



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ST ANDREW'S PREP

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Andrew's Prep

Full Name of School	St Andrew's Prep
DfE Number	845/6016
EYFS Number	EY333852
Registered Charity Number	307071
Address	St Andrew's Prep Meads Eastbourne East Sussex BN20 7RF
Telephone Number	01323 733203
Fax Number	01323 646860
Email Address	admissions@standrewsprep.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Simon Severino
Chair of Governors	General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue
Age Range	1 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	382
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (215 boys; 167 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 31 5-11: 204 3-5 (EYFS): 53 11-13: 94
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 356
Number of Boarders	Total: 26 Full: 16 Weekly: 4 Flexi: 6
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Heather Stokes
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	28 Apr 2015 to 01 May 2015

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in May 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Bridget Windley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Dominic Crehan	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sarah Marsh	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Craig Watson	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Stephen Bailey	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Miss Mary Regan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Andrew's Prep is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils between the ages of one and thirteen. It is located in Meads village, on the western outskirts of Eastbourne. Originally founded in 1877 as a boarding school for boys, it became a charity in 1956. It admitted its first day boys in 1963, with girls being accepted 13 years later. In 2010 it amalgamated with Eastbourne College, with whom it now shares a board of governors. On site, the school has its own specialist facilities, including a multi-purpose gymnasium, an indoor swimming pool, a woodland learning environment and a chapel. Since the previous inspection a new chair of governors has been appointed, a baby room has been established in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and there has been investment in the facilities of the school, including the boarding house, science laboratories and Nursery.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection there were 382 pupils on the roll, of whom 167 were girls and 215 were boys. There were 84 in the EYFS, 62 of whom attending part-time. In Years 1 and 2 there were 57 pupils, 147 were in Years 3 to 6 and 94 were in Years 7 and 8. The school is divided into the Nursery, Pre-Prep, consisting of Reception to Year 2, and Prep, comprising Years 3 to 8. The pupils come predominantly from Eastbourne and the surrounding area, and are from a variety of backgrounds. Most pupils are white British. Pupils may board on a full-time, weekly or flexible basis; at the time of the inspection there were sixteen full-time, four weekly and six flexi-boarders, and some of the boarders were from overseas. All boarders are accommodated in the main building, with separate wings for boys and girls.
- 1.3 As indicated by standardised tests taken by the older pupils, the ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. Forty pupils use English as an additional language (EAL) and half of these receive specialist support from the school. Forty-three pupils have been identified as needing a degree of learning support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and thirty-nine of these receive extra specialist help. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 The school aims: to provide a rich, broad and balanced education that stimulates, excites and inspires its pupils; to provide opportunities for them to achieve excellence both as individuals and in groups; to educate the whole child; and to engender in all pupils the qualities enshrined in the school's values, which are based on Christian principles.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils of all ages and abilities are highly successful in their learning and personal development, and the school meets its aims most effectively. The pupils' excellent standards of achievement in academic work are promoted well by a wide and exciting range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. Pupils are confident and independent; they exhibit particularly well-developed skills in science, English and mathematics. An excellent curriculum prepares them thoroughly for their senior schools. Teaching is characterised by expert subject knowledge and much is highly stimulating. Planning and support for pupils with SEND or EAL are of high quality and more able pupils are offered suitably challenging tasks. Marking of work is regular and constructive. Assessment is thorough and is effective in tracking the pupils' progress and needs. This meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. The overall quality and standards of the EYFS are excellent.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development throughout the school, including the EYFS, is excellent. It is supported by highly effective measures for both pastoral care and welfare, health and safety. The safeguarding of pupils is promoted and the school has comprehensive measures to ensure the suitability of staff. Medical provision is of a high standard. Incidents of unkind behaviour are rare and pupils feel safe and valued. The pupils' spiritual development is strong; they have an excellent sense of morality and an outstanding social awareness. Pupils welcome opportunities to take on roles of responsibility; this meets a recommendation from the previous inspection. They understand fully the potential of cultural and religious diversity in enriching life. Boarding outcomes for pupils are excellent. The recommendations of the previous boarding inspection to fully integrate international pupils and to improve the boarders' access to evening snacks have been met in full.
- 2.3 Excellent governance throughout the school, including in the EYFS, ensures that pupils are well educated, and the governors are committed to the pupils' academic success and personal development. As a body they have ensured that the requirement of the previous boarding inspection regarding their annual review of safeguarding and recruitment has been fully met. Leadership throughout the school is excellent. The strong and collaborative management style supports the pupils' high levels of achievement and personal development. Links with parents are excellent. Those who replied gave extremely positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. In Years 1 to 8 the pupils' written progress reports for parents are thorough, but not all give guidance for individual improvement. The EYFS recommendations from the previous inspection regarding outdoor play and sleeping accommodation for babies have been fully met, but access to outdoor areas is not always available, should children wish to use them.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
 - 1. Ensure that all reports include guidance about how individual pupils can improve.
 - 2. Increase opportunities for Nursery children to participate in free movement between the classroom and the outdoor areas.

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 fulfils with great success its aim to ensure that all pupils are provided with opportunities to achieve excellence. They leave the school equipped with an extremely wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills for their age in all subjects of the curriculum, well supported by their success in the broad variety of extra-curricular experiences that the school provides.
- 3.3 Throughout the school the pupils are highly skilled in literacy. They are notably articulate and apply their speaking and listening skills confidently in lessons and discussions. They listen with care to the thoughts and opinions of their peers, happily sharing ideas. As pupils move through the school they read and write with increasing fluency and in a range of contexts. Mathematical understanding is strong and the pupils are able to apply these skills efficiently in other subjects where needed. Pupils acquire an excellent understanding of scientific concepts, and their investigative skills are suitably well developed.
- 3.4 Achievement in the humanities and in classical and modern foreign languages is high. Pupils use their effective skills in information and communication technology (ICT) to good effect in a range of subjects. Their achievement in sport and music is outstanding. Excellent levels of creativity are evident, from the exciting artwork seen in lessons and on wall displays to the extremely high standard of pottery and woodwork that pupils produce.
- 3.5 Pupils attain excellent standards in a variety of areas. Many achieve scholarships to senior schools in a range of fields, including academic performance, music, drama, art and sport. School teams excel in inter-school and county sports competitions, and individual pupils represent the county in golf, chess, hockey and cricket. Music also offers considerable opportunities for pupils to achieve and the majority play at least one musical instrument. Pupils perform with great skill in choirs and instrumental ensembles in the many concerts and productions staged by the school. A small number of pupils currently play with the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain. Drama is given a high priority, with pupils regularly achieving distinctions in London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art awards.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations, particularly given the wide range of abilities evident. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make a high rate of progress in relation to others of similar ability. Pupils with SEND or EAL make rapid progress and achieve as well as their peers, as evidenced by their reading and assessment scores in standardised tests. More able pupils benefit from the school's setting procedures and from the many varied enrichment workshops and lectures which enable their swift progress and high level of attainment. Pupils are extremely successful in gaining entry to the senior school of their choice. Approximately 75 per cent of the pupils move to Eastbourne College on leaving Year 8, with most of the others progressing to independent day and boarding schools in the south of England.

3.7 Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning; their behaviour in lessons is excellent. Older pupils in particular show significant maturity and independence. Their rapid progress is linked to their enthusiasm to learn. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire almost all pupils reported that they consider they are making good progress. Pupils show a strong awareness of the objectives of each lesson and they settle quickly and efficiently to their studies. They work very effectively with each other, in groups and as a class.

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 very effective in its coverage of the areas of learning, supports the school's aims well and has improved since the previous inspection. It appropriately and positively provides opportunities for understanding and learning about fundamental British values. The curriculum includes opportunities to make excellent use of the local beach and the school's own woodland area to enhance areas of learning. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents showed an overwhelming level of satisfaction with the range of subjects offered.

3.10 In Years 1 to 8, emphasis is placed on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are taught predominantly by their form teachers but benefit from specialist teaching in subjects such as music and physical education (PE). Pupils are set according to ability for mathematics from Year 3 upwards and in English, science, French and Latin from Year 6. A comprehensive scheme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) reflects the school's ethos and includes guidance about healthy lifestyles, equality and the school's four key values. These lessons receive dedicated time within the weekly timetable. Weekly religious education (RE) lessons raise all pupils' awareness of other cultures and faiths. Pupils are encouraged to use ICT as a valuable tool to support aspects of the curriculum, and computing is also taught as a discrete subject. The curriculum ensures that pupils are challenged by investigative and collaborative work, for example in projects on artists and in computing. Provision within the curriculum for PE, music and art greatly benefits the pupils.

3.11 Learning support for pupils with SEND is well organised and provided by an enthusiastic and committed team. Teaching staff are particularly well informed about pupils with SEND or EAL and they are able to plan successfully to meet their individual needs. More able pupils are provided with many extension activities, both in and out of the classroom, which stimulate and challenge them.

3.12 The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of after-school activities for Year 1 upwards and co-curricular activities for Years 5 to 8. These range from pot throwing, chess and jazz dance, to shooting in the school's rifle range. Saturday morning school offers further exciting opportunities for the pupils, with activities such as fencing, squash, archery and dry slope skiing. A range of trips enhances the pupils' understanding of curriculum subjects; for example the residential visit to Normandy provided an excellent stimulus for learning and for cross-curricular links between French and history. Visits to galleries, local places of interest and theatres also add to the cultural richness of the school.

3.13 Links with the local community are strong. The school supports many local good causes, such as a children's hospice, a local food bank and the mayor's charity. Pupils from a nearby primary school visit the school to share mathematics activities.

A local church is used for the annual carol service. The school also welcomes many visitors, such as from the local police, who discuss with younger pupils how to make safer choices. It has extremely active engagement with the scouting movement, with over 100 pupils attending its groups.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching is a contributory factor to the excellent achievements of the pupils and it supports the school's aims well.
- 3.16 Much teaching throughout the school is of an extremely high quality and enables pupils to make excellent progress. This teaching demonstrates quick pace, a range of activities and high expectations, which foster high levels of application in the pupils. The teachers are particularly knowledgeable and their lessons include enthusiasm and humour, which enhance the pupils' learning. The pupils are afforded many opportunities to offer their views; questions are used thoughtfully to extend their ideas. They are enabled to work together very co-operatively, listening attentively to each other. Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is particularly enthusiastic, and employs an exciting variety of methods to stimulate the pupils' interests within lively classrooms.
- 3.17 Lessons are carefully planned. Teaching takes into consideration the pupils' different needs, especially those with SEND or EAL. Appropriate challenge exists for more able pupils, such as in English, where they had to write a comparison between two poems and a piece of prose on the same topic. The pupils' books show that teaching successfully requires high standards of presentation and an appropriate amount of completed work, although an over-reliance on worksheets is apparent in some subjects, limiting the pupils' independence. The marking of the pupils' work is generally thorough and comprehensive; most includes positive comments from the teachers. The most helpful marking includes targets for the future and ensures that the pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. Some subjects also involve the pupils in self-assessment. The school has successfully made marking a focus of attention for improving teaching, promoting good practice with regular work scrutiny and staff discussion. Older pupils stated how much they appreciate the regular and helpful individual feedback given by the staff.
- 3.18 Teaching is enhanced by resources such as the modern science rooms and extensive physical education and games facilities, including the indoor swimming pool. The very well-equipped ICT suite and generously stocked library are located in a prominent position in the school. These excellent specialist facilities greatly improve the pupils' access to the curriculum and are used well.
- 3.19 Considerable progress has been made towards meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection to use information from assessment to track pupils more accurately, and identify areas for improvement in teaching and learning. A coherent approach to tracking is now implemented. The record of data from a range of assessments is kept centrally and is easily accessible. Systematic analysis of this information is communicated to staff for their use, to achieve a beneficial impact on learning. An excellent feature of the school's assessment procedures is the collection of 'industry' marks, used to monitor the pupils' effort in Year 3 and above

on a weekly basis. These are recorded in the 'set book', which is shared with parents, enabling an immediate response to any concern.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. It is actively promoted to reflect the school's Christian values and practices, which support all pupils in their search for meaning and purpose in life. Pupils benefit from prayers in assembly and traditional services held in the school's chapel. During a recent 'prayer spaces' day the older pupils explored their faith and spirituality in a creative and interactive way. Appreciation of non-material aspects of life is encouraged, and pupils, for example, choose to sit quietly in a memorial garden or reflect during breaks. Activities on the beach encourage the pupils to experience awareness and reflection through contact with nature. Pupils are self-assured and confident, work and play harmoniously, and develop positive self-esteem as they move through the school.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils have a highly developed awareness of right and wrong, and demonstrate excellent behaviour, courtesy and good manners. Moral values are encouraged by the example of staff, the highly effective behaviour policy, class discussion and the PSHE curriculum. Pupils collaborate to create class behaviour charters, and the older pupils are excellent role models for those who are younger. Through focused assemblies and their extensive studies in PSHE, pupils acquire a clear understanding of the civil and criminal law of England.
- 4.4 Pupils show excellent social development. They work and play in pairs or groups effectively, and an extensive range of house activities fosters team loyalty and collaboration. The numerous sports fixtures promote teamwork and mutual endeavour, and residential trips help the pupils to develop strong social skills and confidence. Maturity and leadership are successfully nurtured through service in many ways, often through positions of responsibility, including 'special helpers' and the positions of head boy and girl. The recommendation of the previous inspection to develop a greater range of opportunities for responsibility for pupils of all ages has been met. Excellent social development is also nurtured through regular charitable and outreach work. Charities, mostly local and in aid of children, are supported through a variety of school activities, and some are initiated as a result of the pupils' suggestions. Pupils develop mature social, political and economic awareness. They show good knowledge of the public institutions and services in England, derived from the PSHE curriculum, debates, and visits from local dignitaries and officials. An excellent example of their understanding of democracy was observed as the pupils took part in preparations for a mock election, complete with candidates, and a secret ballot. Economic awareness is developed through charitable work, such as running stalls at a fund-raising fair, curriculum activities, a business competition and careers talks.
- 4.5 The pupils' broad cultural education raises considerable awareness of their own and other ways of life through subjects such as RE, PSHE and art. School trips and excursions to local, national and international destinations, such as the annual Year 6 trip to France, encourage pupils to be aware of their own community and the world beyond. Pupils understand different religions, including Judaism, Hinduism and Islam, studied in RE and assemblies. Art activities, such as making diva lamps and creating Rangoli patterns, play a significant part in enabling pupils to respect other

faiths and cultures. Through class debates and discussions, pupils learn to show an excellent respect for others, including those from different backgrounds to their own.

- 4.6 All pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school, in accordance with its aim to teach the importance of values, responsibility and community.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The staff know individual pupils extremely well and provide them with effective support and guidance within an exceptionally friendly and caring community. Pupils say that staff are helpful, supportive and kind, and they feel that there is always a member of staff to whom they can turn if they have a personal difficulty. The provision of a listening lounge provides even further opportunities for pupils to seek support if upset or worried. In all parts of the school relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent.
- 4.9 The school successfully promotes good behaviour through positive reinforcement and encouragement. The systems used are clearly understood by pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils reported that the awarding of rewards and sanctions is unfair. Inspection evidence did not support this view; scrutiny of the school's behavioural records indicated that the procedures for implementing and monitoring rewards and sanctions are rigorous and consistently implemented. A very small minority of pupils and parents expressed concern regarding the school's response to bullying. Inspection evidence showed that the school has suitable measures to guard against bullying. Effective anti-bullying procedures are implemented appropriately should an incident occur. Records are methodically kept and monitored.
- 4.10 Pupils benefit from healthy, nutritious meals at lunchtime and there is excellent provision for them to be active during the day. The school councils provide regular opportunities for pupils to put forward their views, and examples of changes brought about following discussions include a request for the library to be open for longer hours, which has now been arranged.
- 4.11 Pupils with SEND are well supported through an appropriate educational access plan.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 The well-being of all pupils is promoted highly effectively and staff deployment ensures that pupils are appropriately supervised at all times. Excellent child protection and comprehensive staff recruitment arrangements have regard to official guidance and the safeguarding of pupils is given a high priority. All staff, including non-teaching staff, receive the correct level of training, which is regularly updated; they understand their roles and responsibilities. The inter-agency training for those with a designated safeguarding role is carried out by the local safeguarding children's board, with which the school has strong relationships.
- 4.14 A comprehensive health and safety policy is monitored effectively. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire exits are kept

free of obstruction and their signage is clear throughout the school. Fire safety procedures are thorough and regular fire drills are held. Risk assessments are comprehensive, and daily checks ensure that any hazards or faulty equipment are removed or repaired without delay. The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy. Potential risks on site and on visits out of school are carefully assessed.

- 4.15 Procedures in case of accidents and for the administration of first aid are efficient and timely. A high number of staff are trained in first aid. The school makes suitable arrangements for pupils who are unwell during the day. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that the school keeps their children safe. The school's arrangements take full account of pupils with SEND.
- 4.16 Admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.17 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.18 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are polite, well informed and engaging. They are very proud of their boarding house and are encouraged to take care of it through tidying and decorating competitions. The school has a 'buddy' programme that helps young and new boarders settle quickly. The welcome pack is an excellent guide for all pupils who are considering taking even the most tentative steps into boarding. Boarders have excellent relationships with house staff, including Gap-Year students, medical staff and matrons.
- 4.19 The boarders use suggestion boxes and the boarding house council to express their views; they confirm that the staff listen. All boarders are aware of the school's approach to safeguarding and they know who to contact and in what circumstances. The boarders are offered the opportunity of contacting staff at the school if they have specific concerns, and a newly appointed independent listener is available when required. Overall, boarders are extremely happy with life in the house and believe that they have every opportunity to flourish socially as well as academically. Boarders assist in helping to run the house and if selected can assume the role of house captain.
- 4.20 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. All staff offer extremely high levels of care and support to the boarders. They ensure that the house is well maintained and the environment is clean, warm, light and homely. The estates department has worked extremely hard in recent years in upgrading many aspects of the house, including a new sick bay, additional staff accommodation and the general improvement of rooms, bathrooms and facilities. Daily maintenance is a firm priority and completed to an exceptionally high standard. Boarders report that they feel safe within their boarding house, and the staff operate strict routines with regard to visitors' entry. Boarders' clothes are washed daily and all are returned promptly; boarders express appreciation of the help they receive with this. All boarders have access to lockable storage.
- 4.21 Boarders have accompanied access to extensive sports fields, a swimming pool, a sports hall and tennis courts. The school has several sports teams and boarders play a full part in representing the school in all age groups. An extensive range of evening and weekend recreational activities is very popular, in particular trips to the cinema and adventure parks, and go-karting. The range is evident in the recent photographs of boarders involved in these extra-curricular activities which decorate

the house. The school's programme of healthy activities ensures that the boarders have every opportunity to engage in meaningful and beneficial exercise. The boarders have limited but appropriate access to mobile telephones and they can use video messaging and email to contact their parents. They have access to the wider world through television news, the provision of daily newspapers and appropriate access to the internet. House staff have excellent communication links with parents, and an appropriate complaints procedure is in place if parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of any specific issue.

- 4.22 Comprehensive policies cover general healthcare, first aid, and storage and administration of both prescribed and non-prescription medication. These operate effectively. The medical centre provides isolation rooms for boarders who are unwell and unable to attend school during the day, and the boarding house has separate sick bay facilities for boarders who may be ill during the night. All medicines are administered with the agreement of the medical staff, and meticulous records of this are kept by the house staff with respect to boarders. A local doctors' practice provides additional medical services. The boarding house staff have appropriate first-aid qualifications and the house is supplied with suitably stocked first-aid kits.
- 4.23 All boarders' meals are of a good standard. Catering staff liaise with the school to provide menus that cover a four-week cycle and ensure that there is always sufficient food that is of nutritional value. The school promotes the concept of healthy eating through a 'traffic light' scheme. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed concerns about the quality of food and the availability of snacks and drinking water outside mealtimes. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views; food is of good quality and suitable snacks and access to drinking water are provided.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. All boarding policies are robust and are reviewed at least annually. Each review is dated and individuals responsible for these are noted. Boarding staff have undertaken a variety of boarding, first-aid and medical training courses. All boarding staff are suitably trained in safeguarding. The conduct of the pupils in the boarding house is exemplary, in response to effective arrangements to promote good behaviour. The school pursues its anti-bullying policy rigorously; boarders report that there is little bullying in the school and that staff deal quickly and effectively with any that arises. The boarders' safety is of paramount importance and house risk assessments are robust and reviewed regularly. Any requests to remedy maintenance issues that may compromise pupil safety are dealt with as a priority. The level of boarding supervision ensures that there are always more than the minimum number of staff on duty in the house. Fire drills are undertaken for all boarding staff and pupils at least once a term and drills are staggered to include early and late evening, and early morning. Detailed records are kept of all evacuations and of tests that are undertaken on the fire alarm system, appliances and emergency lighting systems. Surveillance cameras in operation at the school do not compromise the privacy of any of the boarders.
- 4.25 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. In line with the aims of the school, boarding priorities are firmly established and carefully monitored. The boarders are served by a dedicated team, led with enthusiasm and experience; boarding staff are committed to self-evaluation and improvement. All parents of boarders responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed the views that their children enjoy boarding, that boarding

accommodation is comfortable and that the boarding experience helps their children's progress and development.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance has improved since the previous inspection. The board of governors provides a most effective oversight of the school and ensures that its aims are strongly maintained. Through various committees, governors exercise prudent financial control and ensure that the school benefits from high quality accommodation, resources and staff. Substantial investment has enabled work to begin on a new sports hall and dance studio. Governors help to compile and annually scrutinise the school's strategic plan, as well as review the annual development plans.
- 5.3 Regular and minuted meetings are held for the full board and the various sub-committees. A committee dedicated to oversight of the preparatory school, which comprises five governors, is well informed about school life through teacher presentations, lunch with prefects and lesson observations. Members regularly receive presentations from heads of department about individual curricular areas, whilst those with responsibility for boarding and the EYFS frequently visit these sections of the school and report their findings back to the full board. Such activities ensure that the governors are conversant with the school's operations, needs and opportunities. They are wholly supportive and committed to the school's success and offer effective challenge to senior managers. Regular, high quality training ensures that governors are kept abreast of current educational developments.
- 5.4 Governors are entirely successful in discharging their statutory responsibilities. The regulatory requirement regarding the review of the child protection policy, identified at the previous boarding inspection as requiring action, has been fully met. A review of safeguarding is presented annually and the related policy and procedures are approved after thorough questioning and debate. The governors receive regular training in child protection. Oversight of health and safety arrangements is strong.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management at all levels provide clear educational direction, as reflected in the excellent quality of the pupils' education and their personal development, in accordance with the school's aims. The school has improved on the standards reported at the previous inspection and leadership and management are now a strength. Effective policies and procedures, including those for the safeguarding of pupils, reflect thorough attention to detail and they are regularly reviewed and implemented effectively. Communication is excellent across the school, which ensures that staff, pupils and parents alike are aware of their responsibilities.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are effective in self-evaluation, and in setting priorities and ensuring that they are achieved. School development planning is thorough, takes into account the views of staff and governors, and guides the school well. The

school development plan lays out clear targets for improvement, with designated responsibilities and appropriate timescales.

- 5.8 Self-evaluation guides curriculum development and is a prominent feature of subject leadership. The views of staff and pupils are surveyed, the pupils' written work is scrutinised and resources are audited. Teaching and learning are routinely observed, feedback is given and peer observation has allowed teachers to share good practice, resulting in improved teaching standards. Since the previous inspection a highly effective appraisal programme has been introduced for teachers, which includes lesson observation, the identification of training needs and interim reviews. A comprehensive programme of professional development has also been established.
- 5.9 The school is successful in recruiting, developing and motivating high quality teaching and non-teaching staff, and ensures that they are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils and in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Induction procedures for new staff and for newly qualified teachers are thorough. Since the previous inspection, the range and quality of continuous professional development for staff have been greatly enhanced.
- 5.10 The quality of care and welfare has been evaluated and improved through appropriate targets set in the school's annual development plan, the establishment of a school safeguarding committee, chaired by a governor, and an annual safeguarding audit. Weekly meetings of staff with pastoral and safeguarding responsibilities enable good monitoring. Thorough and effective arrangements exist for checking the suitability of all those who come into contact with pupils, and comprehensive checks, which are recorded methodically, promote the safety of the pupils.
- 5.11 The quality of links with parents is excellent. The school deals promptly with issues that parents raise; it handles their concerns with care and in accordance with its suitable published procedures.
- 5.12 Informative weekly bulletins with an editorial from the leadership provide parents with important notices, key dates and a list of various pupil achievements. The annual school magazine, special assemblies, prize giving and speech day provide opportunities for parents to celebrate and share the pupils' achievements. Termly calendars, text and email messages, and the parent portal on the school's website give parents immediate access to a significant range of information, including all required documents. Termly curriculum information sheets inform parents of topics to be covered across a range of subjects. Numerous departmental handbooks and booklets appropriate to different age groups within the school provide valuable guidance and advice for parents.
- 5.13 Grade cards for pupils in Years 3 to 8, twice yearly written reports for pupils of all ages and frequent parents' consultation evenings ensure that parents are kept very well informed about their children's work and progress. Report writing is thoughtful and considered, and indicates close knowledge of the pupils. Most reports give helpful guidance for improvement, but some do not make clear the steps needed to further learning.
- 5.14 Numerous opportunities are available for parents to be actively involved in the life and work of the school. There is a supportive parents' group, which is very successful in arranging a variety of social and fund-raising events. All of these

events are extremely popular and well supported across the school, including social events for pupils and staff.

- 5.15 Informal 'drop-in' sessions provide opportunities for parents to view pupils' work and to tour the school. Parents are invited to share their particular expertise and they give talks to pupils about a range of topics relating to aspects of the school curriculum, including the festival of Diwali and dental care. They attend and often help at many major school events.
- 5.16 All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. Parents are extremely complimentary about the school, and comment very positively on the wide range of extra-curricular options available for their children and the pastoral care that is provided.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The early years provision is outstanding in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The weekly timetable provides excellent coverage of the requisite areas of learning and reflects a highly successful balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning. As a result, most children reach the age-related expected levels of development; some exceed them. Younger children and babies listen attentively and start to develop concentration and early speech. Older children acquire strong physical skills and make rapid progress in literacy and mathematics. An excellent range of games and resources for children in Reception is available throughout the year. Children in the Nursery currently have supervised access to the outdoor learning environment but have only limited independent choice on when they may use this facility. Frequent opportunities to work with specialist teachers in music, dance, PE and swimming greatly enhance the physical development of all the children.
- 6.2 All children receive a high level of support so that they develop the necessary skills to learn most effectively through play, exploration and active learning. Exemplary teaching strategies and timely support and intervention ensure that all children make excellent progress relative to their starting points and are ready to move on to the next stage of learning.
- 6.3 Children are particularly well motivated by experienced practitioners who set extremely high expectations. Through their expert knowledge and understanding they ensure that the imaginatively planned activities always engage and inspire the children. Such activities, which are tailored to the children's individual needs and interests, provide rich and exciting experiences. Thorough assessment procedures ensure that each child's progress is carefully recorded.
- 6.4 Outstanding links have been developed with parents who, in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, indicated overwhelming support for the school. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's achievements and progress. They are invited to open sessions to observe what their children are learning. Detailed and informative end-of-year reports clearly indicate each child's level of progress and development.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.5 Provision for children's well-being is outstanding. Teachers and support staff ensure that all children, including those in need of additional learning support and the more able, enjoy exceptionally positive relationships with adults and form strong emotional attachments. The 'key person' system is highly effective. Teachers know children extremely well and liaise closely with parents to ensure that all children's individual requirements are expertly managed. High standards of behaviour are expected and achieved.
- 6.6 The children are very well looked after and a high priority is placed on enhancing self-esteem and independence. The care taken with hygiene for the younger

children is exemplary and the staff are meticulous with sleeping routines for the babies. Two year olds show confidence and an awareness of risk as they walk up and down stairs holding on or with minimal support. The older children show excellent levels of self-control and independence as they pass plates and pour their own drinks at snack time, or change into their PE kits and waterproof suits.

- 6.7 The children enjoy healthy snacks and nutritious lunches. They are all encouraged to be independent, and many, including the youngest, can feed themselves using appropriate cutlery.
- 6.8 Arrangements for transition are excellent and numerous opportunities are provided for children to spend time with their next teachers.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 6.9 Leadership and management are outstanding. The governors' involvement in the EYFS is highly effective and the board fulfils all its responsibilities in overseeing the setting.
- 6.10 Very strong leadership and management ensure that the setting is welcoming, safe and stimulating. Staff have received full child protection training and understand health and safety procedures. Teachers trained in paediatric first aid ensure that children's medical needs, as well as any playground accidents, are dealt with effectively. Policies are reviewed and updated, and staff meet weekly to discuss pastoral matters, timetabled events and children's progress. The assessment of children's learning and development is excellent and documented meticulously.
- 6.11 Self-evaluation of the provision is regular and highly effective, and the leadership constantly prioritises targets for development and looks at ways for the setting to improve.
- 6.12 Excellent systems are in place for the supervision of staff and for staff appraisal. There are many opportunities for staff to promote their continuous professional development. This has a positive effect on the academic and personal development of the children.
- 6.13 A positive and exemplary partnership has been established with parents, the local authority and other external agencies to ensure that children receive the support they need.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.14 The overall quality and standards of the EYFS are outstanding. All children, including the youngest, the more able and those with SEND, make excellent progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points and are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. The youngest children are increasingly aware of their daily routines and they enjoy being at school. Children in the Nursery confidently use speech to share experiences about the Nursery and home with familiar adults. They all enjoy experimenting with colour, shapes and materials in creative activities and they are beginning to share toys with their friends. The three year olds can give meaning to the marks they make when they draw, paint or write. Their physical skills are very well developed; they are making very good progress in tennis lessons and they are exceptionally confident when balancing on equipment in the gym. Children in Reception are highly articulate and they listen very attentively to their teachers and each other. They can read words at their own level and write imaginative stories using planning sheets and word banks. In mathematics they can add number bonds to ten and beyond, are developing an excellent vocabulary and can recognise a selection of two- and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of the Reception year most children reach expected levels of achievement, while the more able exceed expectation in many areas of their development.
- 6.15 All children in the EYFS, including those with SEND, receive excellent care. They enjoy school and consider that they are safe and well looked after.
- 6.16 Since the previous inspection the setting has benefited from the development of an outdoor classroom for Reception and a covered area for use all year round. A designated baby room and a hard surface play area have been established for the Nursery children, in addition to a garden area. Outdoor resources have been improved and many more opportunities for learning out of doors have been developed.
- 6.17 Very strong leadership and management of the setting ensure that planning is of excellent quality, that EYFS practices are constantly evaluated and that there is a firm commitment to securing continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.18 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.