



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
BRISTOL GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Bristol Grammar School

Full Name of School	<b>Bristol Grammar School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>801/6013</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>1104425</b>		
Address	<b>Bristol Grammar School University Road Bristol BS8 1SR England</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>0117 9736006</b>		
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Email Address	<b>website@bgs.bristol.sch.uk</b>		
Headmaster	<b>Mr Roderick MacKinnon</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Nick Reeve</b>		
Age Range	<b>4 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>1313</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (799 boys; 514 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-3 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>299</b>
	4-5 (EYFS):	<b>35</b>	11-18: <b>979</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>1313</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mr Peter Huckle</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection Dates	<b>22 Sep 2015 to 25 Sep 2015</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://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, with parents and with the chair of governors and other governors, 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 Christopher Ray	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Mary Allen	Team Inspector (Headteacher, HMC School)
Mrs Pat Clayfield	Team Inspector (Headmistress, TSOH School)
Mrs Barbara Elliott	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA School)
Mr Rodney Harris	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC School)
Mr Andrew Ireson	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC School)
Mr Mark Lauder	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC School)
Mr Simon Northcote-Green	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC School)
Mr Bill Norton	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC School)
Mr Jim Turner	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS School)
Mr David Warwick	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC School)
Mrs Janet Watts	Team Inspector (Deputy Head Academic, IAPS School)
Mrs Rosalind Ford	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bristol Grammar School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged four to eighteen years. The city-centre school was founded by Royal Charter in 1532 for boys to be instructed in good manners and literature. It moved to its present site in 1879 and has been co-educational for nearly 40 years. The school also has playing fields and sports facilities for all school ages at Failand, three miles away. The school is a charitable foundation whose trustees serve as governors with proprietorial responsibility.
- 1.2 The school is broadly Christian in ethos, but offers support to those of all faiths or none. It aims to inspire a love of learning and a sense of adventure amongst its pupils and to achieve excellence in all it does, encouraging a mature sense of responsibility and developing confident, compassionate and ambitious young adults able to use their talents and leadership potential in the service of others. The school also aims that its pupils will flourish culturally, intellectually, morally, physically and spiritually in a happy and nurturing environment through a wide range of far-reaching opportunities.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, several developments have taken place. As from September 2010 the school admitted pupils younger than seven, adding Reception and Years 1 and 2, thus establishing an infant school including an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) alongside the junior and senior parts of the school. Innovations in teaching and learning have been introduced further to improve standards of teaching and learning. Curricular changes have sought to provide additional breadth and choice in the senior part of the school as well as further specialist subjects in the junior years. There have been refurbishments to the junior school, all science laboratories and the completion of a new sports pavilion. A new performing arts centre is currently under construction on the main school site.
- 1.4 The senior school has 979 pupils aged 11 to 18 with 297 pupils in the sixth form. There are 334 pupils aged 4 to 11 in the infant and junior school, with 35 of these in the EYFS. There are 514 girls and 799 boys in the school. The school has a wide socio-economic mix of pupils and is strongly committed to providing its own bursaries; 199 pupils currently receive financial support. Approximately a fifth of the pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds reflecting the wider community in Bristol.
- 1.5 The ability of pupils throughout the school is above the national average. There are 50 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), one of whom receives specialist support from the school. There are 99 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); 20 of these receive specialist support from the school and one has a statement of special educational need.
- 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. Pupils of all ages, needs and abilities including those in the EYFS are successful in their learning. The school fully meets its aims to inspire a love of learning, to foster intellectual independence and to promote self-confidence. It achieves its ambition to reach excellence in everything it does. The school has responded positively and successfully to the recommendations of the previous inspection further to develop teaching to match the flair and quality of the outstanding teaching already in place and to ensure that greater challenge and rigour in learning are provided more consistently throughout the school. Pupils, including those who are more able and those with SEND or EAL, make at least good and typically excellent progress. Excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision provides a wide variety of opportunities for pupils to flourish both in and beyond the classroom. Pupils are strongly supported by the excellent quality of teaching throughout the school.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils in the infant and junior years, including EYFS, have a high regard for the golden rules which frame their daily lives: respect for and kindness to others, honesty and keeping safe. In the senior part of the school, the personal development of pupils is most effectively promoted by the Students' Personal Development (SPD) programme. Service to others is an important part of pupils' lives in the school, whether in leadership or mentoring roles or through charitable fund-raising. The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent. High standards of behaviour are evident in all years. The anti-bullying policy, which encompasses cyber-bullying, is effective. Pupils said in interviews that incidents of bullying are rare and if they do occur they are handled well by the school. The timing and character of the arrangements for lunches significantly delay mealtimes for many pupils in the senior school. 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 interviews, pupils said that they feel safe and happy.
- 2.3 The governance and the leadership and management of the school are excellent. Governors understand their collective legal responsibilities and discharge these effectively. They have a clear vision for the future development of the school. Since the previous inspection the governors, working closely with leaders and managers, have established an infant school including EYFS and they have actively supported significant improvements in teaching and learning. The leadership of the school is suitably structured in order better to achieve the school's strategic ambitions. Honest and forthright self-evaluation and a strong desire for further school improvement are hallmarks of the leadership's style and purpose. The leadership and management of the junior and infant school, and of the senior school, work in close harmony helping to ensure the continuity of education and successful transition of their pupils as they move from infant to junior to senior years. Parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire and in interviews maintained a high level of confidence in the leadership and management. The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. Parents also expressed satisfaction with the frequency and character of information provided about the school, its events and activities and their own children.

## **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) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Review the timings for lunches to enable a greater number of senior school pupils to eat earlier.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school fulfils its aim to achieve excellence in all it does within and beyond the classroom for its pupils, from EYFS to the sixth form. Pupils are most effectively encouraged to develop a spirit of enquiry, to acquire a love of learning and to achieve intellectual independence. The school has successfully responded to the recommendations of the previous inspection report, that the school should strengthen its approaches to teaching and learning. As a result, it enables learners in the senior school to fulfil their potential at the highest level in all areas of the curriculum and pupils in the junior years to be given greater challenges and rigour in their learning. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses almost all parents indicated that they are pleased with the progress made by their children.
- 3.3 The overall quality and standards of achievements in the EYFS are excellent. The children make good progress relative to their abilities and needs, with most reaching and often exceeding the expected levels of attainment at the end of Reception. They are motivated and enthusiastic learners who respond well to the staff's high expectations of them, communicating effectively with each other and their teachers. Children are able to recognise sounds, talk about stories and answer questions using appropriate vocabulary. Their writing, numeracy, physical and creative skills are strong.
- 3.4 The achievement of pupils of all needs and abilities is excellent from the EYFS onwards. Their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are excellent relative to their ages. Pupils exhibit high levels of competency in logical thought, scientific reasoning, the application of mathematical thought, creativity and physical activity. Those pupils with EAL and SEND achieve at least as well as the majority of their peers. The more able pupils show excellent achievement, noted for example in an infant school project on the rugby union world cup, and through independent learning evident in senior school work towards the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Regular and effective use of electronic tablet devices in both the junior and senior schools ensures that the pupils possess excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In recent years, many pupils have gained gold awards in scientific and mathematical Olympiads; and, achievement in design and technology is exceptional; the school currently has three design and technology national Arkwright Scholars.
- 3.5 Extra-curricular achievement in the senior school is excellent. Entry is made to many national competitions with considerable success. For example in 2014 a predominantly Year 12 team came second in a national business, accounting, skills and education competition. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DoE) is very popular within the senior school and many pupils achieve gold awards. Creative achievement is sometimes exceptional as witnessed for example in a Year 13 exhibition at a local art gallery. Pupils achieve much sporting success at local, regional and national competitions; for example in 2015 the under-11 boys' team was placed third in the regional cricket finals.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment in the infant and junior parts of the school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but standardised test results indicate that it is excellent. This level of attainment, together with the

evidence from lesson observation, discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and the school's own data, shows that pupils make excellent progress in relation to their starting points.

- 3.7 For the senior school, the following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE are well above the national average for pupils in maintained schools, and above that for pupils in maintained selective schools. The IGCSE results are generally higher than worldwide averages, and typically above UK averages. A level results are well above the national average for pupils in maintained schools, and above that for pupils in maintained selective schools. Results in 2015 for GCSE, IGCSE and A levels maintained this excellent level of performance.
- 3.8 Attainment in GCSE and A level, together with standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils make progress in the senior school and sixth form that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. At all levels of the school, pupils identified as having SEND make excellent progress because of the support that they receive and the care taken to match work to their needs. The provision set out in statements of special educational need is met. Able pupils, together with those identified by the school as having particular gifts and talents, receive support and encouragement to enable them to reach very high levels of attainment. Their progress is excellent.
- 3.9 Nearly all sixth-form leavers gain places on competitive higher education courses. The school has an excellent record of applications to universities in the UK, including many with highly demanding entrance requirements.
- 3.10 Pupils throughout the school, including children in the EYFS, demonstrate outstanding attitudes to learning. They demonstrate great enthusiasm for all they do within and beyond the classroom. Pupils of all ages show high levels of commitment and motivation, with independence and initiative evident in their learning. They work together most effectively, supporting and encouraging each other. Those with SEND show strong levels of perseverance and effort, gaining confidence from the support they receive. Pupils are well mannered and have tremendous pride in their school.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The education programmes in the EYFS provide stimulating, enriching and challenging experiences, which are highly effective in promoting the children's language, communication, personal, social and emotional development. An excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities provide children with opportunities to solve problems, create their own play and to explore their ideas, both inside and outside. All children are given opportunities to develop excellent speaking and listening skills. The curriculum is enhanced by the use of specialist teaching for music, yoga, Italian and physical education.
- 3.13 The excellent standards of the provision from the EYFS onwards fully support the aim of the school to make available to pupils of all needs and abilities a broad and intellectually stimulating curriculum. The well-planned curriculum is broad and highly effective in its coverage of scientific, linguistic, mathematical, logical, practical, cultural, physical and creative areas of study. The parental responses to the pre-

inspection questionnaire demonstrated an extremely high level of satisfaction with both curricular and extra-curricular provision. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils too were positive about the extra-curricular opportunities available to them throughout the school.

- 3.14 The infant and junior school curriculum provides a stimulating and diverse experience for pupils. The development of literacy and numeracy skills is at the heart of the curricular provision but creative and outdoor education is also given prominence. The introduction of violin lessons for all pupils in Years 1 and 2 is an example of a recent innovation. Specialists from the senior school teach in many areas of the curriculum including French, food technology and science. Strong cross-curricular links, excellent classroom resources and supporting facilities for art, music, dance, drama and sport contribute to a vibrant and enriching learning experience. Programmes for personal, social and health education (PSHE) are most effective. Visits from authors and graphic novelists as well as themed book days, inspire a love of reading among the pupils.
- 3.15 In the senior school pupils are able to study a broad range of subjects with many options available to them including classical civilisation, Russian and food and nutrition. Independent learning is encouraged through the availability of the EPQ. The SPD programme provides excellent and comprehensive coverage of PHSE topics such as e-safety and personal well being for all senior age pupils. Timetabled activities such as Mandarin Chinese further extend the opportunities available to senior pupils. Throughout the school the promotion of Fundamental British Values is evident. An effective careers programme commences in Year 9.
- 3.16 The extra-curricular provision is excellent. The infant and junior school provides many opportunities for pupils beyond the classroom, including five different language clubs, additional tuition in dance, speech and drama, a climbing club and activities in judo and other martial arts. Outstanding facilities at the sports grounds are available to all year groups from the EYFS onwards. There is a project week for pupils in Years 3 to 5 during the summer term, with a different theme each year such as wildlife and heroes, whilst Year 6 pupils develop their spirit of adventure on their activity camp. The senior school too offers many extra-curricular opportunities to its pupils, including orienteering, sailing, young enterprise, fencing, kayaking, and baking as well as numerous clubs and societies and the DoE award programme. There are many musical and dramatic events throughout the year including the house singing competition at a local concert hall. Recent overseas visits have included those to Turkey and Morocco.
- 3.17 The school systematically identifies and supports pupils with SEND and provides clear and carefully considered individual education plans for them. These plans are used to provide targeted support both in the classroom and through additional lessons. The curriculum also provides effective support for pupils with EAL and challenges and enrichment opportunities for the more able.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 Teaching is successful in supporting the school's aims to inspire a love of learning and to foster intellectual independence. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and a passion for learning which results in highly stimulating lessons. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all pupils stated they regard their lessons as interesting and their teachers as helpful, and they said that they are pleased with their progress. Excellent relationships between the teachers and their pupils allow learning to be a co-operative and enjoyable experience.
- 3.20 The school has acted successfully upon the recommendation of the previous inspection regarding teaching. Initiatives such as the appointment of innovators of learning in the senior school and innovative teachers in the infant and junior school, together with the practice of pupil self-evaluation, have all contributed to the spread of adventurous and innovative teaching and independent learning. The school has also focused upon the needs for more effective assessment, the use of data to inform learning and the development of positive attitudes amongst pupils.
- 3.21 Children in the EYFS are guided expertly in exploring and trying out new activities appropriate to their stage of development. The teaching, within a bright and vibrant environment, has high expectations of each child and is typically tailored to suit each child as an individual. Detailed and regular assessments using open questions and well judged interactions enable the teachers to develop and extend learning opportunities, with the teaching most effectively monitoring progress and determining the next steps in the children's learning. Teaching uses a variety of resources within a very well equipped setting, organised so that resources are easily accessible to children to enable them to choose freely.
- 3.22 There is very effective deployment of subject specialists and teaching assistants in the infant and junior parts of the school. A wide range of teaching methods is used to engage pupils' interests. As pupils move through the school, the teaching encourages them to take responsibility for their own organisation. Teachers challenge their pupils to take risks in class, promoted by effective lesson planning. The teaching effectively encourages pupils to think independently and to use subject knowledge to explore complex ideas.
- 3.23 The teaching supports pupils of all needs and abilities, from the EYFS onwards, including those with SEND and EAL. The requirements of those with statements of special educational needs are met effectively. A variety of successful teaching strategies are used, such as role-play and the use of pupil self-evaluation techniques to accelerate learning and progress. Staff recognise the needs of their SEND and EAL pupils frequently adapting their teaching to excellent effect. The pace of lessons is typically brisk, keeping pupils of all abilities engaged and alert. The teaching conveys high expectations for pupil achievement, behaviour and appearance. These expectations are met, with the more able pupils encouraged to raise their levels of performance even further.
- 3.24 The teaching makes excellent use of a wide range of classroom resources, libraries and sporting facilities. All pupils have regular access to ICT resources, with school laptops readily available. Pupils in several year groups in the junior and senior schools have their own electronic tablets which are used to excellent effect within the classroom on a variety of learning tasks and to promote independent learning.

- 3.25 Most work is marked regularly and in the most successful instances, assessment contributes to pupils' progress and learning. In the infant and junior school some inconsistencies in marking exist and consequently it is not always clear to pupils how they might make improvements in their work. The tracking and assessment of pupils is used extremely well to inform planning.

## **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 the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in achieving its aim to develop young adults with self-confidence and ready for the challenges of the world around them by the time they leave the school. Pupils use their talents and leadership potential to serve the needs of others in the school, local and wider communities. The PSHE programme in the infant and junior school and the SPD provision in the senior school are most effective, with pupils of all ages demonstrating a clear awareness of and sense of responsibility for those less fortunate than themselves in the world around them.
- 4.3 The children's personal development in the EYFS is excellent. Children are encouraged to learn together and from each other, through gentle reminders about sharing and helping one another. They make rapid progress in their personal and social development. When they successfully carry out tasks such as being a line leader, each child is given the opportunity to be celebrated as the star of the day. Parents of different faith and cultures are invited to talk to the children, enabling them better to understand and respect each other's differences. The children encourage and support each other and their behaviour is exemplary.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Pupils throughout the school appreciate non-material aspects of life such as music, art and the need for quiet reflection. They are motivated to contribute positively and compassionately to the world through the cultivation of the school spirit, most evident in the pupils' loyalty and commitment to their houses. They develop an understanding of the spiritual dimension of their lives and a respect for the faiths and cultures of others in assemblies, the study of religion, philosophy and ethics, in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Pupils enhance their aesthetic and spiritual awareness in art, drama and music, for example by visiting local galleries and museums or by participating in the many school productions which take place throughout the year.
- 4.5 The pupils' moral awareness is excellent. They demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong and possess strong moral and ethical values. This is evident in the pupils' responses to the well-structured PSHE and SPD programmes which include discussions about many ethical issues such as the responsibilities of wealthier individuals and nations for the poor. These programmes and lessons in, for example, business studies and history also develop a clear understanding of and respect for legal and public institutions within the United Kingdom. Pupils throughout the school are concerned for those less fortunate than themselves, including those with any form of disability, as evident in the exemplary charitable works of the senior school charity committee. Ambitious local, national and international fundraising activities include support by pupils in the infant and junior school for a local children's hospice.
- 4.6 The social development of pupils is excellent and is evident in their active contribution to the life of the school. They are eager to take on positions of responsibility, as seen in a variety of contexts including the prefecture and house leadership roles. Pupils demonstrate outstanding levels of emotional maturity in the way they interact with one another and with staff. They lead their peers in sport and other activities such as debating and Model United Nations. They make

excellent contributions to the school community through school council meetings. Older pupils support and work effectively with younger ones in a variety of ways including peer mentoring. Pupils develop into confident, compassionate and ambitious young adults by the time they leave the school.

- 4.7 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent. They learn to understand and respect other cultures whilst recognizing and valuing British values, for example through responding positively to programmes of study covering democracy, law, liberty and tolerance as well as economic literacy. Fundamental British values are actively promoted through the golden rules of the infant and junior school, encouraging respect, tolerance and kindness. The school takes seriously its responsibility to discourage extremism in all its forms. Pupils have a clear understanding of the dangers inherent in extremism. Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their horizons via foreign trips and exchanges and an outstanding senior assembly celebrating the European Day of Languages highlighted their genuine interest in and empathy for other cultures. Pupils in all years joined in the celebrations by wearing a wide range of international costumes and sampling cuisine from other countries.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Key adults are excellent role models for children in the EYFS. They provide highly effective support so that the children feel very safe and secure, readily seeking support or comfort from staff. Adults give very clear guidelines about the expected standards of behaviour which results in a really happy and busy atmosphere, where children benefit fully from all the opportunities provided.
- 4.10 The school fulfils its aim to provide an opportunity for every individual to flourish in a happy and nurturing environment. Almost all parents acknowledged in their responses to the questionnaire that their children are looked after well in an environment which is safe and supportive. The infant and junior school reinforces good conduct with the golden rules which remind pupils to treat each other with respect and kindness and to be honest. The recently reformed senior house system provides continuity of pastoral care as pupils move through the school and encourages a strong sense of loyalty. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils from the EYFS onwards are excellent. Mutual respect, tolerance and a sense of inclusion bind the community together. Pupils feel valued and cared for. During interviews pupils said they are confident in being able to identify members of staff or senior pupils whom they might approach when the need arises.
- 4.11 Pupils are provided with an excellent variety and quantity of good food. Healthy options at lunchtime enable healthy eating habits to be developed. Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise. A healthy lifestyle is promoted amongst children in the EYFS though the provision of freshly prepared lunches and snacks and by opportunities to use outside areas for play and exercise. A significant number of senior school pupils have significantly delayed access to lunch as a result of long queues and staggered lunch times, with the minds of many pupils focused upon the need for sustenance rather than their studies.
- 4.12 The school most effectively promotes and encourages good behaviour from all its pupils, with due regard for any individual need. It has a clearly defined anti-bullying policy and the advice given about cyber-bullying is well understood. The policies to

promote good behaviour are reinforced consistently and successfully through PSHE in the infant and junior school and SPD lessons in the senior school. Almost all parents indicated through their questionnaire responses that the standards of behaviour in the school are high. A minority of parents identified bullying as being an issue within the school. Inspection evidence found that disciplinary records provided appropriately detailed accounts of all reported significant incidents, including those involving bullying and the subsequent action taken. In their questionnaire responses and during interviews, pupils indicated their view that the school deals appropriately with the few cases of bullying which occur. Pupils during interviews maintained that sanctions are given fairly and that rewards in the form of commendations are distributed appropriately.

- 4.13 In their questionnaire responses a minority of pupils said that they do not believe that the school asks for their opinions or responds to their views. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are able to express their views and concerns at school council meetings and they receive appropriately clear responses. Those pupils interviewed said that they have a clear voice within the school and welcome the responses of the school to their views.
- 4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 Careful attention is given to the safeguarding of pupils and a comprehensive policy for this is implemented effectively throughout the school from the EYFS onwards. All teaching and non-teaching staff undergo the required checks prior to appointment and these are recorded meticulously on the single central register of appointments. The school has now ensured effective arrangements for all members of staff, volunteers and governors to read updates of essential safeguarding documentation. Pupil records are kept centrally to facilitate ready access by those staff with responsibilities for pupil welfare.
- 4.17 All members of staff, governors and volunteers receive regular and effective safeguarding training. Records relating to any concerns about pupils' welfare are stored carefully and suitably trained designated members of staff maintain close and appropriate contact with the relevant local agencies. A named governor is trained to an appropriate level in safeguarding procedures: this governor monitors closely and supports those members of staff with specific responsibilities for safeguarding and takes part in the training of staff in safeguarding matters.
- 4.18 The necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are methodical. Fire risk assessments and training records are up-to-date. Risk assessments associated with the premises and with school activities and trips are comprehensive. This includes day-to-day operating procedures such as crossing roads and travelling on coaches. Such procedures are generally well known and understood by pupils and staff. Maintenance of the buildings and the site is very well managed.
- 4.19 The school's health and safety committee meets regularly and its deliberations and recommendations are considered and acted upon effectively both by the leadership and management and by governors. The provision for ill and injured pupils is very effective. Key members of staff are suitably trained in first-aid. Pupils who are ill or



injured benefit from excellent medical support from qualified medical staff in a suitable medical centre.

- 4.20 Suitable systems for registration are in place and there are secure mechanisms in place to monitor regular attendance in all years from the EYFS onwards. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored.

## **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 governing body is highly successful in supporting the school in its mission to set its sights firmly upon excellence. Governors have an extremely clear vision for the future of the school, built upon their focused understanding of the strengths and needs of the school. Since the previous inspection their leadership, experience and active support has helped the school to fulfill its aims for pupils of all needs and abilities, wholeheartedly supporting the school's ambitions for even stronger teaching and learning and also firmly to establish the infant school. Academic excellence is valued as is the need to ensure that the personal development of pupils is promoted and supported throughout their lives within the school community. Inclusivity within and across the school is of great importance to governors.
- 5.3 The governing body provides both excellent support and rigorous challenges for the headmaster and members of his senior leadership team. Many governors are regular visitors to the school. Governors have a varied range of expertise, including financial, legal, premises, business and educational areas. There is a good mix of experienced and more recently appointed governors, including some current and former parents.
- 5.4 A financial and general purposes committee maintains careful oversight of the school's financial affairs. Other committees monitor the work of the senior management and provide focused support across the school. Strategic development planning is strong. Confident professional relationships ensure that governors and the senior leadership work extremely well together in support of the school's aims.
- 5.5 Acting as a corporate body, the governors fully understand their legal responsibilities to the school and maintain oversight of policies and procedures, including safeguarding, and these are scrutinised and reviewed annually. The governing body is well informed about the EYFS and a nominated governor for EYFS visits the setting on a regular basis and keeps the board well informed about it. The welfare, health and safety of pupils are reviewed at governors' meetings each term and robust safeguarding procedures are in place. A named governor maintains regular contact with the school on safeguarding matters, closely monitoring and actively supporting those who have specific responsibilities for child protection. Governors undergo appropriate training for their roles and all have received safeguarding training.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, parents expressed very positive views about the school and its leadership, with the vast majority of them saying that the school is well led and managed and that they would recommend the school to other parents.
- 5.8 The senior leadership and management of the school is highly effective in enabling the school to fulfil its purpose to aspire to excellence in all areas of the school, as reflected in the excellent quality of education and the very high standard of pupils' personal development. Values which encourage respect for others and democracy are evident in the ethos of the school. The leadership and management of the junior and infant school and the senior school works in close harmony. This helps to ensure the continuity of education and successful transition of their pupils as they move from infant to junior to senior years.
- 5.9 The senior leadership and management has worked most effectively with the governors in identifying the priorities for the school's strategic objectives. There is a decided and productive unity of purpose. There is a marked commitment to continuous improvement as the school has successfully fulfilled the recommendations of the previous inspection, including ensuring that relevant policies are age-related in character. The leadership and management of the school is structured so that its strategic educational and wider objectives may be realised more effectively. Close monitoring by senior and middle managers and more robust self-evaluation processes have contributed to an improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Departmental curriculum review and plans are linked to the whole-school strategic objectives. Middle managers use self-evaluation to inform their departmental plans and set priorities.
- 5.10 Leadership is distributed among a large senior management team. Each member has a clearly defined role with responsibility for a strand of the strategic objectives in addition to oversight of the work of several middle managers. Regular meetings take place with middle managers in which the analysis of assessment data, outcomes of work sampling, lesson observations and pupil feedback is discussed, enabling the leadership and management continually to improve teaching and learning. Close and regular contact between members of the leadership ensures smooth transitions from infant to junior and from junior to senior parts of the school.
- 5.11 The direction of the school is also reinforced through the strategic plan which addresses the strategic objectives and provides another layer of actions which sit on top of departmental plans. The strategic plan is monitored at points during the year by evaluating the progress against the objectives. A report on each area is produced for governors and the headmaster. Direct links exist between the strategic plan and subsequent departmental plans and the school is looking to achieve greater transparency between these planning documents.
- 5.12 The school is very supportive of the professional development of staff and middle managers who receive training on significant aspects of their roles such as the conduct of appraisals and the management of budgets. Career development is encouraged and a generous budget is available for training. Members of staff also

have the opportunity to be seconded to the senior management team to gain experience for a year, which they appreciate greatly. Rigorous annual appraisal is effective in raising the quality of teaching. The appointment of leading practitioners in the school has strengthened further the focus on developing more effective teaching and learning strategies. Academic and pastoral managers take their responsibilities very seriously and discharge their duties effectively.

- 5.13 The school recruits and appoints high quality members of the teaching staff at all levels in the school from the EYFS onwards. The induction for those new to the school is excellent. Teachers speak warmly of the supportive environment, inclusivity and the accessibility of senior managers and colleagues who offer advice and guidance. Members of the senior management team are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of pupils in areas of safeguarding and safer recruitment.
- 5.14 Within the EYFS, members of staff are regularly supervised and the educational programmes are effectively monitored by the leadership and management. The setting has made good progress since the previous inspection with the leadership and management establishing productive partnerships with parents. Consequently the school is able to secure appropriate interventions for those children who need them and to engage parents in their children's learning. A strong emphasis on self-evaluation in the EYFS ensures that ambitious areas for development are being quickly identified and action taken to improve. Members of the EYFS staff share a very clear vision for the continued development of the setting. The award of a local standard for excellence in the EYFS reflects the high standards achieved by the leadership in this part of the school.
- 5.15 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 procedures to check suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with children are implemented and appropriately detailed records are made in the central register.
- 5.16 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children as well as in the life of the school. In their questionnaire responses, almost all parents maintained that they are highly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children and with the excellent quality of communication with the school. The level of academic progress, the range of subjects and scope of the extra-curricular programme on offer to their children, as well as the pastoral care and standards of behaviour, were the principal reasons given for satisfaction.
- 5.17 Constructive relationships with parents are established before entry to the school with comprehensive literature for new parents at every level of entry. Subsequently parents are kept abreast with events at the school through weekly e-mail communications, the portal for parents on the school website, which provides all required information, and information evenings. Parents receive regular reports on their child's academic progress. Reports on academic matters are fully detailed and helpful for future improvement. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses and through interviews, parents expressed great satisfaction with the frequency and quality of information provided about the school, its events and activities and their own children. Parents can have direct e-mail access to subject teachers and house staff, and responses are generally swift and supportive.

- 5.18 The school deals with any concerns with care and sensitivity and handles complaints according to its published procedures. The development of a parent forum has been widely appreciated, providing an excellent opportunity for discussions on matters such as the new 'shape of the day' and the plans for the performing arts centre currently under construction.

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