



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

POCKLINGTON SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Pocklington School

Full Name of School	Pocklington School
DfE Number	811/6003
Registered Charity Number	529834
Address	Pocklington School West Green Pocklington York North Yorkshire YO42 2NJ
Telephone Number	01759 321200
Fax Number	01759 306366
Email Address	mainoffice@pocklingtonschool.com
Head	Mr Mark Ronan
Chair of Governors	Mr Christopher Oughtred
Age Range	4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	790
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (421 boys; 369 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 16 5-11: 166 11-18: 608
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 700
Number of Boarders	Total: 90 Full: 80 Weekly: 10
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Jo Kay
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	12 Nov 2013 to 15 Nov 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspections (as separate schools) of Pocklington and Lyndhurst were in September 2007.

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

Inspectors

Mr Martin Bussey	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Daphne Cawthorne	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sandra Clements	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Pamela Craig	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Harriet Granville	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Mark Mawhinney	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Miss Lucy Pearson	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Clive Thorpe	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, HMC school)
Mr Nicholas Vernon	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Rosalind Hayes	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Crispin Dawson	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Penny Oates	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Pocklington School was founded in 1514. It is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 4 to 18. A charity, renamed since the previous inspection as the Pocklington School Foundation, has oversight of both of the constituent schools of Pocklington and Lyndhurst through a board of governors, incorporated as directors of Pocklington School Trustee Limited. The schools are Lyndhurst, for pupils aged 4 to 11, which includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged 4 to 5, opened in 2010 as part of a new pre-prep section, and Pocklington, for pupils aged 11 to 18. Both schools occupy a site in the middle of Pocklington, a small town in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Boarding is offered from the age of eight. The site includes a range of buildings for teaching and activities, and four boarding houses.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the schools have opened: a new sixth-form centre, pastoral areas for other Pocklington pupils, facilities for changing and for the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), and new teaching accommodation for information and communication technology (ICT), biology, history, classics and cookery. The chapel has been relocated to the centre of the school. Boarding arrangements have been revised, a sixth-form bursary scheme introduced and timetables between Lyndhurst and Pocklington synchronised. In both schools a revised management structure has been initiated. The chair of governors and the head were appointed in 2008 and the head of Lyndhurst in 2009.
- 1.3 The schools aim to: inspire pupils for life through their ethos; develop individual talent, confidence and personal responsibility through a broad curriculum, extensive activities programme and strong pastoral system, including specialised help for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); provide for a wide academic ability range and enable pupils to achieve their personal aspirations.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 790 pupils educated at the schools, 90 of whom were boarders. There were 186 pupils in the sixth form and 182 pupils at Lyndhurst, including 16 children in the EYFS. Most pupils proceed from Lyndhurst to Pocklington and constitute just under two-thirds of the intake in Year 7. At Lyndhurst and in Year 7 the average ability on entry is above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Following an increase in the size of the average cohort between Years 7 and 10 of around a fifth, most pupils studying for GCSE have ability that is slightly above or in line with the national average. Around a fifth of pupils in Year 12 are new, replacing a similar number of leavers; this results in an ability profile broadly similar to the national average.
- 1.5 Most pupils are of white British origin and from similar backgrounds, such as farming communities, living in small towns. Boarders come from the UK and seven other countries from Europe and the Far East, the latter comprising around a twelfth of the school population. There are 47 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 38 receive support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Of the 101 pupils who have been identified as having SEND, 62 receive specialist help with their learning.

- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used at Lyndhurst and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used at Pocklington and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
1st Year	Year 7
2nd Year	Year 8
3rd Year	Year 9
4th Year	Year 10
5th Year	Year 11
Lower 6 th	Year 12
Upper 6 th	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The pupils' achievement and learning are excellent, including in the EYFS, where children make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. Those pupils with SEND or EAL achieve at levels equal to their peers. Those who are able, gifted and talented (A, G and T) fulfil their potential, particularly in activities, but at times levels of challenge and expectations set by teaching are not sufficiently high to ensure consistent progress. All pupils develop good learning skills and take effective responsibility for their learning within the context of the work they are set, but some elements of learning, such as the consistent development of high order thinking skills, are not yet fully embedded. Pupils of all ages respond well to an excellent curriculum that stimulates development of their talents, and to good teaching. This results in good levels of progress, and high levels of progress at Pocklington to GCSE level. Excellent achievement in activities is typified by national success in sports, the creative and performing arts, and competitions.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils show high levels of confidence and excellent behaviour, which is exemplary in the EYFS. Pupils show excellent moral awareness, and high levels of cultural awareness are evident in the easy integration of boarders from overseas into the community. The pupils are supported by excellent pastoral care. Those pupils who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires were very positive about the schools. A minority expressed dissatisfaction with opportunities for the school to listen to and respond to their views. Inspection evidence showed that opportunities for pupils to air their views are plentiful but pupils feel that, in practice, systems do not ensure that the schools' responses to their views are passed on effectively. Good arrangements are in place to ensure the pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The quality of boarding is good. Care for boarders is excellent but new initiatives in boarding are not yet implemented consistently in all houses so that the most effective practice is not experienced by all boarders.
- 2.3 Good governance promotes the schools' aims well and its support underpins the pupils' excellent achievement and personal development. All recommendations from the previous inspections have been met, where finances have permitted. Governors fulfil their responsibilities for oversight in those areas where they have legal responsibilities but minutes of the annual review of safeguarding lack sufficient detail to represent the breadth and depth of discussion held. Both schools have made significant progress since the previous inspection. Leadership and management, including in the EYFS, are excellent, characterised by accurate and perceptive self-evaluation and the strength, dynamism and sense of purpose of senior leaders. The implementation of policy by middle managers is good but does not always realise initiatives consistently. Monitoring of individual staff training needs in the EYFS is not fully developed. The schools' links with parents are excellent.

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 schools are advised to make the following improvements.
1. Build on the many strengths evident at all ages to enable higher order thinking skills and risk taking in the pupils' learning, and increase expectations appropriately, including for A, G and T pupils.
 2. Ensure the pupils' awareness of the schools' responses to their opinions and suggestions, including in boarding.
 3. Establish systems to ensure that boarding staff share the most effective practice.
 4. Minute the governors' annual review of safeguarding in sufficient detail to demonstrate the depth and breadth of their discussion.
 5. In the EYFS, develop a systematic programme to identify the training needs of individual members of staff.

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.

Prep School

3.2 Pupils demonstrate excellent levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas by the end of Year 6 in response to excellent teaching and a demanding curriculum. The school's aim to develop individual talent is met very successfully.

3.3 In the EYFS, children of all abilities and needs make outstanding progress in relation to their individual starting points. All, including those with SEND, reach, and in many cases exceed, expected levels of development. They competently blend sounds to build words and can read and spell simple words. Some use more complex strings of letters in the same way. Children explore and experiment, design and build. Their powers of imagination and creative thinking are highly developed, evident as they made their way tentatively along an imaginary beanstalk to the giant's castle during role play in the garden. Children readily respond to challenges and are happy to work together or independently, and their concentration levels are high.

3.4 The pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are good in Years 1 and 2 and excellent in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2 they demonstrate a strong grasp of language through their experience of phonics but more limited achievement in creative writing. Older pupils express themselves very well in both written and verbal communication, and develop strong understanding in science, for example giving highly effective accounts of why light is refracted through a prism. Pupils develop good skills in modern foreign languages, and their work in art, drama and music is excellent.

3.5 The pupils' ICT skills are excellent but used inconsistently in other subjects. Their physical development is excellent, evident across a range of sports. The achievements of those with SEND are excellent, aided by well-structured support and classroom assistance. Pupils who are A, G and T fulfil their potential through the range of opportunities and extension activities provided.

3.6 Pupils reach excellent levels of achievement in activities. They achieve good grades in instrumental examinations, some with distinction, and enjoy success in regional music festivals. Some participate in professional dramatic productions. Pupils have been successful in national art, chess and general knowledge competitions. In sport, teams achieve well at regional level in hockey. Individuals have participated in regional squads in athletics and have been successful in national water-ski competitions.

3.7 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from their work, responses in interviews and performance in lessons, it is judged to be good by the end of Year 2 and excellent by the end of Year 6 in relation to national age-related expectations. This attainment, as judged, indicates that their progress by the end of Year 6, including that of pupils with SEND, is good. Many pupils gain scholarships on entry to Pocklington and other independent senior schools.

3.8 Pupils from Year 1 upwards work very effectively together. They work well independently in response to structured tasks, and more able pupils enjoy being

given additional challenges, for example to research topics in greater detail in science.

Senior School

- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas in response to good teaching and a stimulating curriculum. Their mathematical skills are strong, in response to learning at a fast pace that encompasses tasks suited to the needs of different groups. They show excellent understanding in science, particularly in practical work. The pupils' skills in modern foreign languages are strong; GCSE pupils are able to express themselves fluently in French. Pupils reach good levels of articulacy in written and spoken English; they are particularly effective in structured and analytical work. Those pupils with EAL develop a good grasp of language which enables them to participate fully in nearly all lessons but occasionally progress is slowed in the sixth form when terminology is not clearly explained. Those with SEND achieve consistently at similar levels to their peers, supported by work tailored to their needs, and help in and outside lessons. Pupils who are A, G and T achieve at high levels in activities, and in extended essays and projects in the sixth form as part of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Pupils demonstrate excellent achievement in creative subjects and sport. Pupils in GCSE drama were imaginative in improvisation and read unseen texts with instinctive characterisation.
- 3.10 The pupils' ICT skills are good but opportunities to utilise them fully are limited in some subjects. Their work in art, design and music is strong. Drawing skills, work in various media and choral singing reach high levels. Excellent standards are attained in physical development.
- 3.11 Pupils reach excellent levels of achievement in activities. They are members of regional choirs and national instrumental groups, and attain high standards in instrumental examinations and musical theatre diplomas. Pupils regularly achieve places to study at drama schools, have won national play-writing competitions and appear in productions by professional companies in theatre and opera. The CCF enjoys success in national competitions and pupils have won RAF scholarships. Pupils achieve well at regional level in Young Enterprise and in physics Olympiads. Achievement in sports is excellent. Individuals play hockey at national level and, at regional level, rugby, athletics, gymnastics, trampolining and cricket. Teams achieve success in national competitions in equestrianism and trampolining.
- 3.12 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 at GCSE and at A level have been good in relation to the national average for pupils in maintained schools. They are similar to the average for pupils in maintained selective schools. Results in the International GCSE (IGCSE) are higher than worldwide averages in English and mathematics. Around 65% of grades at A level have been A* to B. This proportion rose to 69% in 2013. These results, considered alongside the pupils' work and achievement in lessons, indicate that their progress to GCSE level in relation to pupils of similar ability, including those with SEND or EAL, is excellent, and is high at A level. Pupils consistently gain places at universities in the UK, the majority at their first choice of institution.

- 3.13 Pupils throughout the school are confident in their learning, with a willingness to learn evident in their responses to most teaching. All pupils develop good learning skills and take effective responsibility for their learning within the context of the work they are set. This meets the recommendation of the previous inspection. The ability to take their thinking and investigation further, on their own initiative, and to take risks in their learning, is not yet fully embedded. Pupils' work throughout the school is characterised by excellent presentation and a good volume.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

Prep School

- 3.15 The curriculum at Lyndhurst is stimulating and provides excellent coverage of the required areas of learning. It meets the pupils' needs extremely well and supports the aims of the school.
- 3.16 The EYFS makes excellent provision in meeting the individual needs of the range of children who attend, including those with SEND. Imaginative and comprehensive educational programmes utilise all areas of a carefully designed setting. An excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is achieved. Physical exercise is promoted through ready access to the outside learning environment, swimming sessions and specialist physical education (PE) lessons, as well as through exploration of the school grounds. More able children are challenged through work that is carefully structured to match their abilities. This is particularly so in literacy and numeracy.
- 3.17 The recommendation of the previous inspection to develop the Lyndhurst curriculum further has been met. Design and technology (DT) has been introduced as a curriculum subject and the use of ICT enhanced, although there remain limited opportunities for pupils to use their skills in some subjects. Modern foreign languages are taught from the EYFS upwards. Weekly drama lessons give pupils confidence, and performances in dramatic and musical productions are of a very high standard. Pupils debate, enter local festivals for verse speaking and music, and perform in assemblies. Elements of the imaginative curriculum employed in the pre-prep, which explores topics across different subjects, have recently been introduced into Year 3 to good effect. The current Enterprise Project enables older pupils to research and create saleable items to celebrate 100 years of prep-aged learning at the school.
- 3.18 The curriculum is monitored and reviewed effectively through lesson observations, scrutiny of the pupils' work and seeking the pupils' views. Fortnightly curriculum meetings include topics such as phonics and numeracy.
- 3.19 Thorough initial assessments identify pupils who need additional support. Those with SEND receive excellent support through one-to-one lessons with qualified and highly committed specialist staff, which ensures that they make excellent progress. Setting by ability for mathematics and English in Years 5 and 6 benefits all pupils, in particular those who are A, G and T.
- 3.20 The curriculum is enhanced by termly visits. These are both local, for example the Year 2 outing to the local war memorial, and further afield, such as residential trips to a regional outdoor pursuits centre and a biannual French trip for Years 5 and 6.

- 3.21 Pupils are extremely well prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education. Older pupils benefit from teaching by Pocklington staff in some subjects.
- 3.22 The range of extra-curricular activities provided is excellent. Pupils are able to participate in a wide array of activities on offer, including sports, the performing arts, gardening and many specialist clubs. House competitions provide additional opportunities, including in areas such as art and creative writing. Boarding activities at weekends are open to day pupils and many, such as making afternoon tea in the cookery club, are very popular.
- 3.23 Pupils perform regularly in the local community, for example in Beverley Minster and York Minster, often to support charities. They enter, and have been successful in, national charity competitions, such as to design a poster for an appeal.

Senior School

- 3.24 The school meets very successfully its aim to develop talent, confidence and personal responsibility through a broad curriculum and extensive co-curriculum, which are both excellent.
- 3.25 The curriculum is evaluated regularly and a full audit has taken place which meets the recommendation of the previous inspection. Teaching time has increased and the introduction of drama has ensured extended provision for creative subjects. Curriculum changes have enabled free choice to study at least two modern foreign languages at Year 9 and the introduction of IGCSE in some subjects. This offers additional challenge for pupils, who respond very well; for example, those who are A, G and T relish the additional reasoning demanded in mathematics. The introduction of photography in the sixth form has added to a wide range of A-level subjects. The school offers pupils the EPQ, which gives them the option to produce a thesis of their choice and the opportunity to develop strong independent research skills.
- 3.26 A digital strategy group leads developments in ICT. A current pilot course in computer studies designed to enhance programming skills for pupils is being evaluated. A wide variety of specialist software programmes is used competently by pupils across the curriculum, for example in photography, DT and music, but general application of ICT is less consistent. Recently revised personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes include good quality sessions on citizenship and economic well-being, and some guidance on healthy eating.
- 3.27 A strong careers programme begins in Year 9, with advice in choosing GCSE subjects, and culminates in extensive, high quality support and advice for sixth-form pupils applying for university, Gap Year programmes or employment. All pupils in Year 11 benefit from individual meetings with specialists about subject choices, occupations and training. In the sixth form, additional support is given by former pupils, and through extra teaching for potential dental, medical and veterinary students, and workshops for applicants to universities with the most demanding requirements.
- 3.28 Pupils with SEND are identified with care and very well supported through individual plans, the contents of which are communicated well to teaching and pastoral staff. Those with EAL are offered support as required, from specialist teachers and through the opportunity to complete the academic version of the International English Language Testing System, designed to improve language proficiency for those who wish to proceed to university. Pupils who are A, G and T take advantage

of good opportunities to extend their understanding, offered through more challenging activities in the classroom and academically related activities and clubs.

- 3.29 The excellent co-curricular programme offers a wide range of activities, some provided within the school timetable. Opportunities in sport, music and drama are particularly strong. In addition, the 150-strong CCF, compulsory in Year 10, participates in regular camps and competitions, including some in school holiday time. Sport is well staffed and many pupils play for school teams. A large number of pupils learn a musical instrument and there are many opportunities to perform in choirs and instrumental ensembles. Regular music tours provide the chance for pupils to perform abroad. Frequent drama productions take place in the school's theatre, and pupils also participate in the York Mystery Plays and take productions to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The technical club offers opportunities for pupils to be fully involved backstage in school productions.
- 3.30 The school has begun to prepare pupils for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in response to pupil demand and some are currently working towards gold level. The school's own Pocklington Award has been introduced since the previous inspection, to reward pupils who have demonstrated themselves to be responsible young adults who are capable of working independently and managing their time effectively.
- 3.31 Close links exist with the local and international community. Year 12 pupils speak with warm commitment about residents at a local care home. Pupils have travelled to Botswana and Tanzania, where they climbed Kilimanjaro to raise money for charity and supported projects in local schools.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.32 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.33 Teaching successfully supports the aims of both schools, providing for a wide range of academic ability. In the EYFS, detailed planning, comprehensive observations and assessment are used to identify a child's next steps, ensuring that all children learn effectively. Parents are able to review and contribute to these assessments. Dynamic class teaching is supported by specialist teaching in music, ICT, PE, French and swimming. An imaginative variety of teaching methods and plentiful, stimulating and age-appropriate resources, both inside and out, support the children's learning and progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- 3.34 At Lyndhurst, excellent teaching, which is highly committed and shows much dedication, encourages the pupils' high levels of motivation and engagement. At Pocklington, similarly committed teaching enables pupils to achieve excellent progress to GCSE level and good progress in the sixth form by providing structured and supported learning opportunities through which pupils successfully develop their skills and extend their knowledge. Much teaching is excellent at Pocklington and creates positive learning environments in which pupils feel valued and confident. Pupils throughout both schools recognise the commitment of their teachers and comment on the additional individual support and guidance they receive.
- 3.35 Pupils with SEND or EAL are well provided for through activities that usually suit their needs and through individual support, including from teaching assistants. Arrangements at Lyndhurst are excellent. Suitable challenge for A, G and T pupils is often provided throughout both schools through resources that offer appropriate demand or encourage independent research. This is not consistent in all teaching, which can lead to slower progress. The schools are aware of this and have initiated

staff training and revised management structures to extend and monitor the level of challenge given. At Lyndhurst, gifted musicians were enabled to make excellent progress when given a more demanding ostinato to play in accompanying a carol.

- 3.36 Appropriate planning enables pupils to develop their understanding, confidence and skill at a good, often brisk, pace, particularly at Lyndhurst and in some subjects, such as mathematics and science, at Pocklington. Teaching uses a range of approaches to expedite learning and engage pupils, including competitive, well-paced games, stimulating practical sessions in science, DT and other subjects, and creative assignments. Younger pupils at Pocklington made excellent progress when their particular interests and experience in agriculture were referenced when discussing animal reproduction. In the most successful teaching, open-ended questions elicit thoughtful and speculative responses from pupils, but such risk taking in learning is not yet a common feature. Some tasks and activities, whilst effectively communicating information and enabling understanding, restrict pupils from building on their many strengths, particularly in developing higher level thinking skills. Opportunities for independent research are sometimes limited, particularly in Years 7 to 9, where planning often leaves limited room for flexibility. When such challenge is given, progress is rapid. Younger pupils at Lyndhurst used ICT very effectively to research details of Ancient Egyptian gods. Sixth-form pupils choose their own coursework topic in English language and follow this up with extended personal research that demonstrates excellent levels of intellectual and creative engagement.
- 3.37 Resources, including libraries in both schools, are varied and effective, and several are employed highly imaginatively, such as the use of ICT to create an advertisement to promote recycling at Lyndhurst. Pupils engage profitably with the supportive and imaginative displays in classrooms. The library at Pocklington is an excellent resource and is very well used to stimulate and engage pupils; proactive library staff are highly effective in supporting teaching across all subject areas.
- 3.38 Teaching facilitates co-operative learning by pupils and provides regular opportunities for group and pair work. This contributes strongly to the pupils' personal development and their acquisition of skills, including social skills, independence, and a confident ability to debate and discuss ideas, challenge others' thinking and offer alternate views.
- 3.39 Strong enthusiasm for individual subjects and excellent subject knowledge are common in teaching. Demonstrations are expertly presented and instructions clearly given. The energy and commitment evident encourage pupils to sustain concentration and maintain high levels of effort. At Pocklington, teaching demonstrates a very clear understanding of examination requirements, enabling effective focus on associated techniques that pupils recognise and value.
- 3.40 Clear expectations of behaviour and work are set. Relationships in the classroom between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent, and pupils feel that they can approach any member of staff for help. The volume of work set is highly appropriate, including that for homework.
- 3.41 Marking is undertaken well. Most provides useful guidance on how to improve. Pupils have a good understanding of the marking and grading systems used, including, at Pocklington, strong awareness of the practice of individual departments. The quality of some marking and comment, particularly in the sixth form, is exceptional. In some teaching, pupils evaluate their own work, which helps them to

take responsibility for their own learning. Use of assessment information is good. A new school-wide data tracking system has been introduced which is being successfully implemented to identify pupils' under-performance, so that necessary remedial action can be taken.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Throughout, the pupils' personal qualities develop to a high level, in accordance with the schools' aims. By the time they leave each school, the pupils' personal development is excellent for their age.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children are happy and play well together. They gradually develop their independence, as well as their creative and investigative skills. Children's behaviour is exemplary. The careful attention they receive ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- 4.4 Pupils throughout both schools show excellent spiritual development, evident in high levels of confidence and demonstrated in their willingness to listen to the views of others, as well as express and shape their own ideas. They appreciate religious and philosophical ideas, and show emotional maturity for their respective ages in response to assemblies, church services and the wide range of other experiences they are given, for example in the performing arts, sport and PSHE lessons.
- 4.5 All pupils demonstrate an excellent sense of right and wrong. Social and moral issues are discussed in lessons and activities. Pupils write persuasively about moral themes, evident in essays by Pocklington pupils on prejudice when studying *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and in the empathy shown by older pupils at Lyndhurst in preparing a dramatic tableau about Victorian poverty. Ecology receives a strong focus in the pupils' school lives, promoted by a pupil committee that arranges recycling and raises awareness successfully. Community service projects are undertaken both locally and abroad, with strong commitment by pupils, for example in recording passages of local papers for 'talking books' for those with limited vision. Similar commitment is seen in charity work undertaken, led by a pupil committee that organises fairs and other events to raise money.
- 4.6 Pupils show excellent levels of social development in their care for one another. Older pupils take care of younger both within and across the two schools. Sixth-form pupils accompany pre-prep pupils from the school buses to Lyndhurst and also help out with prep and games activities. During breaks the newly instituted public pastoral areas for Years 7 to 11 are busy social hubs where behaviour is lively but very friendly. Pupils accept responsibility well at all levels. Older Lyndhurst pupils take pride in their role in assisting with younger pupils during wet playtimes or operating the projector in assembly, and all are aware of their responsibility to provide friendship to any other pupil sitting on the 'buddy bench'. At Pocklington, pupils fulfil their responsibilities in rehearsal groups, sports teams and CCF sections conscientiously. The pupils' awareness of public institutions develops effectively. Younger pupils at Pocklington showed alert interest in the parliamentary process of setting the budget and associated details of how to allocate individual resources.
- 4.7 Pupils throughout both schools understand and respect other faiths and cultures, alongside highly developed awareness of Western European cultural traditions. The latter is demonstrated well in performing arts lessons and activities, enthusiasm for language trips and interest in varied artistic styles, such as that shown by Lyndhurst pupils when studying sixteenth century styles in art. Pocklington pupils discuss different theatrical traditions with integrity and create artwork in a wide range of

media and styles. The integration of boarders from overseas with other pupils is relaxed and successful. Lyndhurst pupils enjoy learning about Diwali and Chinese New Year.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The schools' aims to give pupils the support and freedom they need to flourish into balanced, fully-rounded and confident individuals who are inspired for life are fulfilled very successfully.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, measures to ensure the children's well-being are excellent. All children feel safe, happy and secure. The key person is highly effective in ensuring that children form very strong relationships, not only with one adult but with other staff so that they feel confident in new situations and different areas of the setting. Generous staff to child ratios ensure that each individual child's needs are met fully. All the adults are excellent role models, and emphasis is placed on promoting sociable and tolerant behaviour through praise, with the result that the children treat each other with respect and courtesy. On the very few occasions when necessary, adults intervene skilfully to avert or resolve any disagreements between children. Children manage their own personal hygiene independently; they understand when and why they need to wash their hands. They were able to discuss whether their lunch contained healthy options.
- 4.11 Pastoral structures from Year 1 are focused on the roles of class teachers at Lyndhurst and on those of tutors and housemasters and housemistresses at Pocklington, who are overseen by the heads of the three age-related divisions. This system is implemented to excellent effect. Pupils receive additional support from matrons, nurses, the chaplaincy and counselling services. Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, are friendly and caring, generating a positive atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils speak very highly and warmly of staff; all pupils feel that they have someone they can turn to. Their responses to pre-inspection questionnaires were very positive.
- 4.12 Pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy eating habits through PSHE lessons, cookery sessions and dining clubs. The youngest are given guidance to try healthy choices, but guidance inside the dining room to remind pupils as they get older about healthy eating choices is more limited. Pupils enjoy regular exercise through the school's comprehensive PE and games curriculum, and there are many and varied physical activities on offer, from trampolining and cheerleading to climbing.
- 4.13 Good behaviour is successfully promoted through clear expectations highlighted in the pupils' personal school diary, on classroom notices and the obvious examples set by staff and pupils themselves. Concerns were raised by a small minority of pupils in response to pre-inspection questionnaires about inconsistency in the way that sanctions are applied by staff. These views were not supported by inspection evidence. Serious sanctions are applied according to the schools' published procedures and recorded and monitored appropriately. In interviews, pupils commented that lesser sanctions are perceived as fairly administered. Bullying is seen as unacceptable and all pupils know what to do should it occur. The schools promote strong measures to guard against bullying, particularly cyber-bullying, including workshops and information provided throughout for pupils, staff and parents.

- 4.14 The schools have a suitable, joint plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.15 In response to questionnaires, a minority of pupils raised concerns about opportunities to express their views and receive feedback to these. Inspectors found that there is extensive provision to enable pupils to express their views, such as through the school councils, food and ecology committees, a boarding council and regular meetings with the leadership. Minutes are published from most meetings and representatives are responsible for communicating findings, but as stated in interviews and conversations, pupils feel that in practice these systems do not currently ensure that information is passed on effectively. The school councils have proved effective in acting upon suggestions made by pupils, having advocated and created the new pastoral areas with locker space for younger Pocklington pupils, made changes to uniform at Lyndhurst and installed a climbing wall.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.17 The schools have good arrangements to safeguard the pupils' welfare, including in the EYFS. Designated staff receive appropriately regular child protection and inter-agency training. Child protection training for all other staff is similarly effective and is now effectively recorded, although this has lacked clarity in the past. Induction for new staff is well focused, and good arrangements are in place to ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the procedures. Strong working relationships with local agencies are characterised by prompt contact for advice, which is followed appropriately.
- 4.18 Registration of all pupils is undertaken carefully and any unexpected absence of day pupils is followed up quickly by house staff. The schools maintain an appropriate joint admission register electronically, which is backed up and stored appropriately.
- 4.19 Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety are effective, including in the EYFS. In both schools, pupils who feel unwell receive excellent care from the medical centre, and the dispensation and recording of medicines are now systematic, including in the EYFS. The first-aid policy provides well for sporting activities, amongst other aspects of school life. Appropriate 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 particular SEND.
- 4.20 Measures to prevent risk of fire and other potential hazards are efficient, with regular drills held, equipment checked appropriately by qualified contractors and assessments of risk provided effectively throughout both schools. Health and safety measures are regularly monitored and reviewed.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.22 Outcomes for boarders are good. Boarding successfully encourages boarders to develop independence, tolerance and self-reliance. They enjoy being part of their community and are supportive of each other. Friendship extends across year groups. Boarding supports the needs of all groups. Co-ordination by designated staff to support boarders from overseas shows great care and enables the boarders to become well integrated into both school communities and to participate fully in school life.
- 4.23 Opportunities exist for boarders to express their opinions on the operation of boarding through the boarders' committee, the food committee and regular house meetings, although boarders are not always successfully made aware of the response to their views. House prefects are clear about their duties. Their training for this role is sufficient but limited in scope. Younger boarders aspire to this position. Boarders are well mannered and courteous. Positive behaviour is successfully promoted through house points, merits and praise.
- 4.24 The quality of the boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarding staff know the boarders well and provide excellent individual care and attention. Relationships between staff and boarders are strong. A comprehensive programme of induction, which includes the use of 'buddies', helps new pupils to settle in quickly but the implementation of this programme is not sufficiently consistent across all houses to ensure a similar experience for all boarders.
- 4.25 The medical centre provides excellent daytime care and systems ensure that overnight medical care is effective. Individual care plans are well formulated and shared with appropriate staff. A surgery is held at the local doctors' practice three times a week and the school nurses make appointments for, and accompany boarders to, the dentist, optometrist or other specialist services when necessary. All boarding staff are qualified in first aid and training is given in dealing with asthma, diabetes and adrenaline pen use. All medications kept in the houses are suitably stored and appropriate records are now maintained. The requirement of the 2010 Ofsted report to ensure access to a named practitioner for professional guidance has been met.
- 4.26 The range of activities available to boarders during the week is excellent. At weekends, house staff arrange interesting off-site trips such as llama trekking, theatre visits and trips to sporting venues, although older boarders appreciate the free time available to them.
- 4.27 Boarding accommodation is of a high standard; rooms are comfortably furnished and include an individual lockable cupboard for each boarder. Individual notice boards allow boarders to personalise their space with posters. The daily laundry service is very efficient. Fire drills are carried out regularly and include termly practices at times when boarders are asleep. The CCTV cameras used do not intrude on the boarders' privacy.
- 4.28 Food for boarders is plentiful. All boarders' individual dietary needs are catered for, including allergies; photographs of boarders with particular requirements are displayed in house staff's offices and are accessible to the catering staff. Water fountains are available throughout both schools. A small minority of responses to questionnaires expressed dissatisfaction with the food provided and arrangements

for snacks. Interviews with boarders indicated that concern centres on a lack of variety at the evening meal. Inspection evidence, including weekly menus and experience of evening meals, did not support this view. Snacks, including fresh fruit, and drinks are available in the boarding house. In discussion, boarders reported their enjoyment of Sunday brunch.

- 4.29 Boarders are able to contact family and friends electronically and through mobile telephones and landlines. House staff are available to speak with parents and guardians throughout the day. Regular receptions are held for boarding parents to meet informally with the heads of Lyndhurst and Pocklington, as well as boarding staff, and individual parent consultations are arranged for boarders' parents who are not able to attend scheduled meetings.
- 4.30 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is good. Safeguarding and staff recruitment procedures are implemented effectively. Staff receive child protection training when they start at the school and training is updated regularly; recording of this training is now effective. Policies to ensure the health and safety of boarders and risk assessments are detailed, understood and appropriately monitored. School policies to guard against bullying are comprehensive. In discussion, boarders report that there is very little bullying and are confident that, if it does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. In questionnaire responses a small minority of boarders expressed the view that staff do not treat them fairly. Inspection evidence showed that boarders understand the need for rules and consider sanctions to be applied consistently. They confirm that there are a number of people they can talk to about concerns, including a school counsellor whom they can contact directly.
- 4.31 Clear procedures for signing in and out allow staff to know the whereabouts of boarders at all times. Levels of supervision are high, including at night; housemasters and housemistresses are supported by resident house tutors and day matrons. In addition, non-resident tutors from teaching and support staff strengthen the link between academic and boarding areas, and the whole school community. Resident staff have suitable, independent accommodation, and those over the age of 16 living in boarding accommodation and not employed by the school have appropriate checks and agreements.
- 4.32 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is good. Boarding is an integral part of the ethos and culture of both schools. The schools' boarding principles and practices are clearly stated and made available to parents, staff and boarders. Oversight of boarding is clear. Since the previous inspection, changes in boarding management structures have led to a review of boarding practices. New initiatives, such as the programme of induction, are evolving, but are not yet implemented consistently in all houses, which limits their impact on the experience of all boarders. Housemasters and housemistresses undertake self-evaluation and have regular meetings with the senior management with overall responsibility for boarding. A comprehensive appraisal scheme, which takes place annually, includes all staff involved in the care of boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance shows a clear commitment to the schools' boarding ethos and supports a strong culture of self-evaluation as a starting point for development. This includes effective self-evaluation of governance structures and review of the skills required to ensure that governors provide appropriate and informed challenge and support for the schools. This results in the successful fulfilment of the schools' aims to foster pupils' excellent personal development and achievement. Governors have ensured the successful fulfilment of the recommendations of the previous ISI and Ofsted inspections where finances have permitted. All governors receive induction training and meetings include informative presentations that broaden the governors' awareness of the schools' operations and welfare systems, and developments in education in general. Some have received additional training on external courses, including specifically in safeguarding children. Governors visit both schools, including the boarding houses, and spend days visiting lessons. A system of link governors ensures good links in individual areas and effective involvement in the EYFS and in boarding, and contributes well to oversight of regulatory areas and educational standards.
- 5.3 The governing body carefully monitors the schools' capital funds, supports good levels of staffing and resources, and plans judiciously for future developments in buildings and accommodation. The many development projects pursued since the previous inspection have resulted in well-used accommodation for teaching, boarding and activities. Existing buildings are maintained with care.
- 5.4 Governors provide good oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities. They review welfare, staff recruitment, and health and safety arrangements regularly. Minutes record discussion on the schools' safeguarding arrangements in response to the link governor's report on child protection as part of the annual review by all governors, but lack sufficient detail to show the breadth and depth of the dialogue held.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 Strong, dynamic and purposeful leadership and management ensure that the schools' aims are met with success in most areas. The schools have made significant progress since the previous inspection in developing the pupils' individual talents, confidence and personal responsibility. The development of the curriculum, facilities and teaching has been highly successful in broadening the range and quality of the schools' provision, most notably in opening the pre-prep, including the EYFS. This success results in the pupils' excellent personal development and achievement.
- 5.7 Senior managers in both schools evaluate the success of their educational and pastoral initiatives with accuracy and perception. Subsequent planning and policy making are strong and take note of the views of parents and staff. The implementation and monitoring of initiatives are well considered and fruitful, with whole-staff training, for example on new initiatives in teaching and learning, and are timely and well focused. Revisions to middle management structures, including in boarding, and associated training initiatives at this level, ensure the promotion of high standards of teaching and learning, and excellent pastoral and boarding care. This meets the recommendation of the previous inspection and has resulted in middle leadership and management of good quality. Occasionally, record keeping and monitoring in academic and pastoral areas lack a degree of clarity and some boarding procedures lack consistency. Effective budgeting ensures that all areas receive good human and material resources. Within the curriculum, implementation of forward-looking initiatives is good, for example the creative focus in the pre-prep and increased provision and support for A, G and T pupils throughout both schools. Some elements, such as the consistent development of high order thinking skills, and monitoring of the achievement of A, G and T pupils against sufficiently high expectations are not yet fully realised, although these are a clear element in the schools' planning.
- 5.8 In the EYFS, leadership and management are excellent. Since the setting was first opened comprehensive self-evaluation has taken place, and the strategic development plan reflects the desire for continuing improvement. The well-trained staff take part in regular appraisal of the setting's success. Ongoing professional development ensures that they are knowledgeable about current educational developments. The supervision of staff in terms of monitoring their individual training needs is largely undertaken on an informal basis and the schools recognise that systems for supporting individuals are at an early stage of development.
- 5.9 The schools appoint staff of good quality, both teaching and non-teaching. Schemes of appraisal, including for senior staff, and linked professional development, operate effectively. Induction of new staff is thorough. Arrangements to train staff in their roles to ensure the pupils' welfare, and for health and safety, including in the EYFS, are implemented well overall, including the training of all staff in safeguarding procedures. Checking procedures to ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors to work with children are very secure and effectively monitored by designated figures for safeguarding. When staff begin work before a criminal records check has been issued, suitable checks against the barred list are always

made, together with an assessment of risk, and supervision put in place. The recording of checks is extremely methodical and comprehensive.

- 5.10 A considerable range of support staff, from those in the school theatre, to catering, administration and library staff, play an integral part in the schools' success, know pupils well and give them significant support.
- 5.11 Links with parents are excellent. From initial contact, a database is used to alert parents to open mornings and other events. The EYFS setting works closely with parents and external agencies to ensure effective support for children, including those needing particular help with their learning and development. Parents are kept well informed through the home-school communication book and through assessment software to which they have access. They share their children's 'Learning Journey' portfolio, have regular consultations and exchange information at handover times. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and in conversation with inspectors, parents were strongly positive about the setting and said that they always feel welcome and are kept fully informed about its work and routines. At Lyndhurst, there is much day-to-day direct contact with parents, including an induction day in June for parents and pupils. Communication with parents is seen throughout both schools as a key element of their work. All staff play a part in maintaining very strong relationships with parents. Parents feel that staff actively listen and act on their concerns. The schools have a clear joint complaints procedure, published on the website and made available to parents.
- 5.12 Responses to pre-inspection questionnaires showed extremely high levels of satisfaction with both schools, in particular with the provision of care for pupils and the progress they make. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all required information. In both schools a weekly email highlights forthcoming dates and provides online links to information about recent events. This is supplemented by termly newsletters and additional email communications. The Friends of Pocklington group organises social events such as a Christmas ball and works alongside staff to support the schools.
- 5.13 In response to questionnaires, a very small minority of parents expressed concern about the quality of information they receive about their children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Parents receive regular reports on their children's progress which are detailed and positive, and assessed against specific subject criteria. Interim grade cards and parents' evenings provide additional information. Pocklington parents' evenings are linked with briefings about current issues relevant to individual year groups.

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