



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION THE KING'S SCHOOL

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The King's School

Full Name of School	The King's School		
DfE Number	916/6003		
Registered Charity Number	108641		
Address	The King's School Gloucester Gloucestershire GL1 2BG England		
Telephone Number	01452 337337		
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Email Address	office@thekingsschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr Alistair Macnaughton		
Chair of Governors	Mr Clive Major		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	569		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed		
Numbers by Ages	3-5 (EYFS):	40	5-11: 113
	11-18:	416	
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 569		
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Caroline McKane		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	22 Sep 2015 to 25 Sep 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 February 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.

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

Inspectors

Dr Joe Tierney	Reporting Inspector
Dr Michael Yates	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Paul Vanni	Team Inspector (Second Master, HMC school)
Mrs Kathy Crewe-Read	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Jerry Gear	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Matthew Judd	Team Inspector (Second Master, HMC school)
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The King's School is a co-educational independent school for pupils aged 3 to 18. Founded in 1541 as the cathedral school, it is situated in the centre of Gloucester. The governing body has representatives from the church as well as lay members and is supported by three committees. Whilst the education offered is based on Christian principles, the school welcomes boys and girls of all religious faiths and cultures.
- 1.2 The school aims to promote the qualities of tolerance, understanding, compassion and commitment and to encourage young people to think of others, both within and beyond the community. It aims to encourage pupils to think for themselves, to appreciate the importance of self-discipline, and also aims to treat pupils as individuals and to work collaboratively. The school is committed to a broad and balanced curriculum and seeks to develop pupils fully as individuals, to prepare them for responsible adult life, and to encourage qualities of initiative and leadership, whilst celebrating their success.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 569 pupils in the school. There were 153 pupils aged from 3 to 11 in the junior school; of these, 40 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The senior school had 416 pupils aged 11 to 18, including 84 in the sixth form. Thirty-three pupils in the junior school have been identified as having special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) of whom 25 receive additional help. Of the 91 pupils in senior school identified as having SEND, 39 receive help. Seventeen pupils in the senior school have English as an additional language (EAL) of whom six receive specialist help. There are three pupils in the junior school with EAL, all receiving help and one pupil with a statement of special needs in the junior school.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with around two-thirds of pupils having ability that is at least above average. Most pupils come from a radius of around 15 miles from the school and are largely from professional families. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Junior School

<i>School</i>	<i>NC name</i>
Kindergarten	Nursery (age 3 to 4)
Reception	Reception
Lower Transition	Year 1
Upper Transition	Year 2
Lower Prep	Year 3
Upper Prep	Year 4
Lower Shell	Year 5
Upper Shell	Year 6

Senior School

<i>School</i>	<i>NC name</i>
First Form	Year 7
Second Form	Year 8
Third Form	Year 9
Fourth Form	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth Form	Year 12
Upper Sixth Form	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in meeting its principal aims, particularly those relating to the personal development of pupils and the provision of a broad education. The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is excellent. In the EYFS, children make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Attainment and progress are good in the junior school. Results in the GCSE and A level show that pupils make good progress; attainment is above the national average for maintained schools. Teaching is good, with many areas of good practice. Marking is not done consistently well and a small number of lessons do not always meet the needs of all pupils. The breadth of experiences offered to pupils through the formally taught curriculum and the extra-curricular programme makes a highly significant contribution to pupils' education. Pupils see this as a real asset and one of the reasons they enjoy coming to school.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Well-rounded individuals are produced in line with the school's aims to promote the qualities of: tolerance, understanding, compassion and commitment and to encourage young people to think of others, both within and beyond the community. Pastoral care is excellent; key policies on safeguarding are up-to-date. The arrangements for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are good.
- 2.3 The school is governed well, with appropriate attention paid to safeguarding, welfare health and safety. Governors have ensured that the school has made good progress since the previous inspection and that it continues to improve. They have undertaken some strategic thinking on the schools' future but have yet to formalise this in a written plan. Key policies and practices are in place but some other policies have not been updated recently or regularly reviewed. Leadership and management at all levels are strong. The junior school is under new leadership and improvements are evident in a number of areas; the EYFS is well led and managed. Leadership in the senior school is well established and very effective, with particular strengths in planning for the future, the monitoring of work, and the professional development of staff. The school is actively seeking ways to improve and to empower staff. Both parents and pupils are happy with the school. A small minority of pupils raised concerns the use of rewards and sanctions. Inspection evidence suggests that they are both applied fairly. Communication with parents is very good and they receive detailed and informative reports on their child's progress. In most respects, the school has been successful in responding to the recommendations from the previous inspection. Junior school personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and the use of ICT across the school are now secure. In the EYFS, children have better access to outside areas. While there are clear expectations over marking, not all teachers are following 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.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all school policies are kept up-to-date and that a plan for its strategic development is written.
 2. Ensure consistent implementation of recent marking developments and the school's requirements, and provide work that meets the needs of all pupils.
 3. Increase the provision for the personal, social, health and economic education programme (PSHE) in Year 10.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 Pupils' achievements and learning are excellent.
- 3.2 The school fulfils its aim of focusing on pupils' needs and aspirations. Pupils develop a wide range of skills through the many opportunities the school provides.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children thoroughly enjoy their learning and their achievement is high. They enter Nursery with a wide range of attainment which, overall, is a little above expected levels. They make rapid progress and, by the end of Reception, the vast majority attain all the Early Learning Goals, with some working beyond them. No children need additional help with learning or language needs, but staff are sufficiently experienced to give appropriate support if needed.
- 3.4 From early in Nursery, children start to join in discussions, speak clearly and become confident to make suggestions. They treat books with respect and some children 'read' them for sustained periods. From the start of Reception, children are keen to discuss; they recognise and use phonics to build simple words and enjoy sharing books with staff and each other. Mark-making in Nursery develops into clear letters and words in Reception as their writing skills improve. Children in Nursery are eager to count and in a game some knew the number which was one less than 5, while even the youngest start to name colours and state their preferences. Several can recognise shapes such as triangles, diamonds and hexagons. Early in their year in Reception, children can count beyond 10 and understand an irregular arrangement of up to 10 objects. They are adept at using ICT as a learning aid in mathematics, although opportunities are more limited in Nursery. All children are physically agile and their fine motor skills are developed well. They become able to work independently and are creative from a young age.
- 3.5 Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. They read well and their language skills are developing. They write clearly and concisely and are capable of producing good notes from their research. They listen well in lessons and are confident in speaking the target language in French. They listen attentively to instructions and can explain clearly what was being asked of them. Standards of numeracy are good and pupils are developing their skills well, so they have good numerical standards by Year 6. Pupils' skills in physical education (PE) are good, as they showed when swimming and doing gymnastics. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing well, and with considerable enthusiasm. They show good skills in using ICT when given the opportunity to do so. Members of the junior school do well in their extra-curricular activities, such as in a competition organised by a local book shop, in a science challenge, and with other successes in art, design, athletics, cross-country, tennis, and squash.
- 3.6 In the senior school, pupils' achievements and learning are excellent. They are extremely articulate, confident and are mature listeners. They read aloud with fluency and the best are able to debate complex arguments in foreign languages. They have good standards in literacy and make good use of library periods. Pupils use and apply mathematical skills with confidence in a variety of subjects, including design technology and the sciences. In mathematics lessons they are confident in their ability to manipulate algebraic and numerical expressions. Pupils are confident in using ICT. They appreciate the school's growing use of a virtual learning environment and feel it helps them with their homework.

- 3.7 Pupils perform with distinction in music. The many choirs and music groups give them opportunities to sing and play well. Individual musical achievements are strong, with representatives in national brass band competitions and the National Children's Orchestra. Members of the senior school develop personal and social skills through the many drama productions. Performance is of high quality and one production was nominated at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Chess is strong throughout the school. Participation in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) has increased with record numbers achieving awards last year.
- 3.8 Senior school pupils achieve high standards of physical skill across a wide range of sports, athletic disciplines, and co-curricular activities. Two-thirds of pupils represent the school in sport and there are individual successes at national level in rugby, hockey and snowboarding. Approximately one in eight of the senior pupils has represented county or district teams across eight sports, ranging from cross country to netball. Academic successes include a university scholarship, a gold medal in the Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad and silver medals in the UK Maths Challenge and British Physics Olympiad. Many leavers gained their first choice place on higher education courses.
- 3.9 In the junior school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the available evidence, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. All pupils, including those with SEN, EAL and the able, make good progress, as was seen in their lessons, from examining their written work and from discussions with them. The school's own analyses of its test data show a similar picture.
- 3.10 The following analysis of senior school results uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. The results at GCSE are above the national average for maintained schools but below those in maintained selective schools. Boys' results are higher than those of girls, being similar to the national average for boys in maintained selective schools. Results in IGCSE English are higher than worldwide norms, as are results in mathematics which are also higher than UK norms. The IGCSE physics results in 2014 were similar to worldwide norms, those for chemistry and biology being below. At A level, results have been above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to that for maintained selective schools.
- 3.11 At both GCSE and in the sixth form, these levels of attainment show that pupils make progress that is good in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils who have EAL or SEND, and the able, gifted and talented, make similarly good progress. This reflects the excellent and highly individualised help provided by the learning support department, as well as targeted support given in lessons.
- 3.12 In all parts of the school, attitudes to work are very good; pupils work well, either independently or co-operatively. Pupils in the junior school speak positively about the new approaches to independent learning and work well together, such as when Year 5 used ICT to research their work in history. Senior school pupils are creative and capable of demonstrating depth in their thinking and independent thought. A co-ordinated programme provides excellent opportunities for them to develop independent learning and study skills.

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

- 3.13 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.14 The curriculum offered supports the aims of the school and at all levels, it does not undermine the broad characteristics that reflect Britishness. Pupils and parents value the range of provision in curricular and extra-curricular areas.
- 3.15 The seven areas of learning for children in the EYFS provide a rich and varied range of exciting activities. There is a well-judged balance between adult-led and child-initiated tasks. The recommendation from the previous inspection that children in Reception should have freer access to the outdoors has been fulfilled within the constraints of the listed building. They have regular time outside, including sessions in the secret garden where they complete tasks that sharpen their imaginations and develop their observational skills. There is sustained emphasis on ensuring that individuals are challenged appropriately and that each child's needs are met. Physical education, music and dance are taught by specialists who have a thorough understanding of the needs of very young children.
- 3.16 From Year 1 to 6 the curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, and covers the requisite areas of learning. A wide range of subjects is offered, including French and, reflecting the recommendation from the previous inspection report, a more systematic approach to personal, social health and economic education (PSHE) from Year 1. Critical thinking is introduced in Years 3, 4 5 and 6. In order to support the development of literacy, pupils benefit from 20 minutes of reading each day, reading lists that are placed on the website, and a number of school initiatives, such as the Cheltenham Literature Festival and a link with the local book shop.
- 3.17 The extra-curricular provision for junior pupils is strong with pupils taking part in at least one activity every week and the majority doing considerably more. There is a wide range of activities to choose from, including some that the children have established and run themselves. Over 20 trips have taken place since January, including a residential visit, team building exercises, and numerous trips to places of local interest. Pupils in the junior school benefit from the good relationship with the local community. They understand the needs of others by singing at an old people's home, by the strong links with a college for disabled children, and by collecting harvest donations to a local foodbank. They participate in variety of activities with the local book store and raise money for a school in India.
- 3.18 In the senior school, the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. A well-balanced range of subjects covering arts, languages, mathematics, sciences and technology is available at all stages and taught in small classes. The curriculum has been recently reviewed to ensure the successful implementation of the new A-level courses and the introduction of the reformed GCSE specifications. Pupils follow a PSHE programme that provides suitable opportunities for them to develop an understanding and knowledge of modern British society, such as democracy, the rule of law and individual freedom. This programme is more limited in Year 10 when it is mainly careers-based.
- 3.19 Pupils in Years 7 and 8 take a broad range of subjects, with an increased choice offered in Year 9. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection in 2010, the provision for ICT has been reviewed and a plan drawn up to embed different skills across different departments in Years 7 to 9, so giving pupils greater experience. Close collaboration between different departments allows pupils to

develop independent learning and study skills. For example, there is a cross-curricular project in Years 7 and 8, and a careers project in Year 9 science lessons. Pupils may select 10 GCSE subjects from a wide choice. International GCSEs have been introduced in the sciences, ICT and English to provide pupils with more challenge. Pupils in Year 10 also have a study afternoon on thinking skills.

- 3.20 An extensive range of subjects is offered in the sixth form with each Year 12 pupil having a bespoke individual education plan. Options include a BTEC course in sport in a joint venture with a local college. Pupils may also choose between the Extended Project Qualification, community service and a financial qualification. The Community Sports Leaders Award is also available.
- 3.21 The senior school curriculum is enriched by an extensive and varied programme of extra-curricular activities and trips. There are numerous choirs and musical groups, drama productions and house music and drama competitions. The debating club and house debating competitions help pupils gain in self-confidence. Pupils have many opportunities for games and sport, and those in Years 7 to 9 benefit from a programme of outdoor education. Pupils benefit from the wide variety of links with communities, both at home and abroad. Links with local state schools are established, as well as those that develop broader international awareness, such as those with schools in India and Japan. Pupils also consider the needs of others by raising funds for charities.
- 3.22 At all levels of the school, the curriculum for pupils with SEND and EAL is highly individualised and effective, both within and outside the normal timetable. This means they make good progress. Where appropriate, provision takes full account of the requirements of education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs. Pupils who are identified as being able, or who have particular gifts or talents, are identified and participate in an academic enrichment programme. A gifted and talented programme for elite athletes is run in collaboration with a local university.

3. (c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.23 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.24 Teaching meets the aims of the school, particularly in encouraging pupils to think for themselves. Teaching is non-partisan in character and promotes tolerance and respect for others.
- 3.25 In the EYFS, staff are extremely experienced and work as a close-knit team, creating a happy, calm atmosphere which helps children to feel confident to meet new challenges. The high-quality teaching initiates exciting activities, including some outside, that intrigue children and inspire them to explore and to think. Assessment is thorough and of high quality. It is used in detailed planning for individuals. This ensures that each child's learning is reinforced and extended appropriately. Staff have excellent understanding of how children learn and provide opportunities for them to pursue their own interests independently, as well as planning times when adults lead activities. Resources are good and used extremely well.
- 3.26 From Year 1, teaching in the junior school is effective in promoting good progress. Almost all lessons are well planned and teachers take time to explain to pupils aspects of work they do not understand. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of a variety of resources, such as photographs, audio and

video clips. Lessons are well paced and time management is good, leading to work that is varied in content, providing a stimulating, challenging environment for the pupils. In a small number of lessons there is an over-reliance on worksheets, which limits pupils' responses, and in isolated cases, work is not effectively matched to individuals' abilities, for example in spelling tasks. In most lessons, the pupils' needs are met, including those specified in statements of special educational needs.

- 3.27 The use of independent learning in the junior school has increased since the previous inspection and almost all children are suitably challenged. Assessment is used well to support learning. The marking of pupils' work is helpful and generally constructive, an improvement since the 2010 inspection. Pupils' progress over time is monitored through a variety of standardised tests, the results of which are used to contribute significantly to the teachers' planning.
- 3.28 In the senior school, almost all of the teaching enables pupils to make good progress in relation to their abilities. Teachers know the pupils well and are familiar with their individual needs. Pupils enjoy lessons, are eager to succeed and become confident learners. Sixth-form pupils demonstrate considerable maturity and readily accept responsibility for their own learning.
- 3.29 Most senior school lessons are well structured and capture the interest of pupils through a variety of teaching strategies and resources. In such cases, teaching reflects excellent subject knowledge and clear enthusiasm, which stimulates the pupils with lessons that are fast-paced and challenging, demanding thinking skills that are well in advance of expectations. For example, in a Spanish lesson, a court case was role-played entirely in the target language. Learning resources of good quality are used well, including the increased use of ICT, as recommended at the previous inspection.
- 3.30 In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the overall quality of marking has improved. Recent initiatives to mark diagnostically, whilst not yet used consistently across departments, have enabled pupils to make better progress. Excellent examples of dialogue between teachers and pupils exist, for instance in some English books, where pupils respond in writing to targets set by their teachers. However, in other books there is little evidence of teacher intervention. Half-termly assessments are used effectively by both pastoral and academic staff to monitor pupils' progress. This enables teachers to know pupils well and focus future learning.
- 3.31 Across the school, almost all teaching meets the needs of the pupils, for example, always being reflected in lesson planning; in isolated cases, plans are not translated into practice. Some pupils with SEND and EAL receive additional support from the learning support department, where teaching is tailored to their individual needs. These pupils gain confidence, and clear communication between teachers means they receive the good support throughout the school. A termly programme of activities is available to support able pupils, but provision for this group is not yet invariably part of lessons.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school takes active steps to promote both the personal development of the pupils and their knowledge and understanding of what it means to be British. In doing so it meets its aim of promoting tolerance and understanding.
- 4.3 From the start of Nursery, children learn to play together happily, to share and to take turns. They are asked to give their opinions and make suggestions. They enjoy having small responsibilities such as holding a door or leading a line. Everyone takes responsibility for the tidiness of their rooms, and children often choose the activity they wish to pursue. All these add to their self-esteem. Visits between year groups ensure that children move happily and confidently to a new class at the start of an academic year and are well prepared for transition to Year 1. Children in Reception attend assemblies with the junior school, providing them with opportunities to be part of a larger community. They reflect on kindness to others and their needs, and celebrate their own achievements and those of older pupils.
- 4.4 Across the school, the pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They are confident and self-aware, and demonstrate much maturity and self-possession. Pupils at all stages develop high levels of self-esteem, are comfortable with themselves, and feel valued as individuals. Pupils were quick to express how they would show kindness to each other in a junior school assembly, and senior pupils spoke of an appreciation of 'thinking space' during time in the cathedral. The appreciation of the choral singing tradition within the school showed a sensitivity borne out of an aesthetic and spiritual awareness. Pupils' attendance in the awe-inspiring cathedral adds a significant spiritual dimension to their school lives.
- 4.5 Moral development is strong. They develop a sense of right and wrong from an early age. In doing so, they understand the need for rules, whether within the school or in wider society in the form of laws. They are unfailingly courteous and polite, a lead they take from the staff. There is an air of civility around the school, with pupils who smile and are happy. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school achieved high standards of behaviour; this was confirmed by the inspection. Pupils show a strong sense of morality by their approach in lessons, their extra-curricular activities, and in their charity fundraising. Their respect for each other is apparent at all times. Many translate their moral code into action by taking part in community service in the local area.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development and their sense of responsibility are excellent. A house system enables pupils of all ages to mix together and many take roles of responsibility, for example in running house dramas or charity fundraising. In the junior school, good manners are encouraged and rewarded by special invitations to lunch with the school's leadership. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the vast majority of the pupils across the school said that they enjoy the opportunity to take responsibility within the school. Pupils readily embrace the chance to act as form representatives or on the newly invigorated school council. They develop skills of leadership in activities such as sports teams, the societies, or creating a charity football tournament. Pupils acquire social and political awareness through clubs such as the debating society, and develop a knowledge of the main public services and institutions of England.

- 4.7 Pupils have a good cultural awareness, enhanced by a programme of extensive trips. This is combined with a conspicuous understanding of cultures and faiths other than their own, and a welcoming attitude to those joining the school from overseas. As a result, pupils of all ages respect difference and are tolerant of those whose backgrounds differ from their own. Display material produced by pupils tackled racism in literature and in a Year 7 lesson the pupils were asked to apply the principles of Sikhism to the cathedral.
- 4.8 The pupils' personal development is enhanced by their work within the PSHE programme. It has recently started to support pupils' understanding of British values and to underline their strong sense of right and wrong under English law. A recent mock general election prompted notable pupil participation in political debate and understanding. Pupils accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality and to society more widely. Links with schools in India and Japan are well established. By the time pupils leave the school they have an excellent standard of personal development and feel well prepared for the next stage of their life.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, staff give high priority to fulfilling their role as 'key persons' and providing a warm, caring environment where trust, and loving relationships ensure that children are happy, confident and feel safe. Simple rules, with high expectations of good behaviour, are understood well by all children. They learn about healthy eating and enjoy nutritious snacks. They have plentiful opportunities for exercise outside in addition to their dance and PE sessions.
- 4.11 Relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils themselves, are of high quality. Pastoral meetings with tutors and heads of year in the senior school are held regularly to ensure that any issues of concern are communicated effectively and dealt with swiftly. The recent introduction of a school counsellor and co-tutors has enhanced the individual nature of the care provided for individual pupils. The house system is very effective in integrating pupils from different year groups and promoting the awareness of being part of a community, and of wider social engagement.
- 4.12 The school has high regard for the needs of its pupils and strong relationships are formed making pupils feel secure. Pupils in the junior school feel part of a large family. Residential trips for individual year groups, such as the Year 8 trip to Normandy, enable strong bonds to be formed between pupils.
- 4.13 Pupils behave very well; the standards of courtesy and the school uniform are very high. The school's behaviour policy is clear and reflects the most recent requirements. Exceptional behaviour is recognised through a system of commendations and headmaster's assemblies. The pupil questionnaires indicated that a very small minority of pupils in the senior school felt that sanctions and rewards are applied inconsistently. Inspectors' evidence, including an examination of records and discussions, suggests that they are both applied fairly. Measures have been put in place to raise the profile of the council and to ensure greater participation by pupils.

- 4.14 The school has a policy to counter bullying that reflects official guidance. Records show that there are few instances of bullying. Pupils feel safe and that bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively by the school. The school works particularly hard to promote the safe use of social media and is effective in raising awareness of cyberbullying. Safety procedures regarding social media are emphasised to pupils and parents.
- 4.15 The school promotes a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have an excellent choice of food and individual dietary requirements are well catered for. Pupils think highly of the food. Healthy eating is also endorsed through the school curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to take exercise and participation is very high. The talented sports programme offers nutritional and conditioning advice for the school's top athletes.
- 4.16 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND; appropriate support is given to those pupils who need it.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.18 In the EYFS, staff have all received appropriate training and place high emphasis on ensuring that health and safety and safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously. Staffing ratios meet requirements and some staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications. The arrangements prevent radicalisation and extremism. They are aware of the additional needs of vulnerable children. School attendance is monitored closely. Older children manage their own hygiene effectively and younger ones start to understand the need to wash their hands before eating. Risk assessments are carried out regularly both in school and for trips.
- 4.19 The school has appropriate measures in place to promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of pupils. Senior members of staff take responsibility for safeguarding and all appropriate staff are trained. There are secure relationships with external agencies and a clear system for reporting concerns which are responded to with alacrity. Appropriate procedures for the appointment of staff are in place; all checks are conducted and recorded in line with requirements. At the beginning of the inspection, some policies did not fully reflect the most recent requirements, and in addition, although all recruitment checks had been carried out as required, the recording of them contained minor errors. As soon as the school was made aware of these matters, they were put right swiftly so that all requirements are now met. Amended documents are available to staff and parents.
- 4.20 The school has comprehensive policies covering health and safety, including fire and other hazards. There are regular fire drills and staff receive appropriate fire awareness training. Exhaustive risk assessments are carried out for all relevant activities, both on and off site, and have prudent regard for pupils' safety, with action taken promptly when potential hazards are found. Suitable arrangements also promote pupils' wellbeing and safety in the city centre. These include clear security and improving CCTV provision arrangements for all buildings. There is appropriate supervision of pupils.
- 4.21 The health and safety committee meets regularly, with appropriate reporting and follow-up mechanisms. Governors are kept well informed through regular reports and the effective work of a link governor. The recently upgraded welfare centre is thoroughly supportive of the needs of staff and is staffed by a qualified nursing team and counsellor. The medical rooms are equipped appropriately so that the provision

for pupils who are ill or sick is effective. Sensitivity is shown when supporting pupils with specific medical needs.

- 4.22 Admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and stored. Good arrangements to register pupils and to follow up any absences are in place. Parents believe that their child is well looked after and safe.

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 governors demonstrate good oversight of all parts of the school. Prudent management of finances has ensured that a good level of staffing, accommodation and resources has been made available. This has allowed governors to maintain and improve the human and physical resources and to build a high quality sports hall since the previous inspection. Although there is a strategic vision for the school, this is not set out in a formal plan.
- 5.3 Governors have an insight into the working of the school. Governors are beginning to be informed about the EYFS, enhanced by the recent appointment of a link governor. The monitoring of statutory requirements is effective; several governors have responsibility for particular aspects of school life such as the oversight of safeguarding and health and safety. In contrast, the implementation of educational policies and practice is less well covered.
- 5.4 Communication and relationships between the governors and the heads are very good. The heads feel very well supported but suitably challenged. Governors have a good range of expertise and experience pertinent to their role. This includes knowledge of finance, buildings, education, marketing and the media; a committee structure makes good use of this expertise. An induction policy is in place and governors have had appropriate training to support them in their role.
- 5.5 The governors are effective in discharging their statutory responsibilities. All requirements are met, including those for staff appointments. The full body carries out the required annual review of the safeguarding policy and its implementation.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.7 In the EYFS, excellent leadership and management ensure that regulatory compliance is assured and that policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding, are implemented correctly. Planning and assessment are monitored rigorously and discussed in staff meetings. The training needs of staff are determined through the appraisal system. There is clear vision for improving the setting further. Management ensures that all children make at least good progress in all areas of learning and that there is active promotion of equality and diversity, and that fundamental British values are taught. Parents are delighted with the school and appreciate being encouraged to share their children's achievements. Reports are extremely detailed so parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress towards attaining the Early Learning Goals, but there are not always targets for children to work towards.
- 5.8 The work and dedication of senior staff ensure that the school's aims are met, particularly those relating to the personal development of pupils and the provision of a broad education, both within the classroom and beyond. There is clear educational direction. The style of leadership in both the junior and senior schools

means that staff are empowered and supported. Senior leaders are highly visible in the school and are actively involved in school improvement. An open system of management in both schools has led to an atmosphere where staff are willing to share lesson observations and to reflect on their work.

- 5.9 The senior management team has a suitable range of skills and experience and its members work effectively together, with the staff seeing them as approachable and fair-minded. They have a clear vision of the school's aims and have made good progress since the previous inspection. Recent appointments to both the senior and junior management teams have strengthened management, particularly through the professional development of staff and their appraisal.
- 5.10 An effective system of bi-annual audits of subject departments keeps management informed about current provision and the needs of the future. Planning for the future is well-established and of very good quality. Extensive and detailed plans for the development of all aspects of the school, including academic and pastoral matters, are in place. Subject departments are required to produce plans, or targets, for the future. Some of these are very good, but they vary in quality, as do the handbooks in the senior school. The management of subjects in the senior school is effective; the role of the subject co-ordinators in the junior school is relatively new and one which is developing.
- 5.11 The school employs staff who are enthusiastic and committed to delivering the aims of the school. A thorough programme of induction is in place for all new staff, which includes appropriate training in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. New members of staff feel welcome and supported. A recently introduced appraisal system has enhanced the school's ability to identify where additional professional development is required. Staff feel positive about this system and the support given to them.
- 5.12 The school fosters strong relationships with parents, carers and guardians; almost all parents are happy with the work of the school. The results of the parental questionnaire indicate a strong approval of the school's work. Parents are particularly pleased with the range of the curriculum, the progress of their child, and the care provided. Some parents would like the school to make more effective use of electronic means of communication and to respond more promptly to questions. To keep parents informed, the school has introduced a new messaging service to inform them of important information, such as changes to the school calendar. The school publishes a regular online newsletter, while the headmaster writes a weekly blog. The school, and many departments, make regular use of social media.
- 5.13 Tutors provide parents with a means of individualised contact with the school, and both senior leaders are openly accessible to parents. The adoption of a revised homework diary in the senior school enables parents to monitor progress towards agreed targets. Informal complaints are dealt with thoroughly by tutors, heads of year and the head of the junior school. A few parents were not happy with the way the school handles complaints but a review of records shows that much attention is paid to this issue and that procedures are followed in line with published procedures.
- 5.14 Parents are active participants in the life of the school. The parents' association recently raised money for the gardening club, and parents regularly offer support for academic and professional enrichment programmes such as *Take Your Daughter to Work* days. There are high levels of parental support at sports fixtures and musical events; the carol concert and Remembrance Day service are traditional highlights of

the calendar, as are the coffee mornings for parents organised by the junior school. The summer ball was attended by over 400 parents. A system of parent ambassadors has been introduced in the junior school to offer friendship and advice to new parents. Current and prospective parents receive information about the school by means of the website and the school prospectus which celebrate the achievements and traditions of the school.

- 5.15 The information provided to parents is good. All information required for the parents of current or prospective pupils is readily available. Information evenings in the senior school have become well established since the previous inspection. Parents receive thorough reports on their child's progress which give clear indications of progress and attainment. They offer constructive advice on further improvement. Parents also receive regular updates during the full reporting cycle.
- 5.16 Recommendations from the previous inspection have been implemented, including freer access to the outside for children in the EYFS, a more systematic approach to PSHE in the junior school, and the inclusion of ICT in the senior school development plan. The marking of pupils' work in the senior school has improved but, whilst there is some excellent practice, it is not yet consistent across the school or within departments.

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