



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST ANSELM'S SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	St Anselm's School
DfE Number	830/6004
Registered Charity Number	527179
Address	St Anselm's School Stanedge Road Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1DP
Telephone Number	01629 812734
Fax Number	01629 814742
Email Address	headmaster@anselms.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Peter Phillips
Chair of Governors	Mr Paul Potts
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	191
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (98 boys; 93 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 23 11-13: 61 5-11: 107
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 141
Number of Boarders	Total: 50 Full: 50 Weekly: 0
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Sarah Aitken
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	20 Nov 2012 to 23 Nov 2012

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 October 2009.

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

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

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

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 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 Joy Richardson

Mr Paul Easterbrook

Mrs Jane Lancaster-Adlam

Mrs Sue Bennett

Mrs Louise Savage

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Anselm's was founded in 1888 as a boys' boarding preparatory school and it became fully co-educational following the opening of the pre-preparatory department (Pre-Prep) in 1976. The Nursery was added in 1992. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. The current headmaster joined the school in September 2012.
- 1.2 The school has 191 pupils on roll, with almost equal numbers of boys and girls, from the ages of 3 to 13. This number includes 23 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), of whom 16 attend part-time in the Nursery, and 7 are full-time in Reception. Pupils move from the Pre-Prep to the preparatory department (Prep) in Year 3. There are 50 full boarders, the majority of whom are in Year 8, and a further 20 pupils board on a flexible basis.
- 1.3 The school is in a rural setting on the edge of Bakewell, within the Peak District National Park. It has extensive grounds and sports fields. Its facilities include a large sports hall, a swimming pool, a theatre and a music recording studio. The Nursery and the Pre-Prep are housed in adjacent buildings close to the main school and have their own play areas.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide a happy, all-round education that is reflected in excellent academic standards. It seeks to identify and to nurture each individual's talents and to encourage pupils to become good citizens, so enriching their lives and equipping them extremely well for senior school and for life.
- 1.5 The school admits pupils in any year if places are available. Pupils entering the Prep take informal tests during a 'taster day' at the school before admission, and the school checks that it is able to meet the individual pupil's needs. Pupils demonstrate a fairly wide range of abilities, although most are of at least average ability. Overall, the ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.6 The school has identified 49 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom one has a statement of special educational needs. The learning support department provides additional teaching for 39 pupils. The school makes provision if needed for pupils who speak English as an additional language, although currently none require this.
- 1.7 Pupils come mainly from the surrounding area, though some boarders are from further afield. A number of pupils have parents who are serving with the armed forces. Pupils from other European countries sometimes join the school for a term or a year.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is largely successful in achieving its aim of providing a happy, all-round education, pursuing high academic standards, nurturing individual talents and preparing pupils for later life. Pupils make an extremely good start in the Nursery and the Pre-Prep. They reach good standards by the time they leave the school, securing places and often scholarships at the senior schools of their choice. Pupils are articulate and express their ideas with confidence. They read and write fluently and are well grounded in mathematics. They achieve well in creative areas, including art, music and drama, gaining confidence in performance. Pupils perform well in sport; all pupils participate and represent the school in teams, and individuals are able to excel. Teaching is good, though there is wide variation in quality. The teaching is sometimes inspirational, sparking deep interest and extending pupils' thinking in new directions. On occasions, pupils cover the necessary work but all at the same pace without sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able, to enquire further.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are thoughtfully aware of the needs of others within the school community and beyond. They develop a strong moral sense, discussing issues of justice in the wider world and in their own experience. The pupils have excellent social skills, relating with ease and courtesy to those around them, both adults and their peers. They are accepting of differences and interested in other faiths and cultures. Pupils are known and cared for extremely well as individuals. The quality of boarding is good; the boarding houses offer a happy, harmonious atmosphere and boarders delight in the activities available to them. The school has thorough procedures to safeguard pupils and to ensure their welfare, health and safety. Pupils who have SEND are supported extremely well, both academically and personally.
- 2.3 The school is well governed, led and managed. There has been major change in the school's senior leadership this term and the headmaster is providing a strong sense of educational direction. Roles are being reviewed to provide greater clarity about individual responsibilities. The leadership has identified that systems are not yet sufficiently streamlined to facilitate an overview of information about pupils' progress and their personal development as they move across the school. The quality of teaching and learning is not monitored sufficiently consistently to ensure that the existing high standard of practice is more widely shared. The school has close links with parents, who are highly satisfied with what it offers to their children.
- 2.4 Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained and continued to build on its strengths. It has significantly improved provision in the EYFS, which is now excellent in all aspects. Recommendations concerning school development planning and the monitoring of teaching and learning are not yet fully implemented.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.5 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.6 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Pursue teaching of a consistently high quality by monitoring teaching and learning to identify and share existing good practice across all subjects and ages.
 2. Streamline systems to ensure a clear overview by the leadership of information about pupils' progress and their personal development.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The school is effective in providing a happy, all-round education, pursuing excellent academic standards and preparing pupils extremely well for senior school, in accordance with its aims. Pupils achieve good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities. Pupils are articulate and confident in speaking, and they listen attentively. Skills in reading and writing are well established from the start in the Prep-Prep, though the school recognises that a culture of reading is not strongly sustained throughout the older year groups. Pupils learn to take notes and to find out information for themselves. They show a good capacity for independent thought, for example when carrying out scientific investigations. Pupils are well grounded in basic skills in mathematics, though they are not sufficiently required to think for themselves in solving problems. Pupils participate regularly in physical activity and develop excellent skills as a result. They have many opportunities to develop their creative skills in art and music. They become highly skilled in drama through lessons and regular productions, in which many excel.
- 3.3 Pupils are all involved in sports teams, achieving a good level of success in a wide range of sports. Several pupils have been selected to play for county teams. Around two-thirds of pupils learn a musical instrument and most of these take graded examinations, with several reaching a high level. Individual pupils are also successful in speech and drama examinations.
- 3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. Inspection evidence, as seen in lesson observation, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews with them, confirms this judgement. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make at least appropriate and often good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability, as shown by standardised measures of progress. The pupils follow a broad curriculum and, on leaving the school, they secure places at the senior schools of their choice, with almost half being awarded academic, all-rounder or other scholarships recognising excellence in an area such as sport, music, drama or information and communication technology (ICT).
- 3.5 Throughout the school, pupils generally make good progress in lessons and over time. Expectations are high in Years 7 and 8, accelerating the progress of pupils towards the goals of Common Entrance and scholarship examinations. Pupils with SEND make good progress from their various starting points as a result of carefully constructed individual educational plans, well-planned support in lessons and additional one-to-one teaching. Pupils who are able, gifted or talented sometimes have opportunities to excel.
- 3.6 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are diligent and determined, and take their work seriously. Pupils show great pride in their work. They relish opportunities to exercise independence and initiative, for example when completing geography projects. Pupils are often excited by learning, and talk with enthusiasm about their work.

- 3.7 In the EYFS, children make excellent progress relative to their abilities and needs. They are enthusiastic learners who greatly enjoy their activities, and work extremely well both independently and co-operatively. The children's numeracy and literacy skills are highly developed. Nursery children count objects to ten reliably and can identify initial sounds in words. Reception children identify a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes, they can all write their name from memory and they recognise a good range of simple vocabulary. In ICT, the children use the mouse skilfully to click and drag and they create original pictures using a paint programme. Children achieve extremely well in meeting the goals for early learning in all areas.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The school's curricular provision successfully fulfils the aim of providing an all-round education that nurtures individual talents and prepares pupils for later life. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils of all abilities and needs, and all the requisite areas of learning are covered. The curriculum is extended by the inclusion of French from the Nursery onwards, Latin for pupils from Year 5, and the availability of ancient Greek in Years 7 and 8. Pupils have timetabled drama lessons from Year 3. Pupils' personal development is underpinned by the recently updated and comprehensive scheme of work in personal, social and health education (PSHE). Art, music, drama and sport feature strongly in the curriculum.
- 3.10 The curriculum provides a good range of experiences in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social, and creative areas. Technological skills are less well developed because design and technology is taught in the Pre-Prep but not currently included in the Prep curriculum. Pupils have good access to ICT up to Year 6, through discrete lessons in the school's two computer suites and in the course of extra-curricular activities. It is not taught in Years 7 and 8, however, and its use to support work in other subjects is variable.
- 3.11 The school makes arrangements to enable pupils from abroad with a reasonable level of English to attend for a term or a year. The school provides additional support for those for whom English is an additional language when this is needed. Curricular provision for pupils with SEND is excellent so that they are able to participate fully with their peers. In many lessons, pupils with SEND are clearly identified in planning, which ensures that tasks are suited to individual needs. Provision for the most able and those identified as gifted and talented is less consistent. Subjects are taught in sets from Year 4 in mathematics, from Year 5 in languages, and in additional subjects in the older year groups. However, planning does not consistently consider the scope in all lessons for additional challenge for the more able.
- 3.12 A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum and broadens pupils' interests and skills. Pupils participate in sport on four afternoons a week, with 'extras' taking place on Thursday afternoons, and they speak highly of their experiences in activities such as pottery, cooking, sailing and 'exploring'. However, the pattern of organisation means that pupils are able to pursue only one additional activity during the week and popular options can be heavily oversubscribed. There is some additional provision at break and lunchtimes, for example for music and drama rehearsals. Pupils enjoy a good range of day and residential visits, such as the recent sports tour for all in Year 8. Trips abroad, including choir tours and visits to a French language centre, further broaden the pupils' horizons and knowledge of

the wider world. Pupils also benefit from visits by well-known children's authors and other speakers.

- 3.13 The school maintains close links with the local community and pupils take the initiative in supporting a number of local, national and international charities. For example, they have supported a charity for seriously ill children through a 'readathon', and have raised money for an African village through a charity that has its base in Bakewell.
- 3.14 Provision for children in the EYFS is excellent. The educational programme is comprehensive and thoroughly planned so that children develop extremely well in all the required areas of learning and their needs are met. Children learn rapidly through stimulating play and valuable first-hand experiences. They participate with delight and show genuine pleasure in the topics and activities they are offered within a lively and well-balanced curriculum. Foundations are laid thoroughly in literacy and numeracy.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 The teaching effectively supports the school's aim of providing an enjoyable all-round education that includes the pursuit of academic excellence. The quality of teaching varies widely but it is almost always sound, frequently good and sometimes excellent. Teaching effectively enables pupils to achieve well and make good progress.
- 3.17 Teachers generally have high expectations for their pupils, encouraging them, across the school, to make the most of their intellectual, physical and creative talents. Teachers make good use of a wide range of teaching methods and a variety of activities in lessons which engage and involve pupils. Previous learning is often consolidated by brisk questioning at the start of lessons. Subject specialists and class teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and clear about the progress expected from pupils.
- 3.18 Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. Pupils across the school respect and like their teachers, who they say are supportive and approachable. The small class sizes help to ensure that teachers know their pupils individually and pupils of all abilities are confident about asking for help. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect, nurturing pupils' enjoyment of the subjects being studied, and motivating pupils to do their best. Teachers make good use of resources to make learning interesting. They provide support for those experiencing difficulty and, where necessary, this is supplemented by effective individual tuition from the learning support department. The needs of pupils with SEND are well known and taken into account in planning and teaching. For any pupils with a statement of special educational needs, the provision ensures that the requirements of statements are followed.
- 3.19 The most effective teaching is characterised by a brisk pace and a knowledgeable enthusiasm that captivates pupils' interest and sets their sights high. In these lessons, open-ended questions promote a sense of enquiry, and pupils are encouraged to think critically, to reason and to develop independent study skills.
- 3.20 In some lessons, teaching lacks pace and does not explore what pupils know already in order to build on this. In these lessons, questions and independent

thought by able pupils are not sufficiently encouraged. Pupils all complete the same work at the same pace, and teaching methods lack variety.

- 3.21 The pupils' work is marked regularly. In Years 1 and 2, marking is consistent and pupils receive advice as to how they might improve their work. In Years 3 to 8, the format of marking varies between subjects. Whilst pupils are often given written comments of praise, they are less often guided in how to improve. In some lessons, pupils are helped to evaluate their own learning and progress. Some subjects have developed good systems for setting targets for pupils, though practice varies.
- 3.22 Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress through the use of examinations, standardised tests, and effort and attainment grades. In the Pre-Prep, pupils' work is also related to National Curriculum levels. Use is beginning to be made of the wealth of information collected to monitor pupils' progress, to plan work and to identify difficulties, though the approach to this is not consistent throughout the school. Assessment information is used effectively to advise pupils and their parents in choosing senior schools.
- 3.23 In the EYFS, staff motivate the children extremely well and set appropriate challenges. Teaching is highly skilled, effectively developing learning in all areas. The staff incorporate the children's own interests into planning. They create opportunities for children to explore at their own pace and in their own way, supporting this through imaginative resources. Children's progress is carefully monitored and staff are extremely secure in their knowledge of each child's learning and development stage, their needs and their next steps. Informative learning profiles document the children's progress, giving a true sense of the individual child. Staff are alert to any sign that a child may not be making expected progress and excellent support is given for those with SEND. All the staff, including teaching assistants and specialist subject teachers, have a full understanding of the EYFS and are committed to giving each child a positive and supportive learning experience.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim of encouraging pupils to become good citizens, so enriching their lives and equipping them for later life. By the time they leave the school, the standard of pupils' personal development is extremely high.
- 4.3 Pupils develop a strong spiritual awareness. Confident and self-aware from an early age, they appreciate non-material aspects of life and are emotionally mature for their age. This is fostered, for example, by the family-style lunch, where houses and year groups sit and talk together, and are served by staff or prefects. Themes, such as justice, are explored in assemblies, and pupils relate the ideas explored to their own life in school as well as to issues in the wider world. Boarders, and day families if they wish, take part in a Sunday chapel service in a local church.
- 4.4 Pupils have a highly developed sense of right and wrong. They appreciate the school's values and principles of behaviour, which older pupils summed up as kindness, honesty, politeness and respect for others. Pupils support the school's code of behaviour and seek to abide by the rules, which they consider fair and sensible. They know that bullying is unacceptable and they each personally sign the school's anti-bullying charter. Pupils empathise strongly with the needs of others and learn to see issues from different perspectives. They regularly raise funds for charities they have chosen, and show interest in their link with a school in Kenya.
- 4.5 The pupils develop extremely well socially. Their behaviour is courteous, and they are engaging and lively in conversation. They conduct themselves very well around the school. Pupils are notably kind to each other and comfortable in each other's company. They accept responsibility, for example as prefects and monitors, and appreciate that the purpose of such roles is to help others and to contribute to the life of the school. They are extremely co-operative, working and playing together harmoniously. The pupils regard the school as a big family where people respect and care for one another. This starts from the EYFS and is reinforced in the Pre-Prep, where pupils learn, for example, not to judge other people by outward appearances. Pupils encourage one another, and take pleasure in each other's achievements.
- 4.6 Pupils develop wide cultural appreciation. They are well versed in art and music from different traditions. They gain a thoughtful understanding of Christianity and other world religions through their lessons, including religious studies and PSHE. This begins in the Pre-Prep, where pupils study artefacts relating to different faiths, for example when they learned about Hinduism and the customs of Diwali. In assemblies, pupils are encouraged to discuss worldwide and local news, often covering challenging topics such as conflict in the Middle East. Pupils' knowledge and experience of cultures other than their own are enhanced by wall displays around the school and by visits. They gain an international perspective, as in learning about the United Nations in Year 8.
- 4.7 In the EYFS, children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. Children care for and respect each other. They take turns, share willingly and are quick to offer help. The children display exemplary behaviour. They are confident,

co-operative and articulate in talking about their experiences. They are keen to give of their best and they develop extremely positive attitudes towards learning that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school is extremely successful in ensuring, in accordance with its aims, that pupils are happy in their education and that their individual talents are identified and nurtured. Relationships between staff and pupils are relaxed, respectful, friendly and purposeful. Teachers serve as excellent role models.
- 4.10 The staff know pupils extremely well as individuals. Any concerns are shared as necessary at a weekly staff meeting so that all staff are kept informed. Attendance at these meetings includes teaching and also boarding house staff to ensure a pastoral link with boarding. Registration periods with the form tutor are welcoming and provide the opportunity for discussion of any academic or pastoral concerns. Pupils have many opportunities to talk with adults. Their views are listened to and taken into account.
- 4.11 The school is extremely effective in securing high standards of behaviour. Its expectations are consistently explained and pupils are supported in meeting them. Pupils are given clear guidance on the prevention of bullying. They say that bullying does not happen but, should it occur, they are confident that it would be dealt with quickly and they would have a number of trusted adults to whom they could turn.
- 4.12 The questionnaire completed by pupils before the inspection showed a high degree of satisfaction with almost all aspects of school life. A small minority of pupils questioned the fairness of sanctions. The inspection found that the school's rules, and the use of rewards and sanctions, are well understood by pupils. A new system of discipline slips for work and behaviour is in the process of being introduced, which it is intended will allow for closer monitoring over time by the school's leadership. Pupils are keen to gain house points, which lead to the reward of cake for the house with the highest total. They are eager to participate in 'show ups', where their good work is proudly shown to the headmaster.
- 4.13 Healthy eating is encouraged and food is of a high standard, with plenty of choice, including vegetarian and salad options. Pupils have excellent opportunities for taking regular exercise within the school day and in extra-curricular activities. The school has a suitable plan for continuing to improve educational access for pupils who have SEND.
- 4.14 In the EYFS, the uniqueness of each child is recognised and care for the individual is extremely strong. The 'key person' system is deeply embedded, fostering excellent relationships between children, staff and parents. The staff have a strong understanding of children's development. They are highly effective in guiding children's behaviour and in supporting any who have particular individual needs.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.16 The well-being of pupils is central to the school's concern and its procedures for ensuring this contribute to the happiness of the pupils, as expressed in the school's aims.
- 4.17 The school's child protection policy has been recently updated, following changes in personnel, so that it is now compliant with current requirements. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and are implemented effectively. The school makes provision for regular training for all staff in child protection. It is careful in carrying out the required checks to ensure the suitability of staff. Robust arrangements are in place to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire drills are carried out regularly, during the day and the evening, and fire equipment is routinely and regularly checked. Risks assessments are made for each area of the school site, and maintenance arrangements ensure a quick response if any potential hazards are identified.
- 4.18 The school makes excellent arrangements for the medical care of pupils. Many staff are trained in first aid and the administration of medicines is overseen well, with careful records kept of any accidents and injuries so that patterns can be identified. The care for boarding or day pupils who are ill at school is excellent and communication with parents about medical matters is extremely good. The school takes careful account of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities, and makes every attempt to ensure that they can thrive and succeed. The school's attendance and admission registers are suitably maintained and stored.
- 4.19 In the EYFS, there is a comprehensive programme of staff training in child protection and health and safety, which is carefully monitored by the leadership. The staff are extremely attentive to children's well-being, health and safety and alert to any risks. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and of the statutory requirements concerning children's welfare. They act as excellent role models, guiding children in learning to look after themselves, and teaching them how to be safe and healthy.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders' personal development is extremely well promoted through their boarding experiences. Boarders are confident, self-assured and well mannered. They articulate their thoughts and opinions exceptionally well, and show a strong interest in the wider world. Pupils feel that boarding significantly develops their independence and helps to prepare them for their future education, as articulated in the school's aims.
- 4.22 There is a strong sense of community within the boarding houses and relationships between staff and boarders are highly positive. Boarders interact with one another, and with day pupils, extremely well. They appreciate the diverse needs of their peers, and are highly supportive of younger boarders and those who are new to boarding, readily acting as guides and mentors. Boarders of all ages relish roles of responsibility, volunteering for house tasks and explaining that they do so because it helps the community. Senior boarders demonstrate self-reliance and integrity in their prefect and monitor roles. All boarders have excellent opportunities to

contribute their views and opinions in house meetings, resulting recently in a change to the timing of breakfast, for example.

- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The atmosphere in houses is harmonious and relaxed. Boarders know who they can approach for personal support and guidance, including nominated adults outside school and national helplines. Thoughtful induction processes help new boarders to settle quickly and happily into boarding life. Boarders feel safe and well supported by the staff who care for them.
- 4.24 The boarding accommodation, whilst variable in quality, is generally welcoming, homely and well organised. Currently, there are differences in the standard of bedrooms and bathrooms across the houses. Dormitory furnishings are of good quality and provide adequate storage for boarders' possessions and security for valuables. Boarders have suitable facilities for study and for relaxing. They are able to personalise their own areas and describe their common rooms as warm and cosy. Provision for boarders' laundry needs is exceptionally good and personal items or stationery needs are effectively replenished as required.
- 4.25 Boarders have excellent opportunities to contact their families and full boarders write letters home each Sunday. Parents are well informed about boarding news through the website and regular newsletters. Parents are also warmly invited to attend events such as a Sunday evening church service followed by dinner. In their questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents questioned the ease of making contact with house staff; inspectors found no evidence to substantiate this concern.
- 4.26 Boarders enjoy a vibrant programme of organised evening and weekend activities, ranging from parlour games to Peak District walks. These activities enable boarders to enjoy exercise and expand their learning beyond the classroom environment. Careful consideration of the balance of the boarding day ensures sufficient opportunity for boarders to relax and follow their own interests. Risk assessments are undertaken with great care, including for off-site excursions, and any concerns are quickly addressed. Fire evacuation drills are held regularly and boarders have a clear understanding of emergency procedures.
- 4.27 Arrangements to ensure boarders' health and well-being are excellent. An experienced and highly qualified nurse, supported by matrons and a local doctor, oversees the medical provision. This results in high standards of care for boarders who are unwell, including during the night. Boarders also have good access to specialists, such as a dentist or optometrist. The medical arrangements are meticulous and include guidance for the use of home remedies and self-medication. Boarders' health records are comprehensive, ensuring that the school has appropriate permission for emergency treatment and is fully aware of specific medical and dietary needs. The catering facility provides nutritional and varied menus that are enjoyed by boarders. Before bedtime, older boarders help to prepare hot chocolate and toast, which is a popular conclusion to the boarding day.
- 4.28 The arrangements for safeguarding and welfare are good. Suitable policies and procedures have been recently updated to ensure boarders' safety. Boarders are cared for by suitably qualified house staff, all of whom have job descriptions to support their respective roles. Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and new staff receive adequate guidance. Designated people have undertaken advanced training and have good links with the local

safeguarding children board. Recruitment and vetting checks for new staff are rigorous. Boarders are well supervised and registration systems ensure that staff know their whereabouts at all times. Boarders know who to turn to if they need help, including during the night. Staff are vigilant in their management of behaviour and the prevention of bullying. Behavioural management systems are understood well by boarders. They stress that incidences of bullying are extremely rare and disagreements are resolved in an amicable manner. There are clear procedures for making a complaint.

- 4.29 The leadership and management of boarding are good. The school is effective in ensuring that its boarding principles are reflected in practice. Boarding staff are appropriately experienced and trained. Strong links between the academic and pastoral aspects of school life are supported by the attendance of house staff at staff meetings where issues concerning pupils are discussed. Boarding has a significant focus within the school's life, as exemplified by the diligent support that staff and the school's leadership give to nurturing the boarders' well-being. However, there are some inconsistencies across the houses relating to the sharing of daily information. Channels of communication tend to be informal and through conversation, with the result that, on occasions, not all staff are fully informed.
- 4.30 Processes of self-evaluation are developing effectively, following recent management changes, to secure greater consistency of provision. Appropriate records are maintained and monitored. Strategic planning by the leadership and governors demonstrates purposeful reflection on future boarding priorities.
- 4.31 The views of parents are sought and considered by the school. In their questionnaire responses, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the boarding provision, commenting that their children are happy and well looked after. Inspectors concur with these views. Pupils say that they greatly enjoy their boarding experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body is highly supportive of the school in pursuing its aims. It is firmly committed to discharging its responsibilities for financial planning and for investment in accommodation and resources. Designated governors lead the oversight of key areas, including child protection, boarding and the EYFS, reporting back to the board as a whole. The governing body is aware of its responsibilities and ensures that the school is compliant with legal requirements, including the annual review of the child protection policy and procedures. The governing body draws on a wide range of expertise amongst its members. Governors visit the school and are known to the staff, and provide a valuable resource for the leadership in planning the school's educational direction. The EYFS is effectively supported by the governor with specific responsibility for this part of the school, who regularly visits the setting and meets with staff.
- 5.3 The governing body is undergoing a period of change under new chairmanship, and is currently engaged in reviewing the effectiveness of its constitution and proceedings, and the appropriateness of its membership. It has embarked, with the leadership, on strategic planning for the future. This is designed to feed into a process of school development planning, which was identified as an area for development at the time of the previous inspection.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.5 The efforts of leadership and management are clearly directed towards the achievement of the school's aims, ensuring that the school provides a happy, all-round education. The leadership exercises effective responsibility for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their welfare.
- 5.6 There has been significant recent change in the school's leadership. The new leadership is providing a strong sense of educational direction, shaping the ethos of the school and inspiring the confidence of pupils, staff and parents. New management structures and responsibilities are not yet fully formulated, but priorities for developing the school's facilities and the quality of education are being clearly delineated.
- 5.7 Teamwork is strong, and staff work closely together with pupils' interests at heart. Frequent, informal communication is largely effective but is not always sufficiently underpinned by clear and simple systems of record keeping. Although individual pupils are extremely well known, the school's leadership lacks the means of maintaining an overview of pupils' behaviour and progress over time.
- 5.8 The provision for pupils with SEND is extremely well led and managed, reflecting the school's aim to nurture individual talents. The Pre-Prep is highly effective in laying strong foundations for successful learning. The leadership is strongly focused on

ensuring that every pupil can thrive and succeed at school, and this is reflected in excellent relationships and the high quality of pupils' personal development.

- 5.9 Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, as recommended at the time of the previous inspection, has been extended but is not yet fully effective in securing improvement. Teachers work together well and are keen to share ideas. Subject leaders are active in developing their subjects and informal links support continuity between the Pre-Prep and the Prep. School-wide expectations, for example about adapting lessons for the needs of different pupils, are reflected in some teachers' planning, though not consistently evaluated in practice. Opportunities are limited for staff to observe others teach in order to identify and share more widely, across subjects and age groups, the excellent practice that exists within the school.
- 5.10 The school contributes to the training of new teachers. It encourages the professional development of staff and ensures that they are appropriately trained for their roles in welfare, safeguarding, health and safety. The new leadership is effectively evaluating the school's strengths and areas for development. It is developing a sense of shared priorities in seeking to improve further the experience for pupils. The school has many ways, both formal and informal, of collecting information about pupils' progress and personal development. The leadership has identified that current systems do not give a clear management overview.
- 5.11 The school's links with parents and carers are excellent. Parents are extremely satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that a large majority of parents are highly positive about all aspects of school life. Almost all agree that the school is well led and managed, that their children are happy and feel safe, that they are pleased with the progress their children are making and that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. Parents are extremely positive about the range of the curriculum and the variety of opportunities provided outside the classroom. A few parents and pupils question the appropriateness of homework arrangements. The school is in the process of changing the organisation of homework, and inspectors agree that the content and timing are currently not working sufficiently well.
- 5.12 There are many parent committees that support fund-raising and social activities. Parents are warmly welcomed to the school and to its events, for example accompanying sports tours and supporting drama productions. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required and relevant information about the school and its policies, which are available on the website. The prospectus, parents' handbook and regular newsletters keep parents well informed about the life of the school. Pupils contribute to lively and interesting blogs about their school activities. Full progress reports, which are detailed and comprehensive, are sent to parents three times during the year and interim grades are issued several times each term. Any day-to-day concerns raised by parents are handled with care and the complaints procedure is made available in case it is needed.
- 5.13 The EYFS is extremely well led and managed. As a result, it has improved significantly since the previous inspection and all the recommendations made at that time have been implemented well. Highly effective use has been made of support from the local authority in achieving this. The commitment to continuous improvement is strong. The setting's leadership has identified clear priorities for the future and this vision is shared with all members of the dedicated staff team. A comprehensive programme of staff training in child protection and health and safety is carefully monitored. Training needs are identified through regular supervision and

appraisal of staff, a rigorous overview of the curriculum and careful monitoring of the achievements of the children. The links between home and school are extremely strong. Before admission, parents are encouraged to share information from home in order to help their children to settle in. This open dialogue continues throughout the children's time in the setting. Parents express strong appreciation of daily opportunities to be kept informed and of the excellent weekly online Nursery diary, which details activities and achievements.

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