



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

CHEAM SCHOOL

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Cheam School

Full Name of School	Cheam School
DfE Number	850/6006
Registered Charity Number	290143
Address	Cheam School Headley Newbury Berkshire RG19 8LD England
Telephone Number	01635 268381
Fax Number	01635 269345
Email Address	mrj@cheamschool.co.uk
Head	Mr Mark Johnson
Chair of Governors	Mr Robin Boycott
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	403
Gender of Pupils	Mixed: 211 boys; 192 girls
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 257 3-5 (EYFS): 39 11-13: 107
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 235
Number of Boarders	Total: 168
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Tina Kitaruth
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	10 Nov 2015 to 13 Nov 2015

PREFACE

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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in September 2012 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in November 2011. The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

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

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

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

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

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

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

inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), 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, with parents and with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body, 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

Dr Christopher Ray	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Angela Alsop	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Deborah Nisbet	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Oliver Stokes	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Gillian Proctor	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Diane Martin	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Anne McConway	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d) The quality of boarding	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Cheam School is a co-educational day and boarding preparatory school. Founded in 1645 in Cheam, Surrey, it occupies a 103-acre site in Headley, near Newbury in Berkshire, to which it was relocated in 1934. The school is a charitable foundation whose trustees serve as governors with proprietorial responsibility.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a first-class all-round education in which the individual needs of the pupils are met in a strong, harmonious and close-knit community. It strives to educate the whole child so that pupils may realise their potential and thereby gain self-esteem. The commitment to being charitable in all things, enshrined in the school motto, *Omnia Caritate*, and the ethos of service to others, are at the heart of the school community.
- 1.3 The pre-prep consists of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2. The prep educates pupils from Year 3 through to Year 8. Pupils come mostly from professional families living in the surrounding area. There is a small number of pupils from ethnic minorities.
- 1.4 The main building is Grade II listed. The grounds include an outdoor swimming pool and numerous sports pitches. Since the previous inspection there have been many developments including a new building providing dedicated accommodation for art and design technology. In the pre-prep, the senior management team has been restructured, and an outdoor programme has been introduced. A bursary fund has been established to widen access to the school.
- 1.5 There are 403 pupils in the school: 211 boys and 192 girls. There are 39 children in the EYFS and 168 boarders. All boarding is weekly or for part of the week. One pupil has English as an additional language (EAL) and receives specialist support. The school has identified 13 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and all of them receive specialist help. A further 38 pupils with a range of minor learning difficulties receive targeted assistance. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent. The school fully meets its aim to educate the whole child so that pupils may realise their potential. Pupils of all ages, needs and abilities are successful in their learning. Achievement in the EYFS, and all year groups is excellent. The attitudes of pupils to their learning are exemplary. Excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision includes a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to flourish both in and beyond the classroom. There is a strong emphasis upon inclusivity and all pupils are fully involved in the extra-curricular life of the school. The resources for outdoor education and sports are outstanding. The quality of teaching is excellent. The tracking and assessment of pupils is used to great effect by school. There is a great deal of excellent practice, but the peer observation of teaching is not used sufficiently well in all parts of the school. Pupils with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported and generally make excellent progress relative to their starting points. The more able pupils are appropriately and most effectively challenged in lessons in all year groups and through an excellent enrichment programme in the prep.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The personal development of pupils is promoted most effectively by the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme and through assemblies. Charitable fund-raising, guided and inspired by the school motto is central to the lives of the pupils. The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent. Behaviour is exemplary in all years. The counter-bullying policy, which encompasses measures to counter cyber-bullying, is highly effective. The contribution of the arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils from the EYFS onwards is excellent. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses and in interviews, pupils, including boarders, said that they feel safe and happy. The quality of boarding is excellent. The school provides excellent care for boarders and provides an outstanding range of evening activities for them. The highly effective leadership of the boarding houses ensures that the welfare and safeguarding of boarders is excellent. The parents are overwhelmingly positive about the experiences of the children who board.
- 2.3 The governance and the leadership and management of the school are excellent. Governors understand their collective legal responsibilities and discharge these most effectively. Safeguarding of pupils in all parts of the school, including EYFS, is uppermost in the thinking of governors and the leadership and management. They have a clear vision for the future of the school. Since the previous inspection the governors have strongly supported the development of the school in many ways including through building projects and curriculum change. The senior leadership's clear vision is set down within a comprehensive development plan. Governors monitor the leadership of the school with a characteristically light touch but it is not clear that governors have assessed whether this provides sufficient support and focused challenge for the new senior leadership. The school has responded effectively to the requirement of the previous boarding welfare inspection that the school must ensure that all appropriate checks are made prior to any member of staff starting work under supervision. Parents maintain a very high level of confidence in the leadership and management.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Institute a systematic and school-wide approach to peer observation of teaching.
 2. Ensure that governance and leadership interact in order to provide more focused and challenging support for senior leadership.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are extremely well and broadly educated, fulfilling the school's aim to develop their skills across a wide range of opportunities. The achievement of pupils of all needs and abilities is excellent from the EYFS onwards.
- 3.3 In the EYFS the achievement of the children is excellent. They are very happy and enjoy their learning immensely. Children are highly motivated to engage in the excellent range of exciting learning opportunities provided in which they regularly demonstrate effective learning. Almost all children including those with SEND make substantial and sustained progress in relation to their starting points. Children make rapid progress in phonics and word building, reading, developing cursive writing skills, counting and number recognition to twenty. Children acquire strong communication and language skills. They are active learners in response to the stimulating, well-resourced indoor and outdoor environments where they can investigate natural materials, concentrate on learning new vocabulary, work independently and think critically about the ideas of others and create their own stories to enact.
- 3.4 Throughout the school pupils' speaking, listening, reading, writing, practical and numerical skills are excellent relative to their ages. Pupils in the prep demonstrate high levels of competency and confidence in logical thought, scientific reasoning, mathematical applications, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Excellent skills in translation are also evident, particularly older pupils' skills in Latin. Pupils' understanding and knowledge across a wide range of subjects is excellent, as is the presentation of work and pupils' ability to talk about ideas and concepts. Older pupils debated the moral aspects of conscience faced by Abraham in religious studies. Pupils' aesthetic, design and creative skills are especially well developed, evident in art, design and design technology (DT) displays around the school.
- 3.5 Extra-curricular achievement is excellent. Pupils' physical skills are well developed through the inclusive and varied sporting programmes. Pupils gain regional and national recognition in areas such as athletics, cross-country running and fencing. Pupils speak of the pride they have in major school productions such as *Cats* and the school choir sings in cathedrals. Many pupils achieve distinctions in their external instrumental and singing examinations.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and performance in lessons, it is judged to be high overall in relation to national age-related expectations. This attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make excellent progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils and parents expressed satisfaction with the progress being made in the school. A high proportion of pupils gain academic, creative, sporting, and other scholarships and awards to senior independent day and boarding schools. Almost all pupils achieve entry to the senior school of their choice.

- 3.7 Throughout the school, pupils identified as having SEND or EAL make excellent progress encouraged and assisted by the support they receive. The more able pupils receive sufficient support and encouragement to enable them to make rapid progress and reach high levels of attainment.
- 3.8 The achievement of pupils throughout the school, including those with SEND, is strongly supported by their enthusiastic and highly committed attitudes to learning. Pupils co-operate extremely well in their work, supporting and encouraging each other. Many examples of excellent independent study are evident, for example in the holiday projects done by pupils in the prep. All pupils place a very high value on their excellent relationships with teachers.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The standards of provision from the EYFS onwards are highly successful in meeting the school's aim to ensure that pupils should receive an all-round education which encourages them to realise their potential.
- 3.11 The EYFS provides stimulating, enriching and challenging experiences, which are most effective in promoting the children's language, communication, personal, social and emotional development. Children are encouraged to solve problems, create their own play and to explore their ideas, both inside and outside. Specialist physical education (PE) teaching is highly effective in promoting the physical development of the children. All children are given opportunities to develop excellent numeracy, speaking and listening skills.
- 3.12 The curriculum is carefully planned, offering to pupils of all ages, needs and abilities the opportunity to study to appropriate depth a wide range of subjects including, for example, drama and DT. Pupils with SEND and EAL are supported extremely well through specialist teaching and appropriate support. An excellent enrichment programme enhances the curriculum for the more able pupils with speakers, visits and debates all providing additional challenges.
- 3.13 The pre-prep curriculum enhances the pupils' learning with outstanding cross-curricular links. The prep curriculum is most effectively designed to enable pupils to achieve success in their applications to senior schools. The curriculum strongly supports personal development, including the importance of mental and physical health as well as providing an awareness of possible future careers and economic issues. The PSHCE programme is well planned and its impact is evident in lessons and through displays, discussions and everyday life in the school. The parental responses to the questionnaire showed an extremely high level of satisfaction with the range of both the curricular and extra-curricular provision in the school.
- 3.14 The extra-curricular provision is excellent in the range of opportunities it offers to all pupils from Year 1 onwards. The wide range of sports available includes fencing and judo as well as hockey, netball, rugby and cricket. Orchestras, ensembles, choirs and musical productions provide plentiful opportunities for public performance for pupils throughout the school. The forthcoming production of the musical *Cats* was observed in rehearsal. The development of an outdoor play area has enhanced the facilities for all pupils from the EYFS onwards. There are many opportunities for residential as well as day visits, both in the UK and abroad. Sporting and musical tours are organised annually. There are many other activities available including dance, stage make-up and an assault course.

- 3.15 There are excellent links with the local community. Local maintained primary school pupils receive free music lessons and play in the school's jazz band. The school's choirs and orchestras perform in local venues. All pupils are involved in charitable activities, many of which are focused on local needs, such as providing Christmas boxes for a local charity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Throughout the school high quality teaching allows pupils of all needs and abilities to reach their potential, thereby fulfilling the school's aims. Expectations of pupils are high and sensitively matched to individual capabilities.
- 3.18 Teaching in the EYFS demonstrates high expectations of every child's ability to learn and make excellent progress. The children are known individually and they are presented with enjoyable, wide-ranging explorative and challenging activities. The teaching is consistently excellent in developing outstanding listening skills. Teaching is well planned to match children's interests and stage of development closely. A daily visual timetable provides support for those with additional needs. Planning is thorough, covers all areas of learning and is based on regular and precise assessments of children's achievement. As a result every child is secure in their learning before proceeding to the next challenge enabling their self-confidence. Children with SEND receive most effective support.
- 3.19 Teachers typically have excellent knowledge of their subject area. Rigorous planning is evident throughout the school. The wide variety of teaching methods employed creates a stimulating learning environment in which individual pupils may thrive. The strongest teaching is focused on the learning needs of individual pupils, moves at a brisk pace and promotes rapid progress. On the few occasions when teaching is less successful it moves slowly and involves the pupils insufficiently, thereby limiting their progress. Some peer observation is used to enhance the quality of teaching and enable ideas to be shared. However, this excellent approach is not yet embedded in all parts of the school.
- 3.20 Teaching employs resources for learning throughout the school most effectively. Excellent use is made of ICT as a tool to facilitate understanding and progress. Practical equipment, for example in mathematics in pre-prep and in DT, is used to excellent effect and enriches the learning of the pupils. The teaching uses the school's excellent library facilities to support learning.
- 3.21 An effective marking policy is implemented and pupils respond keenly to the positive feedback they receive. Work is marked regularly and helpfully. Success is acknowledged and celebrated. Target setting gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to make further progress. Oral feedback is of high quality with teachers engaging in fruitful dialogues with pupils. In their lessons and through their marked work the more able pupils are most effectively challenged and pupils with SEND and EAL are given excellent guidance and support.
- 3.22 Since the previous inspection progress in the use of assessment data to monitor pupils' work across the school has been excellent. The tracking and assessment of individual pupils is used extremely well to assist in planning. Regular reviews of pupils' effort and attainment take place. Teachers are provided with clear and helpful guidance by the learning support department to inform their classroom practice.

- 3.23 The relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Lessons are happy, positive and purposeful. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses pupils commended the encouragement they receive from their teachers. Pupils also confirmed that their teachers help them learn and support them as individuals when needed.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils develop self-confidence and self-esteem in a supportive and nurturing environment. Pupils and members of staff from the EYFS onwards work effectively together, conscious of the needs of others and the importance of service to others. The school most effectively meets its aim to develop the self-esteem of its pupils within a strong and harmonious community.
- 4.3 In the EYFS the personal, social and emotional development of the children is excellent because of high levels of trust at all levels, the positive relationships created and the confidence gained from being secure in their learning. This gives them excellent foundations for the future stages of their education. Children are happy to share and co-operate with others, tolerate differences and make choices and decisions. Members of staff actively promote fundamental British values through wide ranging thoughtfully planned themes.
- 4.4 The spiritual awareness of the pupils is excellent. They are confident, self-aware, and emotionally mature for their age, thereby helping to develop their self-esteem. They are motivated to contribute positively and compassionately to others. They appreciate the non-material aspects of life. The extensive school grounds promote an understanding of the natural world. The many art and design displays of pupils' work around the school demonstrate their development of aesthetic values. Spiritual themes are explored to excellent effect in assemblies where music and prayer both play a central part in helping to focus the reflections of pupils.
- 4.5 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent. Pupils have extremely clear moral sensibilities and readily distinguish right from wrong. Pupils learn to understand and respect British legal institutions through PSHCE and assemblies. They readily accept the need for rules and fully recognize the importance of taking responsibility not only for their own behaviour but also for that of their peers. The school motto is used to encourage all pupils to be most effectively involved in charitable activities. For example, a Year 8 assembly on the plight of the Syrian refugees led directly to a significant fundraising effort.
- 4.6 The social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils have a responsible and independent attitude towards their roles in the school and wider community. They demonstrate outstanding courtesy and consideration. They are eager to take on responsibility and when they do so they fulfil their duties conscientiously. Throughout the school pupils are aware of the needs of others who are less fortunate. Older pupils act as most effective mentors for younger pupils. Pupils are strongly encouraged through lessons in PSHCE and other subjects to develop social, political and economic awareness. They have a keen sense of loyalty and demonstrate strong team spirit not least in the plethora of sporting opportunities available to them.
- 4.7 The cultural development and understanding of the pupils is excellent. They have a thorough knowledge of what makes a good citizen, with a firm grasp of fundamental British values of democracy, respect and tolerance. The PSHCE programme and the wider curriculum enable pupils to develop a clear insight into the cultures of others. Excellent displays around the school and in the archive room reinforce these

values. An awareness of other faiths is successfully encouraged through religious studies classes and assemblies, for example the pre-prep assembly observed on the Hindu festival of Diwali. Pupils have many opportunities through overseas trips to broaden their horizons and to develop their cultural awareness. Close links with a community in South Africa provide excellent opportunities for pupils to experience another culture directly.

- 4.8 Pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. They become confident individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Clear structures and policies, understood by all members of staff, ensure that the pastoral needs of the pupils are effectively met. This fulfils the aim of the school to provide a strong, harmonious and closely-knit community in which pupils may thrive.
- 4.11 The contribution of the provision to children's well-being is excellent in the EYFS. A key person for each child ensures that their needs are effectively met, they develop positive relationship and they feel safe and secure. The regular contact the children have with older pupils in the pre-prep contributes most effectively to the promotion of their independence and good behaviour. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and they enjoy nutritious cooked lunches in the school's dining hall. They take regular exercise in the exciting outdoor area.
- 4.12 Pupils rightly praise the support they receive from members of staff. Almost all pupils said, in response to the questionnaire, that they are confident that there is an adult or senior pupil to whom they can turn if they have any concerns. Form tutors, well supported by heads of years, provide daily contact with and continuous pastoral care for the pupils. A counsellor is available for additional support. The relationships between pupils of all ages are excellent. The overwhelming majority of parents said in their questionnaire responses that their children are well looked after, feel safe and are happy.
- 4.13 The school is highly successful in promoting good behaviour through its policies and practice. Assemblies and PSHCE lessons are used to excellent effect in the school's approach to anti-bullying. In interviews and their questionnaire responses, pupils said that bullying, including cyber-bullying, is extremely rare and they expressed confidence that the school handles any incidents which may arise firmly. Inspection evidence confirms this view.
- 4.14 In order to promote and reinforce high standards of work and behaviour, teachers award 'credits and debits' for prep pupils. In their questionnaire responses a small minority of prep pupils said that rewards and sanctions are not always given fairly. The record of sanctions indicates that responses to misdemeanours are typically appropriate and fair. In interviews pupils spoke appreciatively of their success in achieving credits. In pre-prep, good behaviour is positively encouraged through rewards for adherence to the school's rules.
- 4.15 A small minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school does not always ask for or respond to their opinions. The student council, food committee, boarders' council and e-safety council all provide opportunities for

pupils to express their views and to make suggestions. Several recent initiatives have been influenced by pupil opinion.

- 4.16 Pupils are encouraged to make healthy life choices. They take regular exercise both in their timetabled PE and games lessons and through many extra-curricular activities. The PSHCE programme supports a healthy lifestyle through an appropriately strong focus upon good mental health and physical well-being. The school provides a wide choice of nutritious food and pupils are aware of the importance of choosing a healthy diet.
- 4.17 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational and physical access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 The school successfully meets its aims to provide for the individual needs of pupils in a strong, harmonious and close-knit community, thereby promoting most effectively the welfare, health and safety of pupils.
- 4.20 In the EYFS the safeguarding of the children is actively promoted through the vigilance of the staff who provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating learning environment. The children are confident that they will be listened to and feel safe. Staff training to identify and support children who may be at risk of neglect or abuse is kept up-to-date. Members of staff understand the need to report any concerns and work with partner agencies.
- 4.21 Careful attention is given to the safeguarding of pupils from the EYFS onwards. In the previous boarding welfare inspection the school was required to ensure that all appropriate checks are made prior to any member of staff starting work under supervision. This has been done and the school's recruitment policy is now implemented effectively. The school undertakes thorough, comprehensive pre-appointment checks, which are carefully recorded. All members of staff, governors and volunteers receive regular and effective child protection training. An appropriate safeguarding governor is identified. Records relating to any concerns about pupils' welfare are stored carefully. Suitably trained designated members of staff maintain close and appropriate contact with local agencies. Appropriate steps are taken in all parts of the school, including in the EYFS, to prevent radicalisation or extremism.
- 4.22 The necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are taken with particular thoroughness. Fire risk assessments and training records are up to date, fire drills are held regularly at different times of the day and evening and evacuation procedures are clear. The procedures are well known and understood by pupils and staff. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out, including of the premises, boarding houses, traffic within the school precincts, and school trips and activities. Children in the EYFS are supervised carefully as they move around the school site. Maintenance of the buildings and sites is very well managed. The health and safety committee meets regularly and its deliberations and recommendations are considered and implemented by the leadership and management and overseen by governors.
- 4.23 The first-aid policy provides clear guidance for the care and welfare of pupils. The medical provision for ill and injured pupils and for pupils with SEND is excellent. Many members of staff are trained in first aid and this training is updated at least

every three years. Those directly involved in the EYFS have paediatric first aid training. Pupils who are ill benefit from excellent medical support. Accidents, illnesses and provision of medication are recorded carefully.

- 4.24 Registration of the pupils throughout the school, including in EYFS, takes place efficiently and any unexplained absences are followed up quickly and effectively. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.25 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.26 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are well cared for and happy in fulfillment of the school's aims for its pupils. They are articulate, confident and exuberant in their appreciation of boarding at the school and have respect for each other. The responses of parents in the questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive about boarding.
- 4.27 Members of staff and boarders comment on the strong and loving family atmosphere in the boarding house. The views of boarders are heard at separate junior and senior boarding councils. Positions of responsibility are held by the senior girl and boy boarders and by Year 8 dormitory captains. Older boarders particularly enjoy and excel in their care of the younger boarders in their house.
- 4.28 Relationships between staff and boarders are strong and boarders demonstrate tolerance, a caring attitude and respect and trust for each other. Their behaviour is highly co-operative and responsive. Boarders agree that there is always a member of staff to talk to if they have a concern and understand the role of the independent listener who is also the school counsellor. The complaints procedure for boarders is posted on the house notice board.
- 4.29 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Accommodation is well maintained, welcoming, clean and homely. The protocols for the management of ill or injured boarders are robust. The team of suitably qualified matrons ensures that there is always medical support available. All other members of the house staff receive basic first-aid training. Medical confidentiality is observed and health records are detailed.
- 4.30 In their questionnaires a small minority of boarders said that the food is not always good and a small number commented that they do not have enough opportunities for drinks and snacks outside meal times. Surveys carried out by the school to ascertain the popularity of the meals and snacks amongst the boarders prompt generally positive responses. Inspectors found that suitable drinks and snacks are available for all boarders at appropriate times. A boarding food committee meets regularly and boarders are able to air their views. Boarders who were interviewed said that they enjoyed the food and found it generally excellent in quantity, choice and quality. Themed evenings for meals are very popular.
- 4.31 Although there are no lockable places in the dormitories, house staff may store belongings securely. During interviews boarders said that did not feel that they needed anything more as they trust each other.
- 4.32 The wide range of evening activities available is an outstanding feature of the school and they are very much appreciated by the boarders. Boarders often make full use

of the facilities and grounds where they are appropriately supervised. Members of the boarding staff communicate regularly and helpfully with parents, the overwhelming majority of whom indicated in their pre-inspection questionnaires that they are able to make contact with relevant staff easily.

- 4.33 There is ample opportunity for boarders to contact their parents and they may use the office telephone if they want privacy. They have ready access to outside news.
- 4.34 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. There is an appropriate safeguarding policy of which members of staff are aware and they know the procedures which should be followed should the need arise. All necessary checks are carried out prior to the appointment for new members of staff. Training in safeguarding is carried out when new members of staff join the school and this is updated at regular intervals.
- 4.35 Boarding promotes good behaviour effectively. The use of sanctions is minimal because boarders are very keen to do the right thing and any misconduct is relatively minor in character. Boarders are adamant that bullying is a rarity. Boarders said that they are happy to tell someone if there is a problem and it is dealt with effectively. Evidence confirms that measures to guard against bullying in boarding are appropriate.
- 4.36 Risk assessments for boarding premises, trips and activities are carried out and acted upon. All the necessary health and safety checks are appropriately carried out and recorded. Accident records are kept. Fire practices are held at appropriate times. Boarders are appropriately supervised. There is always easy access to a member of staff at night should the need arise.
- 4.37 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. The leadership and management ensure that the school and boarding aims are met. Boarding priorities are clear and the boarding house is well run by qualified and experienced personnel. Staffing levels in the house are sufficiently high to ensure excellent support for and control of the boarders.
- 4.38 Daily routines run smoothly. Boarders' views are actively sought and they feel able to speak openly. Records are accurately and carefully kept through the electronic system and daily books which are monitored regularly by senior staff. There is an annual review of boarding, including associated regulations, leading into a boarding development plan.
- 4.39 All members of the boarding house staff have detailed job descriptions and an excellent annual appraisal system is in place. External training is provided when appropriate. An identified governor takes an active interest in all aspects of boarding.
- 4.40 The previous boarding welfare inspection requirement regarding recruitment checks has been met; the recommendation to use the information provided by boarders further to consider the choice of food during boarding hours has been successfully addressed.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors are highly successful in fulfilling the aim to create an environment in which pupils may enjoy a first-class education. They are strongly committed to the school's inclusive ethos. Through the objectives created for the school, the governors' vision for strategic development is strong. Whilst building upon previous strengths and success, the governors have developed a clear vision for the future set out within a five-year development plan.
- 5.3 Since the previous standard inspection, the guidance of the governors has helped to improve the standards of education whilst maintaining excellent arrangements to ensure the welfare and well-being of pupils, including in boarding and the EYFS. Governors have given their full support to many developments including a new buildings, a restructured senior management team, the introduction of an outdoor programme for pre-prep pupils, and the establishment of a bursary fund.
- 5.4 The governors fully support the EYFS through a nominated governor and regular visits and monitoring. Since the previous inspection the governors have endorsed significant investment in the EYFS outdoor learning and play environment.
- 5.5 Governors have a wide range of professional and financial skills and experience. They have an excellent insight into the school. They meet regularly with the senior management and leadership and with other members of the school community. Governors provide excellent support for senior management, including through periodic appraisal of the head. Recognising the strengths of the current leadership, the governors monitor the leadership of the school with a characteristically light touch. Succession planning for the senior leadership is an important part of their strategic thinking. However, with changes impending, it is not clear that governors have assessed whether this light touch provides sufficient support and focused challenge for the new senior leadership.
- 5.6 The governors understand their legal responsibilities to the school and maintain careful oversight of policies and procedures which are reviewed annually. Robust safeguarding procedures are implemented. The governors as a body receive and discuss an annual safeguarding report on the safeguarding policy and procedures and their implementation, and they are appropriately trained. They review health and safety measures effectively.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.8 Throughout the school, the leadership and management are highly effective. Since the previous inspection, the senior management team has been restructured and includes leaders representing the EYFS, pre-prep and prep. The leadership works very effectively to meet the needs of pupils of all needs and abilities, providing

cohesion and continuity across the school. The highly motivated leadership promotes an ethos that puts the pupils at the centre of its decision-making.

- 5.9 The leadership ensures that the school fully meets its aims. Inclusivity and the ethos of being charitable in all things is central to its thinking. In the questionnaires, parents expressed strong satisfaction with the school and its leadership. Almost all parents said that they felt the school is led and managed well and they would recommend it to other parents.
- 5.10 In the EYFS there is an ambitious vision for continuous improvement in all aspects of the provision to provide the best environment possible for all children. The leadership sets clear priorities for improvement, including for the professional development of staff for needs identified through effective supervision. It communicates these priorities effectively to members of staff. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection especially through the development of the outdoor environment and also the implementation of new individual assessment systems. Leaders and managers have a thorough knowledge of the EYFS curriculum and of how to apply it effectively to meet the needs and interests of all children. As a result they are effective in monitoring planning to ensure activities are educational, inspiring and enjoyable. Members of the EYFS staff actively promote equality, diversity and British values.
- 5.11 The leadership and management have responded positively to the requirement of the previous boarding welfare inspection to ensure that the necessary recruitment checks are made on all newly appointed staff. In response to the recommendation of the previous standard inspection, it has made improvements in the sharing of best practice through the monitoring of lessons and pupils' work. In addition, steps to drive academic standards even higher through peer observations and professional development have been implemented. However, the use of peer observation is not consistent across all departments and subjects.
- 5.12 The clear strategic vision of the leadership is exemplified in the school's development plan which encompasses all aspects of its life. Middle management plays an extremely important part in the life and success of the school. The high level of pupil achievement and their passion for learning is testament to the effective management of subjects by the department heads and subject coordinators. Heads of year and senior boarding staff ensure that the pastoral needs of the pupils are most effectively met.
- 5.13 The school is extremely supportive of the professional development needs of all members of staff. Appraisals take place every five terms and the process encompasses lesson observations, feedback and identification of training needs and wishes. Staff professional development, whether individual or collective, is firmly embedded in the school's culture. This enables the school to meet the evolving needs of pupils in academic, extra-curricular and pastoral areas. Members of staff speak positively of the nurturing and supportive environment afforded by the leadership and management team.
- 5.14 The school recruits and appoints high quality, passionate and fully committed members of staff. Welfare, health and safety procedures are efficiently managed overall. Procedures to safeguard all pupils throughout the school, including in the EYFS, are rigorous and all staff, volunteers and governors are trained in safeguarding procedures, welfare, health and safety. Secure safer recruitment procedures to check the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with

children are implemented and appropriately detailed records are made in the central register.

- 5.15 Parents regularly attend sporting, cultural, charitable, educational and recreational activities. Mid-week and Saturday sports fixtures, often involving every pupil in the prep school, attract many parents and other members of the pupils' families. In their questionnaire responses almost all parents including those in EYFS said that they are encouraged to be involved in the education of their children and in the life of the school.
- 5.16 Constructive relationships with parents in all year groups, including EYFS are established before entry to the school with comprehensive literature for new parents at every level of entry, including all required information for pupils of prospective and current pupils. Appropriate information is sent to all parents except where a court order prevails. Communications sent to current parents are regular, informative and sensibly detailed, taking advantage of the electronic systems which have been introduced. Reports to parents on their children from the EYFS upwards are very informative: they reflect the individual pupil's achievements and document targets to support future learning. Meetings with staff are valuable and readily available to parents. The leadership of the EYFS actively seeks the views of parents, evaluates them and responds positively. Appropriate support is provided for children with SEND at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 5.17 In their questionnaires, parents commented extremely positively about every aspect of the school's work, as well as the quality of care for their children. The school handles any concerns and complaints in a timely fashion and according to the school's suitable written policy.

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