



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MOULSFORD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Moulsford Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Moulsford Preparatory School		
DfE Number	931/6087		
Registered Charity Number	894631		
Address	Moulsford Preparatory School Moulsford-on-Thames Wallingford Oxfordshire OX10 9HR		
Telephone Number	01491 651438		
Fax Number	01491 651868		
Email Address	pa.registrar@moulsford.com		
Headmaster	Mr Michael Higham		
Chair of Governors	Mr William Lazarus		
Age Range	4 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	314		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS):	16	5-11: 216
	11-13:	82	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	280	
Number of Boarders	Total:	34	
	Weekly:	34	
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Claire White		
EYFS Gender	Boys		
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 January 2008.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', '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, with the chair of governors and representative governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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

Professor Pat Preedy

Mr Michael Connolly

Mr Jonathan Milton

Mr Benjamin Moir

Mrs Eileen Grimes

Mrs Patricia Griffin

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Director of Sport, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Moulsford Preparatory School is a day and boarding school for boys aged between four and thirteen. It was founded in 1961, and is situated on the banks of the River Thames, between Streatley and Wallingford in South Oxfordshire. The school is a Church of England foundation administered by a board of governors. Boys of all religious denominations are welcome at the school.
- 1.2 The original building has been much improved with the addition of a sports hall, all-weather games area, swimming pool and learning resource area. Since the previous inspection, a large outdoor activity centre, new art room, and classrooms for Reception and Year 1 have been added. The design technology room has been extended, the boarding house has been re-furbished and equipment in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite upgraded. Two further classrooms, a science laboratory and an additional ICT suite are near completion. The curriculum has been reviewed and extended to include a new personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, Spanish and French throughout the school and additional extra-curricular activities.
- 1.3 The school aims to educate and nurture each child, providing a wide and varied curriculum, with opportunities for individuals to grow in confidence and independence. It seeks to enable each child to discover and develop his unique talents and abilities, including emotional, spiritual, academic, cultural, moral, linguistic and physical development. It strives to develop a close partnership with parents, fostering a caring, courteous, disciplined community where everyone feels respected and valued and children enjoy their school.
- 1.4 The school currently has 314 pupils on roll. Of these, 16 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 35 are in Years 1 and 2, 181 are in Years 3 to 6 and 82 are in Years 7 and 8. The boarding house accommodates up to 36 pupils. From Year 5, pupils may elect to board either weekly, from Monday to Thursday night inclusive, or on a 'flexi' basis. Most pupils live within the local area, and are mainly from backgrounds where parents work in business or in professional occupations.
- 1.5 Standardised test information indicates that the ability profile of the school is above the national average. Fifty pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs and no pupil has been identified as needing support for learning English as an additional language.
- 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 Moulsford Preparatory School is highly successful in meeting its aims. Caring and committed staff support all pupils personally and academically, ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The quality of the pupils' achievements is excellent overall, meeting the school's aim for pupils' to maximise their potential and to develop their unique talents and abilities. The quality and standards of the EYFS are excellent. Children in the EYFS including those with SEND, make excellent progress relative to their starting points, ability and needs. Many children achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. Overall, pupils in the main school make excellent progress, achieving high academic standards by the time they leave the school. The excellent curriculum, programme of sport, wide range of extra-curricular activities, combined with excellent resources, supports the needs of all pupils. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, develop well in all subjects. Pupils are highly articulate and able to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills effectively in all areas. Pupils are creative, and they are able to reason and investigate independently. Such achievement and progress, is largely the result of high quality teaching overall, strongly supported by an efficient tracking and target setting system. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress in relation to their starting points because they receive excellent additional support. However, marking is not yet consistent across all subjects and year groups. Following a recommendation from the previous inspection, teachers' planning documents now include guidance on meeting the needs of the most able. Most lessons include work that closely matches pupils' abilities, and a newly developed challenge programme for the most able, gifted and talented is in the early stages of development.
- 2.2 The personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of all pupils are excellent. Pupils are extremely polite, caring, enthusiastic, respectful and exceptionally well behaved. Pastoral support for pupils is excellent, underpinned by the highly effective relationships between staff and pupils. The quality of boarding is excellent. Boarders willingly take on a range of responsibilities. They are helpful, self-reliant and confident. In line with recommendations from the previous inspection, the school has revised the length of break and lunchtimes to allow for more recreational opportunities. The school pays close attention to the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including carrying out appropriate checks and training for all staff.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. Governors are highly committed to the school and play an important part in its development. They have an excellent oversight of all aspects, informed by reports from the headmaster and staff, regular visits and discussions in efficiently organised committee meetings. Excellent and strong leadership provides clear educational direction for the school, within a supportive and caring ethos. Overall, the school appraisal system fosters the professional development of teaching and non-teaching staff. However, the appraisal and training of boarding staff, and the consistent planning, evaluation and dissemination of staff training, are not yet fully developed. Links with parents and the community are excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, pupils and parents expressed strong support for the school.

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 2011.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Extend and develop further the systems recently put in place for the most able, gifted and talented pupils.
 2. Implement a more consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work across the school.
 3. Consistently plan, evaluate and disseminate in-service training for staff throughout the school, including the EYFS and boarding.
 4. Update EYFS policies and assessment procedures.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is highly successful in meeting its ambitious aims. All pupils, including those in the EYFS, are supported and encouraged by the staff to discover and develop their unique talents and abilities. Pupils consistently gain their first choice place in competitive entry to senior independent schools, and each year, a considerable number are awarded academic, sporting and music scholarships.
- 3.3 Overall, pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities. They read well both for pleasure and for information, and are able to research and reason logically. Pupils listen carefully and considerately to others, and are confidently able to express their ideas and opinions. Throughout the school, including the EYFS, pupils learn additional languages enthusiastically, including French, Spanish and Latin. Pupils in the EYFS achieve excellent standards of literacy. They are able to blend sounds to form words and are beginning to write sentences independently. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 achieve good standards of literacy. Older pupils are able to write in a wide range of styles, taking a pride in the presentation of their work. For example, Year 4 pupils confidently led an assembly to the whole school and their parents, and in a Year 8 geography lesson, pupils eloquently debated issues associated with the ivory trade.
- 3.4 Pupils' mathematical skills are well developed; they can work independently, organise themselves and think critically. From the EYFS onwards, pupils are confidently able to use ICT as a tool for their learning. Children in Reception are able to use graphic software effectively. The use of specific software to develop literacy and numeracy skills is highly successful in raising levels of achievement for older pupils. Pupils are very creative, as seen in the variety of drama and music productions, displays around the school, innovative art and design work and in the video-making club.
- 3.5 All pupils have the opportunity to engage and compete in a range of physical and extra-curricular activities, both as individuals and as part of a team. Access to the full range of activities is limited for some pupils as a result of popularity and timetabling. Arrangements for specialist teaching beyond the school are made to accommodate the needs of pupils with specific gifts and talents, for example in sport and music. Individuals and teams achieve high levels of success locally and nationally in an extensive range of sports which include judo, kayaking and fencing. A wide range of opportunities are provided for pupils to perform both formally and informally, and success in music and drama is considerable.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available it is judged to be excellent. Overall, progress is excellent. In the EYFS, children make excellent progress towards the Early Learning Goals, with many achieving or exceeding them by the age of five. Internal assessments, a range of standardised tests, combined with lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and interviews with pupils demonstrate that as pupils move into the upper school, they make excellent progress in relation to age-related expectations. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress in relation to their starting points because they receive excellent additional support and specific

intervention based upon careful assessment. Although no current pupil needs support for English as an additional language (EAL), the school has arrangements to provide it should the need arise. Since the previous inspection, a co-ordinator for the provision of most able, gifted and talented pupils has been appointed. The recommendation to include reinforcement and extension activities in the planning for the most able has been implemented. Most lessons include work that closely matches pupils' abilities. A new programme for challenging the most able, including links with other schools and organisations, is in its early stages.

- 3.7 From the EYFS to Year 8, pupils have a positive and enthusiastic approach to learning which strongly supports their overall achievement. They are capable of learning both independently and co-operatively, and are confidently able to put forward their own ideas. Throughout the school, pupils are self-disciplined, polite, mature and responsible. They care for one another and are keen to make a difference to the environment, including helping those less fortunate than themselves. The eco-prefects are extremely successful in uniting the school community in making a positive contribution to the environment, including re-cycling and the reduction of food waste.

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 curriculum is appropriate for all ages and abilities and is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and links with the community. The breadth of the curriculum throughout the school contributes strongly towards pupils' achievements and their knowledge, skills and understanding. Curricular documentation is thorough, and individual departments have very well organised schemes of work which support teaching in line with the comprehensive curriculum policy.
- 3.10 The EYFS curriculum is followed in Reception. Staff are in the process of updating EYFS policies and assessment procedures. From Year 1, the curriculum is broadly based upon the National Curriculum, Common Entrance or scholarship syllabi. From Reception, the curriculum is enhanced by the use of specialist staff to teach subjects such as music, physical education, French, Spanish and Latin. From Year 4 onwards, pupils are streamed by ability in English and set separately for mathematics. All pupils in the school are given the opportunity to participate and to compete in a range of sports. Provision for ICT has been recently reviewed. Access to an extensive range of hardware and software, combined with expert support, enables pupils to develop and apply a wide range of skills in all subjects. The extensive and well-resourced art and design facilities, combined with imaginative and creative planning, enable pupils to develop their creative and technical skills. The PSHE programme encourages pupils to gain an understanding about themselves, of other people and of the wider world.
- 3.11 There has been a recent and extensive review of provision for pupils with SEND. The provision is well planned, linking effectively with the English and mathematics curricula. Pupil-specific individual education plans with clear targets and appropriate implementation are regularly reviewed and shared with staff and parents. A register is kept of those of high ability, with the intention that these pupils' learning is fully extended. A number of examples of excellent extension work were observed within the classroom and as part of extra-curricular activities. However, this provision is not yet consistent across all subjects and all year groups.

- 3.12 Overall the range of extra-curricular activities and hobbies is excellent. However, pupils do not always have access to the full range of options because of popularity and timetabling. Pupils attend activities with enthusiasm and are encouraged to suggest additions to the programme, a recent example being the introduction of a first aid course. As recommended from the previous inspection, break and lunchtimes have been adjusted to provide pupils with more opportunities for recreation. The wide and varied range of sports and team games are inclusive whilst at the same time enabling talented pupils to excel. Recent successes have included a number of regional and national titles in judo, fencing and football. Pupils are able to undertake the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) courses, and the annual Year 7 drama production involves all pupils either performing or in a technical capacity. A large number of pupils learn how to play musical instruments and take part in the choir, orchestra and a range of ensembles.
- 3.13 Activities week and a wide range of educational visits enrich the curriculum and the learning of all pupils. The school maintains excellent and highly positive relationships with its local community including a number of sporting links with local clubs. An annual programme includes visiting the elderly, summer concerts, tea parties and Christmas carols. Numerous charities benefit from the support of the school, including 'twinning' with schools and charities in Afghanistan and South Africa.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The quality of teaching is excellent overall.
- 3.15 The overall high standard of teaching contributes towards the excellent levels of pupils' achievement and personal development. It strongly supports the school's aims to educate and nurture the whole child, whilst supporting the discovery and fostering of individual talents. Teaching is consistently well planned and based upon an accurate understanding of pupils' needs. In the EYFS, learning support assistants are used effectively, and staff expertly support learning by posing appropriate questions, building on children's interests and ideas and fostering excellent communication skills. Assessment including completion of the EYFS profile, is being developed as part of monitoring and tracking pupils throughout the school.
- 3.16 Teachers are knowledgeable and committed to helping pupils make progress. Pupils benefit from specialised teaching in a wide range of subjects, and the teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects is clearly evident. Pupils are confident about asking for help and many express their appreciation for the way staff understand any difficulties they may have, and support their learning. Pupils' behaviour is very well managed in class and this contributes strongly towards their progress. They are well motivated and they clearly enjoy their work.
- 3.17 Much of the teaching in the school fosters interest, independence and collaboration. The most effective lessons are characterised by lively and engaging teaching, active learning, appropriately demanding tasks, challenging questioning, effective management of time and marking against the learning intentions. Where pupils are given the opportunity to work independently or in small groups, they develop high level study skills and make excellent progress. An example of this was observed in a Year 8 lesson where pupils were engrossed in an extremely creative and imaginative improvised drama activity, which they produced and rehearsed themselves. They were able to explore at a deep and sophisticated level, themes

relating to the dream world of a story they had read. Another group re-inforced their understanding of history, by enthusiastically re-enacting the battle of Agincourt. In other subjects carefully organised group work enabled pupils to reflect, refine and clarify their ideas and understanding. In a small number of lessons, learning opportunities were restricted by over-directed teaching, lack of pace and the use of worksheets which limited challenge and the opportunities for pupils to work independently.

- 3.18 The school uses a comprehensive range of assessments to monitor pupils' progress and attainment. In the EYFS, detailed observations and assessments are regularly made to assist planning for all children. Excellent liaison between staff combined with detailed pupil progress meetings, enable staff to set targets and to determine appropriate interventions to close gaps.
- 3.19 Work is well presented across a range of age groups and subjects. Where marking is excellent, it is in line with the school marking policy, assessed against the learning intentions, includes encouraging comments, suggestions for improvement and appropriate targets. However, this excellent practice is not yet consistent across all subject areas and year groups.
- 3.20 Following a recommendation from the previous inspection, teachers now consistently plan extension work into their lessons. Excellent provision for the most able is now evident in the upper school, where pupils are given opportunities to research using a range of resources including ICT, creatively explore ideas and make connections at a high level. In some lessons, extension for the most able was less effective as more of the same work was set, rather than providing different and higher levels of challenge. A new challenge programme for the most able is still in the early stages of development.
- 3.21 Teaching for pupils with SEND is excellent. These pupils' needs are met highly effectively in individual and group lessons, and with appropriate support in mainstream classes. Volunteer school staff support a wide-ranging programme of intervention in all age groups. Older pupils enthusiastically and responsibly support younger pupils, helping them to achieve success with their work. This consistent and coherent provision, combined with excellent resources, detailed assessment and monitoring, enables pupils with SEND to frequently make rapid and excellent progress.
- 3.22 The resources available throughout the school are of excellent quality, and are used effectively to promote learning. Excellent use of ICT by staff and pupils particularly enhances pupil progress and enjoyment of the lessons.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The high standards identified at the previous inspection have been maintained and successfully reflect the school's aims. The responses to the pre-inspection parental and pupil questionnaires highlight the caring, considerate and supportive ethos of the school. In the EYFS, children share resources, take turns and organise themselves effectively. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate a commitment to the fundamental values of integrity, respect and responsibility. They have outstanding inter-personal skills, respecting both their peers and their teachers, and recognising the concept of fair play. They embrace the norms of good conduct and their behaviour around the school is excellent. They are proud of their school, enjoy welcoming visitors to see it, and thrive on the extensive range of opportunities on offer. By the time they leave school, pupils are confident, mature and self-aware with an excellent understanding of their responsibilities.
- 4.3 The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Displays around the school show an imaginative approach to appreciating nature and the non-material aspects of life, together with considerable emotional maturity. Pupils are highly confident and enthusiastic, deriving much strength from their performing and sporting experiences. Their self-esteem is strengthened by the emphasis the school places on valuing them as individuals which is underpinned by the school's PSHE programme. This is further enhanced by regular, thought-provoking assemblies and liturgical services to mark traditional celebrations such as harvest festival.
- 4.4 The quality of the pupils' moral development is excellent. The pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. They support each other well and are prepared to offer help when they see someone in difficulty. Their excellent moral awareness is reflected in their commitment to helping others, especially their support of many charities through sponsored events, including a local hospice for children and young adults.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is outstanding. They are always polite, extremely well mannered, thoughtful and considerate. This behaviour is evident throughout the school. Special care is shown to any new pupils who benefit from a very effective peer-mentoring system which ensures that they are made to feel part of the community. Pupils learn to take on leadership roles from an early age. There are many opportunities for pupils to hold positions of responsibility including captain, prefect and monitor. A democratically elected school council shares issues raised by their peers with the headmaster. In this, way pupils develop a good understanding of democratic institutions.
- 4.6 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. A colourful variety of interesting wall displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school reflect a wide range of cultural interests and activities; geographical, historical, religious, musical and social. Pupils' appreciation of their western culture and heritage is strongly developed through educational visits to places of interest and supported by visiting speakers as well as their own studies. Pupils demonstrate a keen interest in learning about other cultures and faiths. Cultural awareness is enhanced by a range of overseas visits including France and South Africa.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The school is highly successful in meeting its stated aim to foster and develop a caring community where everyone feels respected and valued and children are happy. Staff know the pupils extremely well, and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves contribute strongly to the high levels of achievement. Pupils know what to do to keep safe, are very aware of the supportive pastoral guidance provided by staff, and feel there is always someone to turn to if they are worried or concerned.
- 4.9 In the EYFS, adults are well deployed and children are extremely well cared for. Staff act as excellent role models, promoting the standards of behaviour expected. Importance is placed on children's happiness, health and safety and positive relationships at all levels. The children are taught how to keep themselves safe and are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.10 The school is most effective in promoting the exemplary behaviour observed. The house point system is used to good effect to motivate and reward pupils, and encourage them to strive for the ultimate reward of a golden house point. The community is one where pupils show respect and kindness. The school's anti-bullying policy is carefully implemented and all pupils have signed a pledge to show their commitment to an environment where bullying does not take place. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with promptly. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of both healthy eating and exercise, which is encouraged through the school's PSHE programme and the curricular and extra-curricular sporting programme. This message is also positively reinforced in the dining room through display, choice of nutritious food and careful monitoring of waste by the pupils.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan for educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 Pupils appreciate the opportunity the school council gives them for their views to be heard. A minority of responses to the pre-inspection pupil questionnaire indicated that pupils felt the giving of rewards and sanctions was not always fair. Inspectors found that the giving of rewards and sanctions for older pupils does not always seem fair when taking into account their age and stage of development. The school is aware of this issue, and is currently reviewing the rewards and sanctions policy, particularly to meet the needs of older pupils.
- 4.13 The school's excellent pastoral provision makes a major contribution to the pupils' impressive personal development. They are extremely proud of their school and enjoy all aspects.

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

- 4.14 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.15 The school places a high priority on welfare, health and safety, and has close links with child protection agencies. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive, and has regard to official guidance. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place, and the designated safeguarding staff, including one staff member specifically for the EYFS, have had the appropriate level of training. All other staff receive updated training in safeguarding at the required frequency.

- 4.16 All measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards are in place. Regular fire drills are held and recorded, the fire alarms are tested weekly and the fire safety manual and all records are exceptionally detailed. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy, which is reviewed and updated regularly.
- 4.17 Visits out of school have thorough risk assessments and general risk assessments ensure that safety is a priority. A comprehensive medical policy outlines protocols for the administration and recording of medicines and advice for dealing with illness and accidents. Arrangements for pupils who are unwell during the day or who have SEND are excellent.
- 4.18 Pupils are well supervised at all times during the day. The school matrons and high number of qualified first aiders, including paediatric first aiders, ensure the welfare of the pupils both on-site and during educational visits. Access for those with SEND is effectively planned.
- 4.19 Admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately for the previous three years. The school's friendly and positive atmosphere is enhanced by the efficient work of secretarial, administrative and all other non-teaching staff, who make an excellent contribution to pupils' welfare.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding education is excellent.
- 4.21 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Throughout the boarding accommodation boys are at ease and enjoy their time in the house, which is relaxed and informal. They have established excellent relationships with house staff and peers at all levels, which is a great strength of the school. Behaviour throughout the boarding house is exemplary. Boarders respect each other and the staff, highly valuing the time taken to ensure that they are happy and confident. They enjoy the many and varied activities which enable them to develop firm and lasting friendships. Boarders feel very well supported as individuals by staff and other boarders, for whom they have the highest regard. They are keen to contribute to the smooth running of their house through the prefect system, by representing boarding on the school council, and by taking responsibility for supporting peers and new boarders through the buddy system. The majority of the boarders who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive about boarding life. They are confident that their views are listened to; they are able to feed suggestions through the school council and to suggest ideas directly to boarding staff. Boarders speak enthusiastically with regard to changes for which they had been responsible, for example, the decorating and refurbishment of the common room in a homely style. Boarding effectively prepares boys for their next stage in life, enabling them to develop a sense of community, responsibility, tolerance, independence and understanding.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent and has developed since the previous inspection. Boarding staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of boarders', ensuring that these are encompassed into boarding life. Comprehensive care plans ensure that the health and well-being of boarders is promoted to the highest standard. Boarders are delighted with the range of healthy and nutritious meals provided by the catering team. Meals are a true social occasion and staff maximise this time to discuss issues of the day and to strengthen relationships in a relaxed "family" type atmosphere. In addition, boarders are able to access snacks and drinks freely within the house. There is an excellent

range of activities and facilities provided for boarders. Boys can freely choose group or self-directed activities which support the development of a wide range of skills. They are encouraged to maintain contact with their families and are able to access mobile phones at agreed times, as well as unrestricted use of pay phones, which they are able to use in private. Boarding accommodation has been extensively refurbished since the previous inspection. It is characterful, warm and clean with pleasant and well-maintained facilities, including common rooms and the washroom provision. Some boys have taken the opportunity to personalise their areas with posters and photographs. Boys strongly stated that the boarding house is an extension of their home and they are part of a large family. Boarders medical needs are supported through the efficient and well-resourced medical centre. They are cared for in a safe and calm environment which is conducive to promoting their health and well-being, which includes offering support and advice to both boarders and staff.

4.23 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding in boarding is excellent. Staff have an excellent understanding of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, and rigorously implement them throughout the boarding house. Staff are extremely vigilant with regard to all issues of health and safety. Detailed risk assessments with appropriate measures and actions are in place to ensure the safety of the boys. There is a clear policy on fire evacuation and drills are practised regularly at various times of the day. Staff are vigilant when organising activities to ensure that staff with appropriate qualifications and skills are present at all times. Boys state that they feel safe in the boarding house and that their possessions are safe. They have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and develop an understanding of what is right and wrong. Boys stated that the system in place for rewards and sanctions is clearly understood and is operated fairly and consistently by all house staff. This enhances boarders understanding of the agreed house rules and the importance of working together to abide by them. The school ensures that links between house and academic staff are strong and well supported. Whilst many boarding staff are also academic staff, they are keen to ensure that whenever possible issues are kept separate. Bullying is rare, and boys are confident that should they report any concerns these would be dealt with quickly, sensitively and efficiently. They are also aware that there are a number of adults available to talk to, including an independent listener. Arrangements are in place to ensure that boarders' privacy is respected. They are supported by a wealth of detailed policies on management of behaviour, procedures to be followed in the event of a missing boarder, and all other aspects of boarding life. These are regularly updated and clearly understood by all staff.

4.24 Leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent and reflects the high importance the school places on boarding. Boarding staff have a deep commitment to the boys in their care to ensure that all boarders are happy and the boarding house runs smoothly and harmoniously. A clear statement of boarding is in place in line with the ethos of the whole school. Leaders and managers ensure that high standards of care are consistently maintained throughout the boarding provision. Ways to improve all aspects of boarding are considered through regular meetings. The staff appraisal and performance management system is not yet fully developed, and as a result, not all staff are suitably trained in line with current boarding practice. In the parental pre-inspection questionnaire, parents who responded, indicated overwhelming appreciation of the boarding provision and the care and support their children receive. The school has responded successfully to the recommendations raised from the previous boarding inspection in relation to the

areas of administration and recording of medication, nutritional value of meals and privacy for phone calls.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is excellent
- 5.2 Governors and the school's leadership share a clear vision for the school. Governors maintain a very well-informed oversight of the school bringing to their work an excellent balance of expertise across many fields including education, finance and marketing. Many of the governors are current or former parents, which strengthens the relationship with the school.
- 5.3 Communication between governors and senior management is excellent. Governors are fully involved in strategic planning. They work effectively with senior managers and the staff to consider priorities and the future development of the school. The school's leadership provides detailed reports for governors, and staff make regular and informative presentations. All aspects of education and care provided by the school, including achievements, staffing, pastoral education, finance, safeguarding, EYFS and boarding are discussed and monitored.
- 5.4 Governors exercise prudent financial management. They have a thorough understanding of the school, and are committed to providing quality in all aspects. They take expert advice when required, and wise investment enables the provision of educational and material resources in order to fulfil the aims of the school.
- 5.5 Governors have a thorough understanding of their legal responsibilities. They take great care to ensure that appropriate policies, systems and processes are in place to meet statutory and legal requirements. The school's policies and procedures for child protection are reviewed annually, and regular contact is maintained with the school's child protection officer. Staff appointment procedures, the centralised register, health and safety policies and procedures, and the associated risk assessments are carefully monitored. Governors support the school and its community through frequent visits, including regular visits to the EYFS, attendance at school functions, visits during the working day and special functions organised by governors to meet the staff.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.7 Since the previous ISI and boarding inspections the school has re-organised the leadership team. Those in senior leadership positions play a significant part in raising pupils' achievement levels and in extending their personal development. The leadership and management of the school are effective in enabling the school to achieve its overall aim of fostering a caring, courteous, disciplined community, where children enjoy their school. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in interviews, pupils reported that they enjoy being in school, and that their teachers help them to learn.
- 5.8 Leadership and management focus strongly on continuous and sustained improvement. The school development plan is a strategic document reflecting the

school's clear vision for the future. Priorities within the school development plan are identified through self-evaluation and discussions with staff and governors. Since the previous inspection the curriculum has been reviewed to include a new PSHE programme, Spanish and French throughout the school, additional extra-curricular activities and more opportunities for recreation during the extended breaks. Heads of department are extremely enthusiastic about their subjects, and have developed effective policies and schemes of work. Assessment, tracking and target-setting processes have been greatly strengthened, enabling staff to monitor the progress of all pupils, and to determine appropriate interventions to close gaps. The policy for marking is not yet consistently implemented across all subject areas and year groups.

- 5.9 All required policies and procedures, including those for pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, are in place, regularly reviewed and carefully implemented. Safe recruitment procedures are diligently followed when new staff and governors are appointed. All staff are trained at the appropriate level in safeguarding and child protection procedures. The centralised register for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers is completed accurately.
- 5.10 Overall, the school appraisal system supports the professional development of teaching and non-teaching staff. Teaching staff are regularly observed in their teaching role and there is a follow-up professional dialogue providing a forum to discuss targets and training needs. The staff appraisal and performance management system, to ensure that staff are suitably trained in line with current boarding practice, is not yet fully developed.
- 5.11 New staff, including those in the EYFS, receive appropriate induction training. All staff are offered the opportunity to attend relevant professional development. A central register of staff training is maintained for monitoring purposes. A comprehensive internal programme of staff training covering first aid, pool lifeguard and safeguarding is provided on a rolling basis. Links with senior schools have contributed to the programme. Coherent planning, evaluation and dissemination of in-service training are not yet fully developed across the school, including the EYFS and boarding.
- 5.12 Management structures effectively support the school. Teachers, classroom support assistants and non-teaching staff are deployed efficiently. They make a highly significant contribution to the pupils' welfare and learning, particularly those pupils with SEND. Staff are kept well informed about all aspects of the school through excellent written and verbal communication including the use of ICT. Regular staff meetings and working meetings combined with informal communication, enables all staff to work together as a cohesive team, supporting the caring and positive ethos of the school.
- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The very strong partnership that is developed with parents of the youngest children is maintained as pupils progress through the school. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that the overwhelming majority of parents are positive and enthusiastic about the school. In their responses, a high number reported that the school was well led and managed successfully, and were highly complimentary about their children's progress, the curriculum, pastoral care and boarding. Parents particularly appreciate the opportunities boarding provides for pupils to develop personally and socially as well as preparing them for the next stage of their education. Inspection evidence supports these judgements. A small minority of parents expressed

concern with regard to the way the school deals with cases of bullying and the way in which concerns are handled. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has appropriate and sensitive procedures for managing bullying and developing positive behaviour. The complaints procedure was found to be clear and appropriately implemented.

- 5.14 Communication with parents is excellent. They are warmly welcomed to a wide variety of school events and appreciate the personal approach the school offers. Written reports provided for parents are informative and identify targets for improvement. Throughout the school, parents' meetings are held regularly to inform parents with regard to their child's personal and academic progress. A comprehensive website, school prospectus and parents' handbooks provide all current and prospective parents with detailed information about the school. Parents enjoy receiving weekly newsletters that describe the many activities going on in the school. The instant electronic contact that advises parents of immediate situations is particularly valued.
- 5.15 Formal complaints are managed in line with the school's stated policy and procedures. Parents can quickly and easily arrange to see a member of staff if they have a worry or concern. The headmaster and teaching staff are also available at the beginning and end of the day, enabling parents to easily approach them to discuss any concerns or queries. These effective mechanisms for communication mean that the vast majority of concerns can be dealt with informally, swiftly and efficiently.
- 5.16 The very active parents' association organises a variety of fund-raising and social events with the annual school ball being one of its highlights. The success of these events has enabled many valuable resources to be purchased for the school, including a substantial contribution to the funding of the adventure playground.

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