



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
MARLBOROUGH HOUSE SCHOOL**

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Marlborough House School

Full Name of School	Marlborough House School
DfE Number	886/6005
Registered Charity Number	307793
Address	Marlborough House School Hawkhurst Cranbrook Kent TN18 4PY England
Telephone Number	01580 753555
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Email Address	m.mcstrusty@marlboroughhouseschool.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Martyn Ward
Chair of Governors	Mr Henry Somerset
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	314
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (168 boys; 146 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 55 5-11: 190 11-13 : 69
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 275
Number of Boarders	Total: 39 Weekly/Flexi 39
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Vanessa Coatz
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	16 Jun 2015 to 19 Jun 2015

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI interim inspection was in December 2009 with an intermediate boarding inspection in February 2012.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff, 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 boarding house and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Pat Preedy	Reporting Inspector
Mr Nicholas Park	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Stephanie Piper	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr David Williams	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Richard Gibbs	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Eithne Webster	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Marlborough House School is a co-educational day and flexi-boarding school situated on the outskirts of Hawkhurst, Kent. It was founded in 1874, and moved from Hove to its present site in 1930. The school caters for pupils from the ages of 3 to 13. It is non-denominational with a broadly Christian ethos, and is run as a charitable trust, administered by a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed in 2012 and a new headmaster in 2013. The management and leadership team has been re-structured and extended to include an assistant head. The senior classroom block has been re-furnished, a new pre-prep hall opened and a woodland learning area developed.
- 1.2 The school aims to strive for excellence within a safe, healthy, caring and happy community, which is based upon mutual respect. It seeks to recognise and meet children's individual needs, discovering and developing the gifts within each child, whilst preparing them for their future education.
- 1.3 Most pupils live within a radius of fifteen miles. They are mostly white British, largely coming from families with a business, professional or farming background. The school is divided into the pre-prep which includes Nursery through to Year 2, and the preparatory (prep) department which is sub-divided into middle school for Years 3 to 5, and senior school for Years 6 to 8. Pupils from Nursery to Year 2 are admitted following a visit and informal assessment. Pupils from Years 3 to 8 are admitted following a visit and an academic assessment. In total, 314 pupils currently attend the school, 168 boys and 146 girls. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for children up to the age of five, comprises 25 children who attend part-time and 30 children who attend full-time. There are 47 pupils in Years 1 and 2, 143 pupils in Years 3 to 6, and 69 pupils in Years 7 and 8. The school operates a weekly flexi-boarding system for up to 37 pupils per night aged eight and over. Boarders are housed in the main school building. They are organised by age, with separate accommodation for boys and girls at either end of the building, in dormitories catering for between four and ten boarders. Most pupils remain at the school until the age of 11 or 13, transferring mainly to independent day or boarding schools, or state grammar schools.
- 1.4 Results of standardised tests across the school indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average; most pupils are of at least above average ability, with many having well above average ability. Seventy-one pupils are identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that require some support. No pupils have statements or education, health and care plans. One pupil requires support for learning English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Marlborough House School is highly successful in meeting its aims. The school community constantly strives to achieve excellence, and overall the school meets the recommendation from the previous inspection concerning the quality of the teaching. The pupils' academic and other achievements are excellent. Pupils achieve highly academically, creatively, physically and personally. Key factors supporting high achievement are the broad curriculum, excellent teaching, and the pupils' outstanding attitudes towards their learning. At all stages of the school, including the EYFS, pupils of all abilities including those with SEND, EAL and the more able make at least good and often excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The extensive and well-planned curriculum encompasses a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Teachers throughout the school have high expectations and use a wide range of teaching methods to enable pupils to succeed. Pupils take great pride in their work. Marking and assessment of work are usually in line with school and departmental policies. Data from a range of assessments are not yet fully or consistently collated in order to monitor and evaluate the overall progress of individual pupils and groups as they move through the school. By the end of the EYFS, the majority of children meet the expected levels of development for their age, with many exceeding them. Most pupils leaving the school gain their first choice place in competitive entry to senior independent schools, and each year a considerable number are awarded academic, music, art and sporting scholarships.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent, supporting the school's aim of fostering a happy community based on mutual respect. Pupils are exceptionally well-behaved and polite. They care about others and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Throughout the school, numerous opportunities are provided for reflection. In particular, the woodland learning area provides a natural and inspiring focal point. From an early age, pupils understand the need for rules and the importance of taking responsibility for their behaviour. The quality of the boarding education is good. Pupils are positive about their boarding experiences, although the current arrangements do not provide opportunities for pupils to enhance their leadership skills within boarding. A focus on excellent levels of pastoral care, welfare, health and safety, and meeting the personal needs of all pupils, combined with a new personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme supported by form tutors, underpins the school's aim of providing a caring environment in which pupils can learn.
- 2.3 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is excellent. Governors are highly committed to the school, frequently attending formal and informal events. They diligently monitor all aspects of the school including staffing, pastoral education, finance, safeguarding, the EYFS and boarding. Senior leaders are committed to developing leadership throughout the school. There is a clear direction with a strong emphasis upon achieving excellence in teaching and learning. Links with parents are excellent. High levels of parental satisfaction were expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaires and during discussions.

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

1. Collate the various data monitoring systems to provide a clear overview of the progress and attainment of all pupils as they move through the school.
2. Extend the recently agreed systems to provide opportunities for boarding pupils to have responsibility and for all pupils to express their views.

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 Since the previous inspection the school continues to fulfil its aims to prepare children for the future stages of their education and to strive for excellence. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents and pupils who responded stated that they were pleased with the progress made by pupils. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate high levels of knowledge and understanding, and well-developed skills. Key factors supporting high achievement are the broad curriculum, excellent teaching, and the pupils' outstanding attitudes towards their learning. Most pupils gain their first choice place in competitive entry to senior independent schools, and each year a considerable number are awarded academic, music, art and sporting scholarships.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, progress and outcomes are excellent for all children, including those with SEND, EAL and those identified as more able. By the end of the EYFS, the majority of children meet the expected levels of development for their age, with many exceeding them. All can count confidently including the Nursery children. The older children are beginning to count in tens and to manipulate numbers to twenty or beyond. Their phonic knowledge is excellent and most are able to blend sounds to support their reading and writing. Most children can form their letters correctly and spell simple words. Some are able to spell more complex words and to write simple sentences using punctuation. They are all beginning to read, and some can read with great fluency, understanding and expression for their age. They listen with attentive delight to stories and many can think independently, predicting and suggesting reasons for the actions of various characters. Most of the children can speak clearly, and those with delayed speech are receiving effective help to progress. Additional support is provided for any child for whom it would be beneficial. The setting is stimulating and exciting. Children play, explore and develop their intellectual, creative, physical and personal, social and emotional abilities through a wide range of age-appropriate indoor and outdoor activities.
- 3.4 Pupils throughout the rest of the school demonstrate excellent literacy and numeracy skills because of the strong focus on these areas and the careful monitoring of individual progress. Pupils use the library to good effect. As they move through the school, they read and write with increasing fluency and for a range of purposes. Writing in all subjects is of a very high standard, showing clear evidence of critical thought and creativity. Artistic skills are exceptionally well developed, as the high standard of artwork produced in lessons and on display around the school clearly demonstrates. Pupils' creativity is also showcased in music lessons and in drama productions. The pupils' physical skills are highly developed as a result of the wide-range of opportunities provided as part of the curriculum and during break-times, including outstanding use of the woodland learning environment. Expert coaching by school staff and external coaches in a wide range of sports including swimming, football, cricket, tennis, gymnastics, trampolining and cross-country enables high achievement and success in regional and national inter-school competitions.
- 3.5 Pupils demonstrate an excellent ability in number, and confidently develop their own strategies for problem solving and applying mathematics in a practical way. They acquire a high level of understanding of scientific concepts and investigative skills are suitably developed. Good use is made of information and communication

technology (ICT) across the curriculum and pupils display an excellent level of competence when using it. In all lessons, interviews and informal conversations, pupils are confident, open and articulate in explaining their views and feelings. They are highly effective listeners, able to think critically and logically responding thoughtfully to one another and to their teachers.

- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but, on the evidence available, from discussions with pupils, observation of their learning and scrutiny of their written work, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make at least good and often excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. More able pupils make excellent progress because they are provided with challenge, support and guidance in most subjects. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress in relation to their starting points because they receive carefully targeted support within the classroom, individually with specialist teachers and in small groups. This is evident in their high levels of self-esteem and excellent improvement in their reading, spelling and numeracy skills.
- 3.7 Pupils eagerly participate both as individuals and collaboratively in the wide range of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities and extra-curricular activities provided by the school, where they achieve high standards, making an effective contribution to their personal development. Pupils set themselves challenging personal targets and willingly take part in many teams, proudly representing their school. There are numerous individual and team successes at local and regional level including first place in cross-country, riding, football, hockey and golf. Many pupils take part in the choir and learn musical instruments; each year a considerable number of pupils achieve distinction and merit awards in instrumental music examinations. Several pupils also gain distinction in the English Speaking Board examinations. All pupils enjoy the opportunity to take part in a range of public events as part of the local community.
- 3.8 Pupils' achievements are enhanced by their high levels of motivation and positive attitude to all aspects of school life. They demonstrate initiative when working individually and collaboratively, and are caring and considerate toward one another. A great strength of the school is the way that pupils encourage one another to participate and try their best, delighting in the personal success of others. Pupils are caring, polite and exceptionally well behaved.

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 school has refined and enhanced the breadth and quality of the curriculum enabling pupils of all ages and abilities to develop a wide range of knowledge and skills in accordance with the school's ethos of valuing self and others, and its aim of preparing children for their future education. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children are offered an appropriate range of subjects and experiences.
- 3.11 The EYFS curriculum is followed in the Nursery and Reception. Curriculum planning is based on careful assessments incorporating the interests and individual needs of the children. It is enhanced by subject teaching in music and physical education (PE). This strongly supports their excellent achievement where the majority reach

expected levels of development and many exceed them, enabling the needs of all children, including those with SEND and EAL, to be met.

- 3.12 From Years 1 to 6 the curriculum broadly follows the National Curriculum and prepares for Common Entrance and other independent and maintained examinations in Years 7 and 8. Pupils in the pre-prep and middle school benefit from some specialist teaching in PE, music, languages and ICT. In the senior school all subjects are taught by specialist teachers. Setting in English and mathematics in the senior school enables teachers to plan appropriately according to ability. The curriculum covers more than the requisite areas of learning by including the teaching of French from the EYFS upwards and the introduction of Spanish, classical studies and Latin from Year 5. The grounds and outdoor learning environment provide a rich addition to the curriculum, enabling pupils to experience learning in its broadest and deepest sense. Themed and off-timetable days enrich the curriculum as well as highly motivating all pupils. In discussions, pupils stated how much they valued the range of subjects they are able to study and the variety within each one.
- 3.13 There has been an extensive review of the curriculum which has enabled the school to take into account recent changes to the National Curriculum. Curriculum maps and planning have been updated, the timetable revised and additional high-quality resources provided. This revision has enhanced transition between age-groups, and cohesion throughout subjects, ensuring that fundamental British values have been incorporated, and the curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' excellent achievements.
- 3.14 Music, art and sport feature strongly across the whole school curriculum. The library is attractive and well-resourced with a wide range of books suitable for all age-groups. Timetabled library lessons enable pupils to further develop their literacy and research skills. ICT is taught as a subject up to Year 8. Pupils are able to build-upon and enhance their ICT skills as ICT equipment is updated. The PSHEE programme contributes effectively to pupils' personal development including the topics of anti-bullying and e-safety. It effectively allows a balanced presentation of opposing views and teaches respect for all people. Careers experience is introduced through an expanded outreach programme which includes outside speakers, a Year 7 young entrepreneurs project and a Years 7 and 8 careers day.
- 3.15 Detailed monitoring enables the early identification of pupils with SEND. Comprehensive discussions involving staff, parents and relevant outside agencies ensure that individual education plans detail interventions to be implemented in class, in small groups or individually. Older pupils are able to attend meetings with their parents where information is shared, including their targets and what they need to do to improve. For the younger pupils particular attention is paid to the vital areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing, so that they are well prepared to access all areas of the curriculum. Lesson-planning generally incorporates extension and challenge work based upon investigation and problem-solving so that more able pupils are effectively challenged, and specialist coaching is provided for pupils with sporting or creative talents. Emphasis on including the key skills of listening, speaking, literacy and numeracy in all subjects enables excellent access to the wider curriculum, and in the upper years effectively supports preparation towards senior school entry and scholarships.
- 3.16 An excellent range of educational visits further enhances the curriculum. For example, Year 8 begin their final year with a fieldwork and leadership trip to the Isle

of Wight and end it with an excellent leavers' programme which includes a week's residential visit to an outward bound centre, putting on a play and a variety of trips including visiting the Houses of Parliament.

- 3.17 A wide range of extra-curricular activities encourages the pupils to develop and extend their interests, abilities and knowledge in many sporting and creative areas. Astronomy, philosophy and stage make-up are some examples of the activities available. A full programme of fixtures gives all pupils the opportunity to participate and represent their school. The school's strong links with the local community and their support of many local, national and international charities enable pupils to understand a range of views, to develop an understanding of life in the wider world and empathy for those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils spoke movingly of how and why they supported aid to Nepal following the recent earthquakes in the Himalayas. Pupils also take part in local art competitions and pay regular visits to the community hospital. Primary schools are invited to take part in an annual writing workshop, and the local community also has access to the school's excellent facilities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 Throughout the school there is a climate of learning and mutual respect. Many dedicated teachers and support staff work tirelessly to motivate and inspire pupils, supporting the school's aims of recognising and meeting individual needs, discovering and developing the gifts within each child, striving for excellence and preparing children for the future stages of their education.
- 3.20 Staff in the EYFS have high expectations and are extremely knowledgeable about how young children learn. Comprehensive assessments underpin planning which is detailed and flexible, enabling children's individual interests and needs to be accommodated. Great care is taken to provide children with a range of appropriate resources and experiences that motivate them and support their learning. For example, in the Nursery, children eagerly engaged with a display about mini-beasts relishing the experience of putting their hands in soil and using magnifying glasses. Highly effective teaching, including specialist teaching in music and physical education (PE), enables all children in the setting to make rapid progress, particularly in physical, personal, social and emotional development and in acquiring communication and language skills.
- 3.21 Curriculum and lesson-planning are enhanced by teachers' excellent subject knowledge. They take great care to cover all aspects of the curriculum including PSHEE and the promotion of fundamental British values. They plan creative, stimulating and challenging lessons to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities including the more able. Teachers pay close attention to individual education plans provided for pupils with SEND and EAL, ensuring that their needs are met during individual, group and class lessons. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They liaise closely with teaching staff in order to ensure that their support of individuals and groups enables all pupils to make the best possible progress. Interactive whiteboards are used confidently by all teachers throughout the school, and ICT is frequently incorporated into all appropriate areas of the curriculum. Attractive interactive displays throughout the school reinforce and extend learning. For example, pupils were observed spending considerable time discussing a display about the school's values and how they had contributed to it.

- 3.22 Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, underpinned by an ethos of tolerance and respect. Most teachers provide clear learning intentions and success criteria for pupils to be able to continually evaluate their own learning. Staff have high expectations and use a wide range of teaching methods to enable pupils to work independently and collaboratively in order to research, ask questions and creatively solve problems. Time is efficiently managed and resources well-used. Pupils' understanding is regularly checked through effective questioning which requires extended and thoughtful responses. As an example, pupils were able to identify the elements of outstanding performance and to apply these practically when learning to dance individually, in pairs and as a group.
- 3.23 The assessment of pupils is thorough. Teachers use the wide range of information gathered from observations, questioning and marking to tailor their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, and this makes a strong contribution to their achievements. In class, oral, self and peer assessments enable pupils to have immediate help in order to improve the quality of their work. This continuous assessment of pupils' progress is supplemented by regular class testing and year group examinations. These data are beginning to be analysed at senior management level, and some of it is available to all teachers. However, data are not yet fully or consistently collated in order to monitor and evaluate the overall progress of individual pupils and groups as they move through the whole school. A recent review of marking has led to a new whole school policy. Marking and assessment of work are usually in line with school and departmental policies, and there are excellent examples of in-depth assessment against learning criteria that enhance pupils' learning and progress. In a small number of subjects, marking lacks constructive comment and does not make clear to pupils how they can improve their work.
- 3.24 Overall, the school meets the recommendation from the previous inspection to ensure that all teaching and marking is as good as the best. All of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires felt that they were making good progress. A small minority of pupils did not feel that their homework helped them to learn. During interviews pupils proudly talked about their work and the ways in which a variety of homework tasks supported their learning. Inspectors also saw many examples of appropriate homework when scrutinising a variety of work from a wide range of year groups and subjects. Pupils repeatedly stated that they are confident about asking for help, find the lessons to be extremely interesting and enjoyable, and that targets and helpful comments written by teachers in their books enabled them to improve. They spoke with great maturity with regard to how time to reflect and self-evaluation encouraged them to think about what they have learnt and the next steps they need to take. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that their children are making good progress at the school. During interviews parents strongly confirmed that their children were well-prepared for the next step in their education.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal qualities are well-developed in accordance with the school's aim of fostering a happy community based on mutual respect. Excellent pastoral care, supportive teaching and opportunities to take part in a wide range of musical, sporting and other activities enable pupils to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in a supportive and nurturing environment.
- 4.3 Children in the EYFS are happy and enthusiastic. Their behaviour is excellent, they know the routines and what is expected of them. They are able to share, demonstrating respect and tolerance for each other's differences. All children in the setting are confident when talking to adults. They are able to work, share and play co-operatively as observed when they were collecting twigs and leaves to record on a tally chart, and when enjoying a noodle snack as part of their Chinese travel topic. Nursery, Reception and Year 1 staff work closely together to ensure that there is a smooth transition. Children are provided with regular opportunities to visit their new rooms, meet their new teachers and play with their new friends.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Teachers support all pupils in developing self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils reflect effectively on the non-material aspects of life throughout the day including regular attendance at assemblies and chapel. As examples, pupils and staff are given opportunities to reflect when pupils play musical instruments during assemblies, artwork displays around the school celebrate the beauty of the surroundings, and the pupils' understanding of nature and the natural world is enhanced whilst playing in the inspiring woodland environment. Pupils' strong awareness of faith is raised during religious studies (RS) lessons where a conscientious effort goes into studying a wide range of faiths in depth, with respect for belief.
- 4.5 Pupils' moral development is excellent. From an early age they understand the difference between right and wrong, the need for rules and the importance of taking responsibility for their behaviour. During interviews older pupils expressed the importance of making one's own decisions and standing up for what one believes to be important. Pupils make informed decisions and judgements because they are carefully guided by staff to develop emotionally. For example, younger pupils maturely discussed accepting and celebrating ways in which people are different.
- 4.6 The fundamental school value that pupils should value themselves and others is widely upheld. Pupils care about others, and are keen to support a wide range of local, national and international charities. They understand and generally support the recently revised system of rewards and sanctions where awards are given for good behaviour, thoughtfulness and kindness as well as for academic achievement. Agreed consequences for making wrong choices facilitate discussion and understanding of how to apologise, make amends and improve one's behaviour.
- 4.7 Pupils show a strong sense of social awareness. They develop a mature awareness of fundamental social issues and the contribution they can make to resolving them through a wide range of activities including the study of modern literature and lively debates. In English a class reader was used to develop awareness of the wider issues of tolerance and racial discrimination. Pupils linked what they had read to

recent events both in the UK and abroad. The whole school was recently involved in their own elections, allowing pupils to learn more about the public institutions, democracy and the rule of law in England. Pupils are able to argue from both sides and to pose challenging questions on the nature of belief and human rights, as exemplified during a lesson on Oliver Cromwell. They are able to consider the part they play in society and ways in which they can take responsibility for their actions as observed during assemblies and form times. Pupils demonstrate initiative and are eager to assume a range of roles within the school including supporting the new system of electing termly head girls and head boys, and helping the younger pupils with their reading and learning. In the middle and senior parts of the school pupils are appointed as ambassadors. They wear a special, highly regarded badge and hold the office for a term before formally passing it on to another pupil. Pupils understand the importance of sharing and learning from each other, both within their own peer group and also across the different age ranges. At lunch each day older pupils sit with the younger ones, sharing their experiences and offering support and friendship. This reflects and contributes towards the strong family ethos of the school.

- 4.8 Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of other cultures and faiths extremely well through visits by speakers and religious representatives, displays which include a variety of artefacts, and the celebration of a wide variety of religious festivals. Lively debates in subjects such as history and RS and in other areas of school life encourage pupils to be tolerant of different cultural traditions, whilst acquiring appreciation of, and respect for, their own culture.
- 4.9 Pupils have an excellent standard of all round personal development by the time they leave the school. They are mature and thoughtful with an excellent understanding of life in British society and of the wider world.

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

- 4.10 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.11 These arrangements support the school's aim to provide a caring environment in which pupils can learn and make progress in their personal development.
- 4.12 Children in the EYFS are happy and settled. They know that they have a key person who will listen to them and care for them. Children leave their parents confidently and settle quickly into their busy and productive day, enjoying the company of their friends and behaving extremely well. They are supported in developing positive relationships within a secure and safe environment. Most can manage their own personal hygiene and they enjoy excellent healthy and nutritious snacks which are provided by the setting. Meals are served in the dining room and great care is taken to ensure that provision is made for all dietary needs. Children are given a range of exciting opportunities to exercise, particularly enjoying playing freely in their stimulating outdoor learning areas.
- 4.13 The system for pastoral care has been evaluated and revised and a comprehensive PSHEE policy and scheme is now used, including a checklist of agreed core values. Excellent form tutor times were observed where teachers enhance their pastoral role by enabling discussions as part of the PSHEE programme. Pupils are enthusiastic with regard to this approach, and said that they enjoyed discussing topics such as body image, friendship and integrity.

- 4.14 Members of staff work hard to know their pupils extremely well and provide excellent role models. Senior leadership organises a staff meeting each week at which only the pastoral care of the pupils is discussed. Through these meetings, staff have developed specific and non-judgemental vocabulary to enable them to help pupils in a sensitive and age-appropriate way. Staff are highly aware of the pastoral needs of pupils with SEND and EAL and ensure they are met. A detailed accessibility plan is carried out in practice to enable all pupils, including those with SEND, to access the broad education offered by the school.
- 4.15 During the inspection pupils repeatedly confirmed that they have someone to whom they can turn if they have worries or concerns. Notices around the school remind pupils of the availability of the independent listener who visits the school regularly and can be contacted in various ways, including by the use of a note in one of the two worry boxes available in the pre-prep corridor and in the playground.
- 4.16 Behavioural systems help all pupils to relate very well with each other. A buddy system operates throughout the day including at mealtimes, providing excellent opportunities for boys and girls of different ages to socialise. All around the school, out-of-doors during break times and in the school dining room at meal times, excellent, positive inter-pupil relationships are clearly evident, and relationships with staff are also strong.
- 4.17 Pupils are taught the importance of a balanced diet and are encouraged to eat healthy foods. Pupils confirmed during interviews that they are encouraged by their teachers and by signs displayed in the dining-room to select from the healthy options available. They also stated that the food had improved markedly in recent weeks, and that their requests for different items on the menu through the recently formed food committee had been listened to, and, in the main, acted upon. Pupils throughout the school have many opportunities to be physically active. Each week, younger pupils have one hour of games, a swimming lesson and one hour in the woodland learning environment. Older pupils also have timetabled games each day. In addition, they are extremely active playing improvised games during their break times. Many of the numerous after-school activities also involve physical activity.
- 4.18 Exceptionally high standards of behaviour are both expected and achieved. Pupils move around the school in a quiet and purposeful way and there is an air of calm in the corridors and communal areas. An excellent graded system of sanctions is known and understood by most pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents expressed their concern about the way in which the school deals with any bullying. Pupils confirm that there is very little bullying in the school. They are confident that any form of bullying or harassment, including cyber-bullying, is seen as completely unacceptable by the school community. Pupils and parents confirmed during discussions that, if there is any bullying, it is dealt with sensitively and effectively, and that senior staff are given the time and resources to enable this to happen; inspectors agree with this view. Detailed records examined confirm that the school is committed to managing any incidence of bullying taking into account the age and circumstances of the pupils concerned.
- 4.19 The school actively encourages pupils to share their views about matters that concern them. Pupils complete an annual questionnaire, which includes questions about food and bullying. They give feedback to the excellent pupil forum that regularly takes place, and they are also involved in frequent discussions in tutor groups. One example of improvements that have taken place at the request of the

forum is the provision of a salad bar at lunch time. Nonetheless, a small minority of pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that their views are not taken into account. The school is aware that it has not yet fully developed and publicised current systems in order to enable the voice of the pupils to be clearly heard.

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

- 4.20 The arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent.
- 4.21 The school places a high priority on welfare and safeguarding throughout the school, including provision for pupils with SEND and those in the EYFS, in line with its aim to provide a safe, healthy and caring environment in which children may live and learn. Keeping safe, including e-safety, is strongly incorporated into the curriculum and PSHEE programme. The overwhelming majority of parents stated in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires that their children feel safe and happy at school.
- 4.22 The safeguarding policy and procedures are comprehensive and detailed, taking into account recent legislation, official guidance and the context of the school. A designated senior lead (DSL), who has a suitably trained deputy, oversees safeguarding matters, and ensures that staff, volunteers and governors receive appropriate induction and training in line with the local safeguarding children board. All staff are issued with a laminated pocket-size card to remind them of the correct child protection procedures. A range of teaching and non-teaching staff referred to these cards when asked about child protection procedures. They confidently spoke about their training, and being able to refer any concerns to the DSL, demonstrating that this is a school where everyone takes responsibility for keeping children safe. In the EYFS, children's welfare is promoted effectively and staff ensure the children are safeguarded
- 4.23 Health and safety procedures are excellent. Rigorous precautions are taken to minimise risks from fire and other hazards. Procedures and equipment are regularly checked and staff are aware of the fire exits and routes, which are clearly displayed throughout the school. Fire drills are practised regularly and accurate records kept centrally. Any safety issues are promptly resolved. In addition, a full half-termly health and safety check is carried out. Safety protocols in specialist areas are diligently observed and chemicals are stored correctly. Thorough risk assessments are carried out across the school site and for all extra-curricular activities and off-site visits. First aid training is given a high priority. Sixty staff are qualified first-aiders, ten of whom are qualified to a higher level including paediatric first aid. The school's matrons ensure that pupils who are sick or injured are well cared for. The medical centre follows excellent policies and protocols, and record-keeping is meticulous.
- 4.24 Admission and attendance records are accurately maintained and stored appropriately.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.25 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.26 The outcomes for boarders are good. Boarding is currently available on a flexible basis on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays every week and occasionally on Fridays. The number of boarders, who range from Year 4 to Year 8, varies from a few to approximately twenty on any one night according to need and availability. Relationships across the community are good and boarders are integrated into the school. However, opportunities to assume responsibilities within boarding are limited. Most boarders stated during interviews that they enjoy boarding and there is a range of appropriate adults to turn to regarding personal issues, including residential house staff and an independent listener. Older boarders are confident in talking to adults and generally boarders are loyal to each other and to the school. The experience of boarding is said to be fun, and is warmly praised by many pupils and parents.
- 4.27 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The induction process for new boarders has been well organised, the promotion of boarders' health is effective and arrangements for medical care are good. Arrangements for boarders who are unwell are adequate. The flexi nature of the provision means that most boarders live near to the school and can usually return home if they become ill. During interviews, boarders stated they are well looked after if they feel unwell or are injured. They are positive with regard to the food that is provided, with especial praise for breakfast and for the supper that is served before bedtime. The recommendation from the previous boarding welfare inspection concerning the range of healthy snacks available in the evening has been satisfactorily resolved. Drinking water is readily available throughout the school and tuck is provided during the evenings. The recommendation from the previous boarding welfare inspection concerning the range of healthy snacks available in the evening has been satisfactorily resolved. Boarders' laundry is managed centrally and the housekeeping department ensures that the premises are kept to a high standard of hygiene. Boarders are organised by age, in separate groups of boys and girls in dormitories catering for between four and ten boarders. A programme of refurbishment is well underway. The rooms are bright, and cheerful with some displays highlighting boarding activities. Boarders bring the belongings they require each time they choose to flexi-board. They are provided with appropriate storage, and in interview stated that they felt their belongings were safe. Information for parents is disseminated by electronic mail and via the school newsletter. There is a suitable complaints procedure and health and safety requirements are fully met. The general opinion in discussion groups was that the activities programme was good, that there was enough free-time, and that they could be quiet or alone should they wish to be so. Parents of boarders stated during interview that their children enjoy boarding.
- 4.28 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. Procedures and practices ensure that boarders are safe and, during interviews, boarders agreed. Safeguarding and recruitment checks are carried out correctly. Fire evacuation drills are practised at least once a term in boarding time. An effective anti-bullying policy ensures that behaviour is excellent. Bullying is very rare, sanctions are infrequently needed, and in discussion pupils report them to be fair. All staff associated with boarding have undertaken safeguarding training and know the signs of abuse to look out for, the procedures to follow, and who to contact should an incident occur or a disclosure be made. The whereabouts of boarders is regularly monitored and the missing person policy is known by staff, though it has yet to be used. Boarders are

at all times under the responsibility of suitably trained members of staff and there are always at least two adults, one male and one female, on call throughout each night. Visitors are signed in to school and access to the boarders' rooms is restricted.

- 4.29 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. The leadership of boarding participates in the school's weekly pastoral meetings. This ensures that the needs of boarders are considered and met by all staff. Boarding documentation and policies are up-to-date and these and the boarding standards are well known to staff. A statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is made available to parents, pupils and staff and furthers the aims of the school. Residential boarding staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Induction and initial appraisal of the newly appointed leadership of boarding have contributed to the identification of objectives for boarding that are encompassed in the school development plan. The school is aware that boarding practice is not yet fully developed in the way that it wishes. Governors and the school's leadership are considering further development of boarding in line with the school's values and aims.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors are highly committed to the school. They work closely with the school's leadership in order to implement a shared vision underpinned by the school's values and aims. Following excellent self-evaluation, the board has recruited new governors to ensure that there is a balance of expertise across a range of fields including education, business, finance and marketing. Some of the governors are former pupils, or former parents, which further strengthens the composition of the board. Governors receive a comprehensive induction on appointment, and regular update training thereafter. They maintain a very well-informed oversight of the school, including feedback from governors who have particular responsibility for welfare and safeguarding, the EYFS and boarding.
- 5.3 The recent development of an education committee, combined with regular and focussed meetings, has enabled the board to communicate more effectively and to efficiently meet its legal responsibilities, including meeting the recommendations from the previous inspections. The school's leadership provides detailed reports for governors, and staff are invited to give presentations. Governors are fully involved in strategic planning and work effectively with senior managers and the staff to consider key priorities and the future development of the school. Minutes from committee meetings indicate that governors have a strong awareness of standards in the school, and that they diligently monitor all aspects including staffing, pastoral education, finance, safeguarding, the EYFS and boarding. All governors take part in the annual review of child protection, which includes ensuring that policies and procedures are updated and implemented, appropriate training is undertaken and that the single central register of appointments is accurately maintained.
- 5.4 Governors exercise prudent financial management. Their thorough understanding of the school, commitment to its future and wise investment enables them to oversee regular maintenance of the school buildings and grounds, extensive projects such as the building of the pre-prep hall, and the provision of a wide range of educational and material resources. Governors frequently attend formal and informal events, and are regularly invited by staff to visit lessons. These experiences enable governors to have a comprehensive understanding of the school and its community. Governors provide both support and challenge, and are an important and integral part of the school's organisation, development and future.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The senior management team has been restructured and extended to include an assistant head. Responsibilities and reporting lines have been clarified and the management team now includes leaders from all areas of the school. There is a strong commitment to developing leadership throughout the school in order to continually raise standards, and to meet the school's aim to strive for excellence.

- 5.7 There is a reflective, dynamic and collegiate approach to the leadership of the school. Self-evaluation and school development planning is excellent. All members of the school community have contributed to a clear and practical plan that has the well-being and achievement of the school's pupils as its main priority. The ethos, values and direction of the school are clearly articulated. They promote respect and care for others and an appreciation of a democratic society within the wider world. Substantial and rapid progress has been made in many areas including meeting the recommendation from the school's previous inspection to ensure that all teaching and marking is as good as the best. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning and regular review of performance are carried out in order to support a process of continuous improvement.
- 5.8 The leadership and management of the EYFS is excellent. Roles and responsibilities are clearly identified and staff enthusiastically take-up training opportunities. Excellent teamwork is focused on self-evaluation and improvement, enabling children to achieve the best possible outcomes. Senior leaders diligently fulfil their responsibilities to oversee the educational programmes and the learning and development requirements of the EYFS in full. The excellent range of resources for indoor and outdoor learning are well-used to support children's learning.
- 5.9 Innovative leadership training and the coaching of individuals and teams has had a positive impact throughout the school. Heads of department speak enthusiastically about how their development as leaders has enabled them to reflect deeply, evaluate accurately and honestly, and to run their departments more effectively. A strength of the school is the excellent communication between leaders and the developing cohesion across departments and subjects, including the EYFS.
- 5.10 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining suitably-qualified staff, and all required checks and records are undertaken. All staff receive appropriate and regular training in matters of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. A comprehensive system of appraisal, peer observations and sharing of effective practice has been instigated as part of the school development plan. In addition, regular formal and informal staff supervision is implemented in the EYFS.
- 5.11 Links with parents are excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents overwhelmingly indicated that they were extremely positive about the education and care that their children receive. Parents are welcome throughout the school, and have many opportunities to become involved in its life and work, including attending the headmaster's coffee mornings, concerts and tea after matches. The active parents' association works hard to bring members of the school together by means of regular events such as social evenings and charity events. There are excellent lines of communication and information about school life is plentiful. The required information is provided through a comprehensive website alongside informative parental handbooks. The detailed weekly newsletters provide frequent updates on school life. Parents stated during discussions that they value the courteous and helpful administrative staff, and the prompt response they receive to any questions or concerns. Parents of prospective pupils have access to excellent information through the school prospectus, website and visits.
- 5.12 Parents are provided with comprehensive evidence about progress in the EYFS, and informative reports for older pupils. These demonstrate that teachers know pupils well, including the setting of clear individual targets towards which pupils work. Additionally, regular opportunities to meet teachers for formal and informal meetings enable parents to gain a full picture of their children's progress and achievements.

Reports are in the process of being revised to take into account recent changes in the curriculum, and to clarify pupil progress and attainment against national norms. Parents praise the way in which both they and the pupils are prepared for their transition to senior schools. Special evening meetings are held at which representatives of local senior schools are invited to speak, and parents are appreciative of the manner in which the senior staff provide advice with regard to suitable future educational institutions for parents to consider for their children.

- 5.13 The school has a clear and appropriate complaints policy which is readily available for parents. Detailed records are maintained of any concerns or complaints and the actions taken to resolve them. These are monitored by the chair of governors. Senior staff throughout the school are highly visible during the day enabling parents to have informal discussions with regard to any concerns they may have, and for most issues to be immediately resolved.

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