff are well regarded by boarders. They have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and there is a clear management structure, overseen by senior management, which meets the requirement of the 2012 report. Care staff meet regularly with the head of pastoral care, who in turn liaises with the head of boarding weekly to discuss the needs of individual boarders and plan activities. Senior staff provide good leadership. The lack of any staff whose home is on site, at least during term time, limits effective management in the context of developing a strong sense of community and evaluating the needs of boarding. Boarding documentation and policies are up to date and include effective development planning. Training for boarding staff is provided in-house and all boarding staff are familiar with school policies and boarding regulations.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The three proprietors are committed to maintaining the ethos, and promoting the aims, of the school. They divide responsibilities effectively and use their educational and other experience positively. In a number of areas, such as compiling the school's single central register (SCR) of recruitment checks, individual proprietors oversee one another's work informally and some distinctions are drawn between their roles as proprietors and as managers. The proprietors give each other good support and a limited degree of challenge but no external scrutiny is currently sought. Analysis of the quality and standards of education provided by the school has developed since the 2011 inspection, including in the use of data to measure the pupils' achievement. The proprietors receive regular information about the EYFS. Oversight of pastoral care, including in boarding, has become more structured. All proprietors have received safeguarding training, but little other training in areas of governance has been undertaken.
- 5.3 Financial control ensures adequate provision of human and material resources. This includes the successful renovation of boarding areas, although some recreational areas lack comfortable seating. Financial necessity has resulted in limited accessibility of ICT and other resources, and some restrictions on staffing. Some plans for the future are laid effectively but most current decision making is short term and reactive.
- 5.4 The proprietors provide appropriate oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities. They have ensured that the requirements of both previous inspections have been met. They review welfare and health and safety arrangements well, including through well-informed guidance from an external consultant. They now hold a suitable annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements, using a methodical checklist which identifies any areas which require remedial action.

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, is sound.
- 5.6 Senior leaders have overseen effective progress since the previous inspections in meeting the range of recommendations made. The recommendation to ensure that academic and pastoral procedures are monitored and evaluated has been met well overall. The institution of an individual personal development system for pupils, overseen by personal tutors has been successful. Monitoring of sanctions and incidents of bullying is well established. Monitoring of academic procedures has begun to be implemented, with particular success in the junior department. Scrutiny of the pupils' work throughout the school has commenced, although the results have as yet had limited impact on teaching and learning styles. Policy making has been subject to regular review although further revision has been necessary in some areas to ensure compliance with requirements. The school has now instituted a more systematic approach to policy review, particularly with regard to safeguarding.

- 5.7 Senior leaders support the fulfilment of the school's aims, enabling the good academic achievement and personal development of the pupils. Appropriate educational direction has maintained a suitable curriculum and support for all pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, although arrangements for those overseas pupils who arrive late in the school year do not yet ensure that they can participate fully in teaching and learning. Some plans highlight particular areas of focus in the school's development but a comprehensive development plan, shared with all staff, is not yet established. Some steps have been taken to evaluate the school's success, for example through the introduction of standardised tests to track pupils' progress, and to a degree in boarding, but this aspect of management is under developed at senior level. Some staff evaluate the success of individual subject teaching or areas of the school fruitfully.
- 5.8 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good. A comprehensive staff appraisal system is in place and staff have many opportunities for professional development. Strong links have been forged with the local authority, and advisory figures who support EYFS staff effectively. A regular supervision meeting provides support for the staff, enables discussion of any issues and provides coaching to improve their personal effectiveness. Staff constantly evaluate their practice to identify areas for development and thorough systems are in place for the observation, planning and assessment of the individual child and planning next steps.
- 5.9 The school appoints staff of good quality, both teaching and non-teaching, who all show great loyalty to the school and strong commitment to the pupils. Many act in multiple roles in teaching and pastoral care. An appraisal scheme exists, in line with the recommendation of the previous inspection, although it has not been implemented for the head. This includes lesson observation and discussion, but its implementation is inconsistent and outcomes are not currently linked to systematic provision of staff development. Staff are appropriately trained in their roles in welfare, safeguarding, health and safety but other training is limited. The existing experience of staff in the school is not fully utilised in constructive staff training, particularly with regard to meeting the needs of pupils with EAL. Induction procedures are suitable. Checking procedures to ensure the suitability of staff and the proprietors to work with children are secure, and recording in the SCR is methodical.
- 5.10 The school's links with parents, carers and guardians are good. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire parents unanimously expressed extremely high levels of satisfaction about all aspects of the school's provision, including in the EYFS.
- 5.11 In the EYFS, staff work very closely with parents to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure in the setting. Parents' involvement in the children's development and learning is actively encouraged; parents can contribute to their child's individual learning records by providing examples of observations from home, and they contribute to children's reading records.
- 5.12 Parents meetings are held twice a year in both the junior department and senior school, alongside opportunities to meet with staff at any other time should the need arise. An open door policy operates throughout the school and when parents email or telephone the school with a query these are dealt with promptly. Provision is made for communication with parents of international pupils either through their children who will translate or via the overseas pupil co-ordinator. The head of

boarding travels to Hong Kong and China to meet with parents. The junior school has a reading record and diaries in which parents may write comments and these are checked daily by staff. New parents to the school are sent a welcome pack containing a comprehensive range of information and all required information is provided to parents of current and prospective pupils.

- 5.13 Detailed reports written twice a year about the pupils' work and progress include a personal development report which the parents appreciate. An interim report including effort and achievement grades is sent in the spring term.
- 5.14 Newsletters, a website and a calendar all serve to keep parents up to date on events and achievements. Parents are very happy with the opportunities to be involved with the life and working of the school. They attend award assemblies in both the junior department and senior school and are happy to assist on trips when required.
- 5.15 Parents are also encouraged to be involved through a range of social and fundraising events through the Parent-Teacher Association. Regular events include a Christmas fair which is linked to the school carol service, Easter bingo for the pupils and a sponsored walk in aid of charity. The group assists in the well-established school midsummer medley of music performed by the pupils, by serving cheese and wine. Funds raised have been used to provide cameras, camcorders, musical and stage equipment, as well as play equipment for the EYFS.
- 5.16 The school has an appropriate complaints procedure and parents are very satisfied with the way the school deals with their concerns. One formal complaint has been received in the previous academic year and the school's procedures were followed.

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