



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MALTMAN'S GREEN SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Maltman's Green School

Full Name of School	Maltman's Green School
DfE Number	825/6020
Registered Charity Number	310633
Address	Maltman's Green School Maltmans Lane Chalfont St Peter Gerrards Cross Buckinghamshire SL9 8RR
Telephone Number	01753 883022
Fax Number	01753 891237
Email Address	office@maltmansgreen.com
Head	Mrs Joanna Pardon
Chair of Governors	Mrs Debbie Starrs
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	429
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 79 5-11: 350
EYFS Gender	Girls
Inspection dates	14 May 2013 to 17 May 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Robin Attfield	Reporting Inspector
Mr Adrian Hathaway	Team Inspector (Head of Junior Boarding, IAPS school)
Mrs Sue Sanderson	Team Inspector (Head of Pre-Preparatory, IAPS school)
Mr David Sibson	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Miss Mary Regan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Maltman's Green is a day school for girls aged three to eleven, situated on a ten-acre site in Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire. The original building had been a malting house and subsequently part of a country estate. It provides some of the current accommodation, alongside specialist, modern facilities elsewhere on the site. The school was founded in 1918 as a boarding school for girls to the age of eighteen but became a preparatory school in 1958. In 1967, it was registered as a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors. It has been a day school since 1995, when the Nursery was established.
- 1.2 The school admits pupils across the ability range who it considers will benefit from its provision and ethos. It is non-denominational, though has Christian values, and welcomes those of all beliefs, cultures and faiths, with pupils attending from a variety of backgrounds. It aims to provide an educational environment in which all pupils flourish and fulfil their potential, by providing a broad and balanced curriculum and stimulating teaching in a caring and supporting setting in which individual achievement is recognised. The school seeks to encourage pupils to think for themselves and to become increasingly independent and self-motivated.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection in 2009, a number of changes have been made to the buildings and infrastructure, and to the structure of the senior management team. A new position of pastoral co-ordinator has been created. In addition, improvements have been made in the facilities for information and communications technology (ICT) and in provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), including the expansion of outdoor learning. Work to develop the school in sustainability has continued and the school has been awarded Eco Schools Green Flag status for the second time.
- 1.4 The EYFS is attended by 79 children. The preparatory school, for pupils in Years 1 to 6, has 350 pupils. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. Most pupils are of at least above average ability, with over a quarter having well above average ability. The school population reflects the diversity of cultures in the area. Most of the pupils come from professional or business backgrounds. Just under a tenth of pupils move in and out of the school each year due to family mobility.
- 1.5 The school has identified 13 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), for whom it provides learning support; one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Two pupils require support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.6 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 pupils' enthusiastic and committed approach to all of their studies, their excellent classroom behaviour, the wide curriculum, with a broad range of extra-curricular activities, and the excellent quality of teaching are reflected in good progress and in strong academic achievement throughout the whole school, including the EYFS. The pupils are keen to enjoy all aspects of school life and to attain to their highest possible level. They show good subject knowledge, skills and understanding which develop across the whole curriculum throughout their time in the school.
- 2.2 Pupils reach high levels of personal fulfilment. They take on responsibility from an early stage, and are proud both of their own achievements and those of their peers. The staff know the pupils extremely well and the support they offer is excellent. The provision for those pupils with particular needs is exceptionally good and helps them to develop their confidence to learn well. All pupils are valued for the contributions they make to the school. The school is successful in meeting its aims of developing enthusiastic, successful and independent learners, and lives up to its motto of "excellence with a sense of fun". The environment in which pupils learn is stimulating and secure, and the quality of their personal development is excellent. Attention to the welfare, safety and well-being of all pupils is effective and suitable medical care is provided. Very effective pastoral arrangements mean that pupils are secure in asking for help and guidance when required and that teachers are proactive in identifying where pupils may need extra support.
- 2.3 The school benefits from dedicated leadership from the senior management team. The new structure for school leadership and the development of the role of heads of department are promoting the school's development. There is an expectation of success and enjoyment, and the school is supported increasingly well by the governing body. Taking their lead from senior leaders, teachers put the best interests of the pupils at the heart of what they do, ably supported by a range of ancillary staff. The school knows its strengths well and where it needs to develop further. It has an ethos of continuous improvement. Resources have been continually updated so that the pupils are provided with an excellent learning environment. The relatively new appointment of good quality support staff to help senior leaders is creating more opportunities for the leaders to focus on their key role of promoting the best possible learning conditions for the pupils. The school enjoys good relations with parents, who show high levels of satisfaction with provision.
- 2.4 The regulatory deficiencies identified at the previous inspection have been rectified effectively and the issues raised in relation to EYFS provision and pupils with SEND have been addressed successfully. Outdoor learning provision in the EYFS has been developed well and is now a strength. However, the school does not yet comply fully with EYFS reporting requirements.

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

- 2.5 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.6 In order to comply with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school is required to:
- complete the children's EYFS profile at the end of the Reception year, share the information fully with parents and provide Year 1 teachers with a copy.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve educational outcomes further through ensuring that plans and policies have clear success criteria and timescales, and are regularly monitored.
 2. Provide opportunities for parents of children in the EYFS to contribute to children's learning journals.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, achieve and progress extremely well, with some achieving a high level of success in academic, sporting and musical activities. Throughout the school, the pupils show pride in their learning and display secure knowledge, skills and understanding of what is covered in lessons. Achievement is high in speaking, listening, reading and writing; pupils start reading in the EYFS and progress well throughout the school, with many becoming avid readers. They are logical and creative thinkers, and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge well, although some able pupils are somewhat reluctant to take risks in their learning in mathematics.
- 3.3 From an early age, the pupils display a high standard of creative and physical skills and enjoy physical activity. Their learning is enhanced by the quality and wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Almost all leavers in Year 6 move on to the selective maintained or independent schools of their choice, either through succeeding in the 11+ examinations or through Common Entrance examinations, in which several win scholarships each year. Pupils achieve particular success in local and national sporting and academic competitions at both individual and team levels. Several Year 5 pupils, for example, were recently successful in a mathematical problem-solving competition. In particular, the pupils consistently achieve national success in gymnastics and swimming. Many pupils show high levels of musical ability, for example those in the chamber choir, amongst a number of other choirs. Many pupils are achieving good grades in a range of instrumental music examinations, with some achieving very high levels of performance.
- 3.4 In the EYFS, children develop their skills rapidly and are able to express their ideas with confidence and evident enjoyment. They sustain concentration when listening to a story and swiftly develop their reading and number skills. All pupils, including those with SEND, reach expected levels of development, while many exceed these. Children leave the EYFS very well prepared for the preparatory school.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed national norm, but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent. Standardised testing, lesson observation, the scrutiny of work, and discussions both with the pupils and with staff, confirm this high level of attainment across the whole curriculum, including the EYFS, with some pupils reaching high levels of performance. This level of attainment indicates that all pupils, including those in the EYFS, make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. As a result of the school's additional provision, those with SEND or EAL make especially good progress in developing their confidence, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3.6 Throughout the school, the pupils display an exceptionally positive and enthusiastic attitude towards learning and always give of their best, whatever their ability in any subject. They enjoy their learning and appreciate their own and others' successes. Pupils are generally confident learners. They readily ask and answer questions, enjoy sharing ideas and are highly articulate and conscientious. They enjoy competition but from an early age co-operate well. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to work in groups, where they support and challenge each other. They become increasingly independent learners as a result. They show pride in both their

own work and that of the school as a whole, and make a strong effort in producing work that is presented with care. They especially enjoy opportunities to carry out research and be creative in the application of their knowledge. In questionnaire responses and in discussions, they confirmed their enjoyment of learning and of the opportunities offered, and the close guidance and support they receive from teachers. They work well independently and benefit from the wider curriculum, with opportunities to take on responsibility, participate in public events and represent the school in a range of activities.

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

3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent overall.

3.8 The school provides a curriculum that is commensurate with its aim of developing in the pupils the expertise needed for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of senior school and adult life. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, planning and provision are based on the EYFS framework, and they give children the opportunities to develop the necessary range of skills and to express their ideas with confidence. Children have suitable opportunities to initiate their own learning and are motivated by well-planned activities both in the classrooms and outdoors. Classes are set in Years 5 and 6 for English and mathematics, which provides both challenge for the more able and close attention for pupils who have particular needs. The school's leadership has identified insufficient time allocation to personal, social, health and citizenship education. Specialist teaching is introduced gradually throughout the school. All pupils have a formal lesson in a physical activity every day, and pupils swim regularly from the Nursery onwards.

3.9 The curriculum provides a set of well-planned, broad and balanced activities, fostering skills in creative, artistic, linguistic and physical areas. The use of ICT across the curriculum is excellent, with skills being embedded successfully in many subject areas. Reading is promoted, and it is supported by well-resourced libraries and book areas, close co-operation between the library and the English department, and a badge scheme that challenges and rewards pupils as they finish a set number of books. The school has maintained its Green Flag status, with skills embedded successfully throughout the entire curriculum.

3.10 Curriculum documentation is thorough and supports teaching well, ensuring continuity and progression. In some subjects there is detailed guidance on content, methods, assessment and intended outcomes for pupils. Good quality medium-term planning is also developed by staff and influences short-term plans. There is more variability, however, in short-term planning, which is sometimes insufficiently detailed. Planning and provision for pupils with SEND or EAL are well developed and effective additional support is provided individually, in small groups and within mainstream lessons. Provision for those with statements of special educational needs is fully in line with requirements. Additional clubs and activities provide suitable challenge for pupils identified as gifted and talented, alongside suitably demanding learning opportunities in lessons.

3.11 The curriculum is enhanced by numerous educational visits, visitors to the school, the input of parents and peripatetic staff for instrumental tuition. Charitable work is integrated into the curriculum, for example an international water supply project arising from the study of growing deserts. Links with the local community provide opportunities to extend skills in citizenship.

- 3.12 The academic programme is supported by an excellent and extensive programme of extra-curricular activities that cater for pupils of all abilities and confirm the school's commitment to enhancing the pupils' experiences. Clubs operate before and after school, and at lunchtime. Environmental, gardening and linguistic clubs run alongside a considerable range of sporting and musical opportunities, offered at many different levels. Pupils can also attend a number of activities that provide support for their academic learning, including some organised by the learning support department. Activities are monitored carefully and all are popular. The level of participation is a strength and pupils are able to find something that is suited to them from the wide choice available.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is excellent overall.
- 3.14 From the Nursery onwards, teachers demonstrate high expectations in terms of behaviour, learning and attitude. Teaching enables pupils of all abilities to develop a secure understanding of the subjects they are taught, and to make rapid progress. Small class sizes allow teachers to gain a detailed understanding of their pupils' needs, to target their help effectively and to establish a very positive classroom atmosphere, conducive to learning. Excellent relationships between the pupils and the staff are a strong feature, and assist the pupils in achieving high standards. High levels of mutual respect and exemplary behaviour characterise lessons. Teachers and support staff, including teaching assistants and learning support staff, work together well. Support is targeted effectively. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that encourage discussion and debate, and that extend pupils' thinking. Pupils enjoy this, developing their confidence and ability to express themselves clearly. Contributions from pupils are welcomed and the majority of lessons provide opportunities for pupils to take a risk in their learning, although sometimes pupils find it hard to respond to this challenge. Pupils largely benefit from the knowledge of specialist teachers and their high expectations. In a very small number of lessons, however, this teaching shows insufficient awareness of the needs of younger children, which limits their learning.
- 3.15 Overall, lessons are very well planned to match the pupils' interests and capabilities and build on prior learning. The best lessons move at a rapid pace and keep pupils interested and engaged. Teaching resources are plentiful, of high quality and used well. Information and communication technology is used effectively to foster interest, for example when pupils used photographs from a recent visit to extend their thinking on the adaptation of organisms to living in a rainforest. Teachers use a variety of methods creatively, ensuring that pupils are both fully engaged and motivated, and thus able to fulfil their potential and take pride in their achievement. Marking is generally used well to guide pupils' progress; the best practice provides constructive comments that give them a clear understanding of their strengths. Teachers' feedback is generally used, alongside assessment information, to help pupils know what they need to do next to improve. Close communication amongst teachers enables their knowledge of pupils to be shared effectively. Some excellent practice is developing at departmental level, including the use of plenary sessions, which provides opportunities for pupils to become independent learners who are clear about what they need to do in their learning but this is not yet established consistently in all lessons. Policies for assessment and marking are not always followed fully and inconsistencies in application mean that pupils are not always given the feedback to help them understand how well they are learning and what they need to do next. Routine assessment in the EYFS is good.

- 3.16 The school makes very good provision overall for gifted and talented pupils, including a club and the organisation of special events such as an annual thinking skills day for Year 2 pupils. In many lessons, extension work is available and in many others teachers challenge these pupils to produce work of a very high standard. Setting in English and mathematics in Years 5 and 6 supports high standards. Since the previous inspection, the provision for pupils with SEND has improved and is of a very high standard. All staff have an excellent understanding of the pupils' needs and they are extremely well supported in their learning.

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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is very successful in its aim of providing a happy and caring environment in which pupils have a strong sense of purpose and enjoy working together towards common goals. In the EYFS, children develop independence, play co-operatively and enjoy their activities. They interact well with each other as well as with adults and behave very well. They enjoy socialising with each other.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are genuinely proud to be part of their "special" school and are appreciative of the needs of others. Awe and wonder were expressed as Year 1 pupils shared their understanding of growth in nature in a parents' assembly, following their visit to landscaped gardens. Throughout the school, pupils are impressed by the ideas and achievements of their peers. All pupils gain in self-belief, value themselves and show appreciation of others.
- 4.4 The quality of pupils' moral development is also excellent. Pupils have a strong moral code, which is upheld by the staff and permeates the daily life of the school. Pupils develop a keen sense of right and wrong, and respect the norm of good conduct expected by the school community. Pupils display good manners and courtesy, both to each other and to adults, and they are naturally and confidently helpful to visitors to the school. The ethos of the school is based on a clear moral framework that is inclusive, supportive and respectful, and within which pupils develop a strong sense of purpose and enjoy working together towards common goals. Care for the environment and sustainability are actively encouraged. Inequalities in the world have been highlighted through a Young Enterprise day.
- 4.5 Pupils interact confidently with each other and with adults, recognise that their peers have individual opinions and values, and display a composed self-awareness. In informal settings the pupils talk and play well together. In responses to the questionnaire, a few pupils expressed that there have been instances of bullying in school. Inspectors saw no evidence to support this view. Pupils are mature for their age. They co-operate readily in group activities and are receptive to the ideas of others. They are keen to accept responsibility and Year 6 pupils are reliable ambassadors in their roles as house captains. Through the effectively organised house system they work together and develop their understanding of the needs of others. Two houses have recently raised understanding of, and funds for, charities connected to former pupils. Pupils show empathy and generosity. Older pupils contribute outside the school through community service when visiting elderly residents in local care homes, and engage with the residents on subjects they have studied, such as the Second World War.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have a very good understanding of British culture, for example through participation in a wide range of Jubilee celebrations in 2012. Visits from parents from many backgrounds, as well as communication with pen pals in France and India, provide pupils with an understanding of life elsewhere. Pupils show genuine appreciation of the core values of the school and demonstrate a respect for the beliefs, cultures and faiths of others. By the time they leave the school, pupils display well-rounded attitudes to life and a maturity that allows them to benefit from all the school provides. High

levels of personal development were apparent in a Year 6 leavers' assembly in which pupils spoke passionately and with appreciation about their experiences, enjoyment and development in school.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The excellent care and support pupils receive are a key factor in their development as effective learners and respectful young people. Children in the EYFS settle in quickly as teachers work closely with parents. All children are allocated a key person who is a point of welcome and contact, and who keeps a close overview of their developmental needs. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent throughout the school and pupils show appreciation, respect and affection for staff. The school atmosphere is vibrant and welcoming, and pupils feel secure and valued.
- 4.9 The system for pastoral care is very well organised, with clearly defined lines of communication. Form tutors provide strong support and guidance. There is a high level of supervision at all times and all staff, including those who supervise breakfast and after-school clubs, are deeply committed to providing pupils with a high level of care. The school is highly effective in developing exemplary behaviour. Pupils are confident that they will receive help when they need it. Staff deal sensitively with any incidents that arise; records are kept rigorously and resolutions are communicated effectively amongst relevant colleagues. The rewards and sanctions system is used effectively; the school engenders a strong culture based on praise and reward, recognising achievement in all aspects, including personal development. Unacceptable behaviour is challenged and dealt with effectively in a firm, respectful and supportive manner and parents are kept informed. The school is proactive in its work on potential misuse of electronic technology to protect pupils.
- 4.10 The school council is seen by pupils as a key vehicle for proposing suggestions, with several ideas taken up by the school. Pupils' ideas on sustainability are discussed in highly effective 'eco council' meetings that include staff and a governor. A small number of pupils expressed in questionnaire responses that pupils' views are not listened to. Inspectors found no evidence to support this. Opportunities for taking on leadership roles are created for a large number of pupils and are carefully monitored.
- 4.11 Pupils develop a thorough understanding of the importance of healthy eating and of participating in physical exercise, through many aspects of the curriculum. Lunches for all pupils are plentiful and nutritious, with healthy snacks and water available during the day.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.14 The school has successfully addressed the regulatory non-compliance issues identified at the previous inspection. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are effective, with the required checks carried out on all who come into contact with children in school and recorded correctly. All staff, including those newly appointed and those in the EYFS, receive appropriate training in child protection.
- 4.15 The school provides effectively for pupils who are injured or ill. The medical room is appropriately equipped. A significant number of staff are trained in first aid, with some at a higher level. Recent improvements have been made to the organisation of the medical area and record-keeping systems. The EYFS setting is welcoming, safe and secure, and staff have a clear understanding of health and safety procedures. The school's first aiders and staff trained in paediatric first aid ensure that children's medical needs and any minor accidents are dealt with effectively.
- 4.16 Fire and safety checks are carried out routinely and fire drills take place on a regular basis. Electrical equipment is monitored on an annual basis through portable appliance testing. Risk assessments ensure appropriate planning for safety in activities with elements of potential risk, particularly away from the school premises. Pupils are helped to understand issues of risk, and their awareness supports their own safety and that of others. Regular training is provided for staff. Levels of supervision are high and staff are clear about their responsibility to ensure the pupils' safety.
- 4.17 The joint governing body and staff health and safety committee addresses operational and strategic issues to promote safety. Policies are suitable, and work is currently approaching completion on a comprehensive policy addressing emergency situations.
- 4.18 Recording in the admission and attendance registers is undertaken in a timely and accurate manner, and registers are kept for the required period.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors are committed to the school and its ethos, and have supported significant investment in facilities, resources and staff. In particular, commitment to high quality office staff has improved efficiency and allowed senior leaders to focus more fully on the educational aspects of provision. Finance is monitored closely. The governing body is forward looking and has clear plans to improve the school further. Nearly all governors are parents of former pupils, and they possess a range of relevant expertise and skills. They are taking an increasingly proactive role, and are gaining a greater presence and insight into the school. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed fully.
- 5.3 The governors provide both support and challenge to the senior leaders of the school. The chair and leadership meet regularly and governors are actively involved in the recruitment of senior and office staff. There are regular meetings of the full governing body and its two committees, and governors attend a number of combined school and governing body committees. The governing body reviews policies and plans on a regular basis, including those relating to child protection, and welfare, health and safety, including an annual review of child protection. Governors are attending training and developing their skills, including in policy review. A system whereby heads of department report to governors has been established and data relating to pupil performance is also presented. Nominated governors have specific responsibilities in areas such as health and safety and sustainability but there is currently limited expertise in the EYFS.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.5 There has been good progress in all respects since the previous inspection, and action points in both the EYFS and the preparatory school have been fully addressed. The newly restructured senior management team provides complementary skills and effective teamwork, bringing about a clear educational direction that is driving the school forwards, both in the EYFS and elsewhere. Senior leaders promote the school's vision and are unified. They know the school and its pupils very well and are constantly striving to make improvements that will benefit the pupils based on this knowledge. The school is run effectively and has clearly planned procedures that are understood both by the pupils and by adults working in the school. A climate of trust and respect helps pupils to feel safe. The school is a complex organisation, with many staff contributing on a part-time basis in addition to the full-time staff. Despite this, communication is good and there is a true sense of corporate pride and purpose throughout the school. Leaders are accessible at all times and this is much appreciated by pupils and staff.
- 5.6 The close working relationship between governors and the senior management team benefits the school's provision and development. An appropriate range of meetings at whole-school, departmental, subject and individual levels addresses operational and developmental matters.

- 5.7 The school has a one-year development plan that focuses on appropriate areas for improvement, but it lacks precise timelines, success criteria and procedures for monitoring and evaluating outcomes. Both departmental and subject planning informs the whole-school plan and supports its implementation. Procedures for safeguarding are highly effective in the whole school, including the EYFS. Curricular planning has been developed to provide continuity for pupils' learning and has led to high quality schemes of work and planning in many subjects. There are clear policies to support teachers in assessing pupils' progress in a way that can support their learning. However, these are not consistently followed, which leads to some inconsistent practice in classrooms and to reduced opportunities for pupils to become independent learners. The school has a broad range of policies that promote effective school practice but these lack success criteria by which they can be effectively evaluated.
- 5.8 Heads of department, who are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, have clear job descriptions and are well supported by senior leaders. Through joint planning with their team they promote an effective curriculum and develop approaches to teaching and learning. There is much excellent practice, but opportunities at this level to focus sufficiently on core leadership responsibility, supporting and challenging all members of departments to work in an agreed and consistent way, have so far been limited. Currently, there is no specific policy to provide consistent advice to staff and leaders about what constitutes effective teaching and learning, to underpin the school's approach.
- 5.9 Leadership and management of the EYFS are effective in ensuring a positive and coherent approach to the children's education, and appropriate policies are in place to ensure their well-being and safety. Safeguarding arrangements are in place and improvements have been made to outdoor learning through the provision of high quality resources that are used effectively. Careful attention is paid to the children's progress and this supports the high standards that are reached.
- 5.10 The appraisal system for staff provides a valuable tool for professional dialogue between leaders and teachers. It includes lesson observations and discussions about development opportunities. Staff are encouraged to develop their skills through appropriate training opportunities within and beyond the school. All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety. New staff are well supported, starting with an effective induction process. The school's procedures for the recruitment and appointment of staff are now robust, and the centralised register of appointments is completed accurately and routinely to a high standard.
- 5.11 Links with parents have many excellent features. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly happy with the education and support provided for their children. A small minority were concerned about the school's handling of any bullying and the quality of reports. Inspection evidence did not support these concerns, though the school is seeking to improve the quality of reports further. The school is keen to maintain a positive relationship with parents and provides numerous opportunities for them to be actively involved in its operations, as well as in the work and progress of their children. Parents regularly accompany groups on trips and visits, assist in the running of extra-curricular clubs and give talks to classes or in assembly. Parents attend class and celebration assemblies, choral and orchestral concerts and many sporting events. There are regular parents' evenings, induction and transition meetings, and parents are invited to the annual prize giving ceremony and the annual sports day. Year 6 pupils and their families prepare an annual leavers' year book for all the girls to receive. Key

information, including all that is required, is made accessible to parents through the much improved school website, and by letter, email contact and informative newsletters. An enthusiastic and active parents group is involved in organising a wide range of social and fund-raising events for the school.

- 5.12 Parents of children in the EYFS have limited opportunity to contribute to their children's learning journals. Parents of those in the Reception year currently do not receive the required end-of-year report that indicates whether or not the children are meeting expected levels or exceeding them; the school has taken prompt action to remedy this omission. The large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were pleased with the information they receive about the school. Reports are regular and informative, and staff are easily available to talk to parents.

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