



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
KENT COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Kent College Preparatory School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Kent College Preparatory School
DfE Number	886/6071
Registered Charity Number	307920
Address	Kent College Preparatory School Old Church Road Pembury Tunbridge Wells Kent TN2 4AX England
Telephone Number	01892 820204
Fax Number	01892 820221
Email Address	prepschool@kentcollege.kent.sch.uk
Head	Mrs Ann Lawson
Chair of Governors	Mr Edmund Waterhouse
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	183
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 20 5-11: 163
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 175
Number of Boarders	Total: 8
	Full: 4 Weekly: 1 Flexi: 3
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Philippa C Dabin
EYFS Gender	Girls
Inspection Dates	01 Dec to 04 Dec 2015

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI intermediate boarding inspection was in October 2012 and the previous ISI second cycle inspection was in November 2009.

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.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with 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 Jane Chesterfield	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Prudence Lynch	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mr Peter Nicholson	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Susan Rix	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Kent College Pembury is an independent girls' boarding and day school, for pupils aged 3 to 18. It was founded in 1886 in Folkestone by the Wesleyan Methodist Schools' Association. In 1939 the school moved to its current location, in a substantially refurbished and developed Victorian manor house on a 75-acre rural parkland site in the village of Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells. Today, Kent College Pembury is an interdenominational Christian school, welcoming girls of all faiths and backgrounds and it comprises two schools, a senior school for girls aged from 11 to 18 and a preparatory school for girls aged from 3 to 11. The two schools share the same site and facilities. The school is one of ten within the Methodist Independent Schools' Trust. Oversight of the school is delegated to a local governing body.
- 1.2 The school aims to: provide all pupils with a balanced and well-rounded education inside and outside of the classroom; maintain a tolerant and supportive ethos, based upon mutual respect and firmly grounded in Christian principles; and, to meet the individual needs of each pupil, ensuring each one has every opportunity to gain in confidence and to excel.
- 1.3 The school offers Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision to children in its Nursery and Reception classes. There are currently 183 pupils on roll, 20 of whom are in the EYFS. Pupils may board from the age of nine, and prep school boarders share a house with the youngest senior school boarders. Since the previous inspection, a new chair and a new vice chair of governors have taken up post and new deputy and assistant headteachers have been appointed. The school library has been refurbished.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the pupils is above the national average. Most pupils are of at least above average ability, with over a quarter having well above average ability. Few pupils have ability that is below average. Pupils come from mainly professional or business families, and a small proportion are from minority ethnic or overseas backgrounds.
- 1.5 Eighteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and sixteen of these receive specialist support from the school. No pupils currently have an education, health and care plan. Two pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), and one of these currently requires specialist support from the school.
- 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 Kent College Preparatory School is highly successful in meeting its aim of providing all pupils with a balanced and well-rounded education. From the EYFS onwards, pupils' achievement is excellent and they attain high standards in their work. They demonstrate intellectual curiosity and a love of learning. Pupils enjoy an excellent curriculum with many links between subjects, which make it both exciting and stimulating. They also have many opportunities to discover new skills and develop new talents in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. There are not always opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) in their lessons. Teaching throughout the school is of a consistently excellent quality. Its key strength is the way in which teachers match work to the needs of each pupil, so that all abilities have the chance to achieve as well as they can. Excellent systems for the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress have been established in Years 1 to 6, in line with the recommendation of the previous inspection. These are still being refined in the EYFS in order to fully utilise the data gathered.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. They are confident and self-aware, conscious of the natural world around them, and have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They are very keen to be a responsible member of the school community, and show respect for others. They are interested in, and tolerant of, other cultures. Pastoral care for pupils is excellent. Relationships at all levels are excellent, and pupils feel exceptionally happy and safe at school, including the children in the EYFS. Excellent attention is given to pupils' well-being and their welfare, health and safety. The boarding experience for pupils is excellent. They enjoy homely, comfortable surroundings, high-quality food, and exciting activities in their leisure time.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is good. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and maintain a clear oversight of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are developing closer links with the school and its staff to gain a greater insight into its daily life. Leadership and management of the school are excellent, including the EYFS setting. Senior staff have successfully tackled the recommendations from the previous inspection and secured great improvement in the consistency in the quality of teaching, leading to excellent outcomes for pupils. Parents are pleased with the school and what it offers their children. They are particularly satisfied with the range and quality of the provision, and the high quality care provided by the staff.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Create more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning across the curriculum from Nursery to Year 6.
 2. Build on current initiatives for developing greater involvement of governors in the daily life of the school.
 3. In the EYFS, create an integrated and useful system of data collection in order to analyse and track children's progress.

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 In the EYFS, the children achieve at a high level and make good, and sometimes excellent, progress according to their starting points, abilities and needs. By the end of Reception, most children reach or exceed the developmental levels typical for their age. Children with SEND and EAL make good progress because of the carefully individualised programmes and support they receive. The older children have an excellent understanding of letters and the sounds they make, which they use to write sentences independently. The younger children can count and recognise numbers to 10 and beyond. In their Christmas production, all of the EYFS children spoke with excellent clarity and sang with confidence and enthusiasm. The children explore, investigate and communicate well and become absorbed in their activities, whether in teacher-led sessions or in their chosen activities.
- 3.3 The school is highly successful in ensuring that its pupils are well educated in accordance with its aims, so that each one has every opportunity to gain confidence and excel. Pupils of all ages are thoughtful, confident and articulate speakers who listen carefully in class and offer carefully considered ideas and opinions. They are avid readers who are able to interpret the texts they choose with understanding and insight. They can match their writing styles easily to the demands of the situation. Older pupils, for example, were able to create eye-catching newspaper headlines in a history lesson. Pupils are adept at learning modern foreign languages and relish the challenge, both of familiar approaches to language structure in their French lessons, and the excitement of the unfamiliar, when they start learning Mandarin.
- 3.4 Pupils make the most of the many opportunities they have to be independent and creative in their learning, for example through project work and art work, and are able to apply logic in their thinking. Younger pupils, for example, were able to look at pictures of the seaside holidays past and present, and conclude that travel by steam train must be in the past, as such trains no longer run in many places. Pupils have a strong grasp of mathematics and are skilled in using ICT. They are enthusiastic gymnasts and swimmers, and energetically undertake a range of sports to a high level. Pupils regularly win national awards in gymnastics, and are successful in national music and drama examinations.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available from lesson observations, work scrutiny and school data, it is judged to be well above national age-related expectations. About half the Year 6 pupils each year pass selection tests to gain places at the senior school, and some are awarded scholarships, whilst a significant proportion pass local authority tests, allowing them to transfer to highly selective maintained schools in Year 7.
- 3.6 Throughout the school, as judged, pupils make excellent progress from their different starting points. Pupils with SEND or EAL make similarly strong progress to that of their classmates, because of the high quality support they receive. The progress of more able pupils is also excellent, because they are challenged to perform to the best of their ability. The consistently high quality of support and challenge for pupils of all abilities is a significant factor in their high attainment and progress.

3.7 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning throughout the school. Younger pupils already show that they can concentrate intently, answer questions coherently, and settle to work without fuss and without supervision. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a lively curiosity and a thirst for learning, and there is frequently a tangible air of enthusiasm in the classroom. Pupils have excellent team-working skills and are very supportive and thoughtful towards one another. They move to the next stage of their education with highly-developed skills for learning.

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

3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.9 In the EYFS, suitable programmes and activities cover the required seven areas of learning extremely well. Since the previous inspection, planning has been improved. It is based on half-termly themes and is adapted to follow children's interests and to ensure excellent progress for differing abilities. More able children are provided with weekly challenges to extend their learning. A stimulating range of activities, both indoors and outside, supports the children's independent learning. Children with SEND benefit from regular individual help to support their needs. Specialist teaching in French, drama and music effectively underpins the EYFS children's creativity and knowledge of the world. The children's physical development is greatly enhanced by specialist teaching in swimming, physical education (PE) and dance. Individual instruction in ICT enables the children to use various simple programmes with independence to support their learning across all areas.

3.10 Throughout the school, the curriculum fulfils its aims to provide all pupils with a balanced and well-rounded education inside and outside of the classroom, to meet the individual needs of each pupil and ensure each one has every opportunity to gain confidence and excel. The curriculum is stimulating and covers the requisite areas of learning and includes in-depth provision for pupils to gain a knowledge and understanding of all values inherent to modern British society. This was observed in work scrutinies of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and religious education (RE), in the observation of displays around the school and in the school's support of a school in Nepal.

3.11 The introduction of French in the Nursery and Mandarin in Year 6 enhances the pupils' linguistic abilities. Physical education is a notable strength of the school in the scope of activities offered. Generous staffing allows high levels of access to competitive team sports, and excellent use is made of the school's sports hall, swimming pool, netball and tennis courts and playing fields.

3.12 Creative and expressive studies are strongly represented in regular work. Older pupils learnt to evaluate critically one another's artwork and apply water colouring skills to still-life painting. English, mathematics and science are emphasised as key subjects, with regular, half-termly formal assessments.

3.13 The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) provision makes an excellent contribution to the curriculum and is effective in encouraging pupils to develop their understanding of themselves, other people and the wider world. Political issues are represented in a balanced way. Community links are strong, with local businesses supporting healthy eating initiatives, regular talks from the emergency service and visits from parents and grandparents of pupils to enhance pupils' understanding of such topics such as dental hygiene or twentieth century historical events. Pupils support worthy causes, such as a local hospice. The

school contributes to a group of local schools, which between them offer enrichment opportunities for more able pupils.

- 3.14 Curriculum planning is thorough, with comprehensive programmes of study underpinned by regular reviews by subject leaders and staff to ensure that they provide continuity and progression through the various phases of the school. Timetabling issues highlighted by the previous inspection have been thoroughly addressed. Provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is highly effective, and they have access to the full curriculum. There is an excellent match of work to different needs, observed in lessons throughout the school. Effective and sensitive help for individual pupils is provided through specialist learning support. Pupil education plans are thorough, regularly reviewed with both staff and parents and disseminated throughout the school. In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection, an excellent system for utilising formal assessment data to track pupils' needs is in place and all pupils in Year 4 are routinely screened for dyslexia.
- 3.15 The provision of extra-curricular clubs and activities is excellent. This was evident from the enthusiasm expressed by pupils in interviews and in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Pupils take advantage of a rich and varied programme which includes choir, orchestra, drama, swimming, gymnastics, trampoline, dance, silk painting, magazine, cookery, cross-country running and an eco-explorers club. The curriculum is enriched through numerous educational visits, such as the Year 5 residential outing to Norfolk and the Year 6 trip to France, as well as day trips to museums and facilities in nearby towns.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 The EYFS staff are highly knowledgeable about how children learn and expertly engage and motivate the children. Adult-led sessions to introduce a topic are followed up by a range of stimulating activities. In a session on words and the sounds that they make, for example, a new sound was introduced to the children and a range of teaching methods and practical activities was used highly effectively to reinforce their learning. The well-trained staff make detailed assessments of the EYFS children's knowledge, skills, understanding and interests through careful observations. These are used effectively to plan the next steps in the children's learning. Staff have a good understanding of the children's starting points because they make perceptive initial assessments and incorporate information from previous settings and from parents. A variety of methods are used to track the children's subsequent progress but these are not always used effectively to analyse any trends, make comparisons and measure progress. The setting provides an adequate range of resources which support the children's learning. However, the resources for independent and outdoor learning and adventurous activities are limited.
- 3.18 The school fully realises its aim to meet the individual needs of each pupil and ensure each one has every opportunity to gain confidence and excel. Throughout the school, the teaching is a strong contributory factor to the excellent achievement of the pupils; this was observed in all stages of the school. Teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' understanding so that they make rapid progress and attain high standards.

- 3.19 Teachers' subject knowledge and planning is excellent, based on a thorough evaluation and recognition of pupils' individual needs and abilities. Lesson plans are carefully prepared, based on well-established long term, medium term and weekly schedules. Independent research and enquiry are facilitated by the use of ICT. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills in their learning. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and cater effectively for their individual needs. The use of target setting has increased since the previous inspection, especially in mathematics and English. Teachers follow the school's marking scheme consistently and pupils appreciate the constructiveness of the annotations. They understand fully how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, lessons are characterised by lively and enthusiastic teaching and skilled questioning techniques, which maintain pupils' interest, reinforce their knowledge base and extend their learning whilst promoting discussion and co-operative learning. Pupils are routinely encouraged to work co-operatively in pairs or small groups and to contribute their insights to the lesson. This has a considerable impact in developing their communication skills and self-confidence. The tasks that pupils are required to do are varied and carefully matched to individual abilities.
- 3.21 More able pupils are well supported with extension tasks that promote independent thought and research and enhance their interest. Pupils with SEND and EAL are well known to their teachers and treated sensitively with assignments which stretch the pupils without overwhelming them. The mutual respect promoted by teachers and shown by pupils in appreciating and encouraging the contributions of all members of the class is a notable characteristic of the school. Teachers promote tolerance and respect, and provide a balanced view of political issues.
- 3.22 Teachers motivate pupils with praise and encouragement and the use of house points. Small class sizes mean that teachers can move around easily, assess pupils' progress and provide high-level individual support. Excellent examples of team teaching were observed, particularly in sport. Teachers routinely use a variety of strategies which capture and hold pupils' commitment and interest, and promote excellent behaviour. They provide excellent opportunities for pupils to make cross-curricular links between subjects.
- 3.23 Resources for pupils to use in the classroom are of good quality. Teachers use them well to support pupils' learning and to motivate them. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively across the school in all subjects. Display work in all classrooms is of high quality and promotes further enquiry and curiosity from pupils. The recently refurbished library is light, attractive and well-stocked, and plans are well developed to embed its use more extensively in the life of the school.
- 3.24 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils expressed high levels of satisfaction with the teaching at the school, feeling that teachers support them and encourage them to work independently, so that they can make good progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school successfully promotes the personal development of the pupils, preparing them for their life in the wider community in line with its aims. In the EYFS, the children's personal development is excellent. High standards of courtesy and values are consistently and effectively promoted; staff model appropriate behaviour and give praise and positive reinforcement. The children enjoy taking responsibility for simple daily tasks such as tidying the chairs and equipment. They understand the importance of co-operating and sharing. Through circle time, they are guided to respect and tolerate one another's differences. Children are able to plan, carry out and review their chosen activities, helping them to think for themselves and make appropriate decisions. The children are all highly aware of the school and class rules and of the importance of following them so all can feel safe and happy. Through this they are able to understand in a simple way how a democratic society functions. The children are prepared for their transition into the next class extremely well. This is greatly supported by visits to the next class and through generating their ideas on what they would put in a survival kit for Year 1.
- 4.3 The school actively and effectively promotes British social values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Prominent, lively corridor displays explain in child-friendly language how these values apply to young people. In a PSHE lesson, older pupils reflected maturely on appropriate responses to current political world issues and were able to refer to earlier lessons in which they had studied these topics.
- 4.4 Pupils' personal qualities develop strongly, in line with the aims of the school. Pupils are confident and self-aware. They show maturity, understanding and concern for each other. This mutual support was shown in every lesson observed. Pupils are generous and positive, with a high level of spiritual awareness and self-esteem, responding effectively to the culture of praise and encouragement which permeates the school. Older pupils highlighted how supportive fellow sports team members are, even if they perform badly. The spacious rural setting helps pupils appreciate the non-material aspects of life. In assemblies, PSHE and RE lessons, pupils enjoy exploring ethical and spiritual issues. During one lesson, pupils reflected maturely on what makes them a unique person.
- 4.5 Pupils have an instinctive sense of right and wrong. They show consideration for their peers and adults and live out the codes of good conduct, mutual respect and care encouraged by the school from their earliest years. In a classroom display the pupils recognised that their behaviour affected their rights and the rights of others. In a school council meeting, together with staff, pupils sensibly discussed appropriate consequences for bad behaviour.
- 4.6 Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. Opportunities include the school council, a 'buddy' system, becoming house leaders and head girls, as well as showing visitors round the school and daily tasks, such as giving out class registers. Year 6 pupils felt looking out for younger pupils helped them prepare for the next stage of their education. Pupils understand the needs of others; they select the charities they wish

to support, such as the local mayor's charity which provides Christmas gifts for children less fortunate than themselves.

- 4.7 Pupils have a good understanding and respect for each other's faiths and are interested in other cultures. A Year 4 class, for example, enjoyed trying unfamiliar Italian foods. Pupils welcome opportunities to spend time with people from different backgrounds and appreciate the value of difference. They relish the chance to perform in music or drama productions, and have a love of and appreciation for the visual arts.
- 4.8 Pupils have a good knowledge of English law, public institutions and services. They relish opportunities to practise democracy at school, primarily via the school council. In a classroom display pupils declared, 'we have a say in what happens in our school and vote for who represents us'. Pupils confidently leave the prep school with excellent personal skills that equip them very well to succeed in the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care excellent.
- 4.10 Throughout the EYFS, pastoral care is of a high quality. The staff are committed to providing a happy, caring and purposeful environment for the children. They know the children in their care extremely well and sensitively guide them to develop respect for one another, to share and co-operate so that they develop positive relationships with their teachers and with each other. Playtimes are carefully supervised. After play, time is given to discussing, 'How was your playtime?', encouraging the children to articulate their feelings, and resolve any difficulties they have experienced. The warm and friendly relations between the children in the EYFS and the older pupils in the school are reflected in the extremely harmonious and constructive atmosphere in the after-school care provision. Children are helped to understand the importance of healthy eating by the provision of nutritious lunches and healthy snacks and by topic work on this subject, including a visit to a local supermarket. Politeness and good behaviour are consistently promoted, along with the importance of their personal hygiene. Physical activity is encouraged in the many sessions taught by specialist PE, swimming and dance teachers, as well as in informal outdoor play and activities.
- 4.11 Staff throughout the school know their pupils extremely well and provide a high level of pastoral care, ensuring that pupils are well looked after and that their individual needs are fully catered for. A play therapy counsellor, who visits the school once a week, supports pupils individually and talks to classes about relevant topics. Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptionally strong. Staff make an extra effort to support them socially and in their learning, and pupils feel individually known and valued. The pupils are extremely happy at school, feel secure and cared for, and are confident that there are staff members they can turn to at any time for help and encouragement.
- 4.12 The school provides nutritious, healthy food which is well-prepared, well-balanced and very popular. Pupils greatly appreciate the many opportunities to exercise through the full and varied PE programme and extra-curricular activities.
- 4.13 The school behaviour policy is effectively implemented in practice and school records show that any poor behaviour that might occur is investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken. In the parental questionnaires, a small minority of

parents felt the school did not deal well with cases of bullying. Inspection evidence shows that the school deals effectively with such cases and that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying. All possible measures have been taken to accommodate pupils with SEND and there is a suitable accessibility plan to improve educational access for these pupils.

- 4.14 There is a strong sense of community and there are excellent opportunities for pupils' views to be heard via the school council and through the strong day-to-day relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils described a number of initiatives suggested by the school council which have subsequently been implemented by the school, such as arrangements for the school disco.

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 In the EYFS, the children's welfare is promoted highly effectively. Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures and are strongly aware of what to do if there is a concern about a child. All staff have received the necessary checks before commencing employment. An appropriate number of staff are trained in paediatric first aid and all staff have regular first-aid training. There are effective procedures for the administration of medicines. Off-site visits are well planned and assessed for risks. Classrooms and equipment are regularly checked to ensure the children are cared for in a safe and secure environment.
- 4.17 The school is rigorous in its attention to all child protection and staff recruitment arrangements and implements all official guidance effectively. The safeguarding of pupils is taken very seriously. All staff undergo the appropriate level of training and this is regularly updated. Inter-agency training to a higher level is undertaken by those with a designated safeguarding role. The checks to ensure the suitability of staff are carried out thoroughly and the school's single central register of appointments is scrupulously maintained. All staff are trained in the arrangements to prevent radicalisation and extremism.
- 4.18 The school has comprehensive health and safety policies, including effective provision for those with SEND. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills are held and carefully recorded. The system for risk assessments is suitable and effective, and is currently in the process of being reviewed and updated. All aspects of health and safety are regularly checked by senior staff.
- 4.19 There is comfortable provision for pupils who become ill or are injured at school, either in the prep school office or in the medical centre. Regular health checks are carried out. There are clear guidelines for staff administering medication and rules about the medication pupils may possess. Suitable well-stocked first-aid boxes are located around the school. Medical records and incident books are carefully kept.
- 4.20 The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately and appropriately stored for the previous three years. Prompt checks are made if a pupil is unexpectedly absent.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The aims of boarding, available in the boarding handbooks, and information to parents, are fully met and the boarding house values and behaviours are understood all the boarding community. The boarders are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and all feel welcome and accepted. The child-friendly handbooks and welcoming encouragement of the staff ensure that the boarders are fully inducted and settle into boarding quickly. The boarders develop confidence and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where the staff know their pupils well and their individual welfare and wellbeing needs are identified and fully met.
- 4.23 Boarders are confident, polite and articulate. They discuss their school and boarding with pride and enthusiasm. Relationships between staff and boarders, and amongst the boarders themselves, are warm, sincere and based upon mutual trust. In interviews, boarders described how, if they were feeling homesick, their friends would cheer them up. They could not recall any bullying and even disagreements are rare. Staff are vigilant and can be relied upon to deal with any such issues promptly. Boarders also said that they could talk to any of the house staff on any personal matter or to air concerns or opinions. There is also a suggestion box for their ideas. In responses to the pupil questionnaire and during the inspection, they expressed how much they enjoy boarding and were keen to explain that many of their friends would like to board much more often.
- 4.24 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are encouraged to be fit, healthy, considerate and kind. Pupils feel that they are safe and well looked after. Their behaviour is exemplary and they thrive in the nurturing atmosphere. The dormitories are comfortable, spacious and homely. The bathrooms are clean, practical and well-equipped and ensure boarders' privacy. There are attractive common rooms where boarders can relax and socialise, as well as a variety of play areas and activities including crafts, board games, and entertainment equipment. A phone booth and access to mobile phones and visual communication systems ensure ease of communication with parents. Boarders benefit from the wide-ranging extra-curricular provision of daytime clubs and evening and weekend boarding activities. In particular, they much enjoy their regular swimming evenings in the school pool.
- 4.25 The catering provision is excellent. The well-qualified and committed team serve an impressive range of high quality meals. The menus are varied and nutritious, and take into account individual dietary needs, and the opinions expressed at regular consultations with boarders. The kitchen and storage areas are clean and well-managed. The dining room is attractive, spacious and well-kept. Ample snacks and drinking water are available outside mealtimes, and it is possible for young boarders to learn to make snacks independently in the kitchenettes in the boarding house.
- 4.26 Medical matters are overseen by experienced, well-qualified and approachable nursing staff. The storage and administration of medication is careful and appropriately recorded. There are excellent communications between the nursing and house staff to ensure proper care of any boarders who are ill. Rights of choice and confidentiality are respected. Record-keeping is thorough and careful. The day accommodation includes the surgery, an administration office, and a pleasant day rest-room. There are also two bright sick rooms, one of which could be used for

isolation, if necessary. These are linked to the boarding house; if boarders are ill, they stay overnight or else are looked after by house staff. Appropriate care is taken of the boarders' possessions. The laundry provision is effective. There are systems in place to manage valuables such as mobile phones, pocket money and passports. Personal and stationery supplies can be provided as necessary whilst boarders are at school.

- 4.27 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed effectively. The school's anti-bullying and behavioural policies are fully implemented and procedures ensure that the infrequent incidents are swiftly investigated and resolved. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are thorough and known by all staff, including governors. Excellent relationships are evident across the community and boarders feel secure and confident that any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Each individual pupil is known by staff and their whereabouts are carefully monitored. Effective procedures ensure that, on the rare occasion that any boarder who is not where she is expected to be, she can be swiftly found. Appropriate and careful risk assessments are in place for the boarding areas. Comprehensive health and safety, and fire safety policies and procedures are efficiently implemented. There are regular reviews and evaluation to inform improvement plans.
- 4.28 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent, and this is reflected in the quality of the relationships and personal development of the boarders. It mirrors the strong relationships between the house staff, and senior leaders. The senior house staff are committed to regular reflection and review of policies and procedures, and work together to produce a coherent plan for development and improvement. This self-evaluation benefits from the involvement of a dedicated governor and the interest and support of the governing board and senior leaders. The recommendations from the intermediate boarding inspection in 2012 have been fully addressed. The school's database is used effectively for record-keeping. All the house staff have job descriptions, thorough induction, mentoring and regular review, and there is a strong commitment to ongoing professional development. There is a strong relationship with parents. The questionnaire responses of the boarders' parents were overwhelmingly positive. This regular communication between staff and parents promotes the well-being and safety of boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governors ensure that they maintain a broad oversight of the school, including the EYFS, through their range of committees, which cover all aspects of the school's work. They are diligent in discharging their responsibilities for pupils' educational standards, management of the school's finances and wise investment in staff, premises and resources for learning.
- 5.3 Governors are involved in the school self-evaluation and development planning process, thus gaining a valuable insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are able to give the school the required balance of support and challenge. They have a clear vision for the future of the school. They have sensible plans for increased sharing of staff, resources and facilities across both the senior school and the prep school. Following the findings of the previous inspection, governors spend more time in the prep school, including the EYFS, to learn more about its daily life, and to get to know its staff. This process is ongoing.
- 5.4 The governors ensure that the school fully meets statutory requirements and carry out their annual review of safeguarding and child protection assiduously. They make sure that the well-being of pupils is always of paramount importance to all staff.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership of the EYFS have a thorough oversight of regulatory compliance. Policies are reviewed and updated regularly. Careful induction of new staff, regular staff training at the required intervals and the strong attention to safeguarding procedures ensures that staff are highly vigilant towards the safety of the children. The leadership team has a clear vision for the EYFS to promote the happiness, success and confidence of the children in its care. The setting regularly evaluates its practice and a suitable development plan sets out the agenda for improvement, which is updated annually. Careful monitoring of the education programmes ensure the children thrive in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. Regular staff discussion and supervision meetings enable staff to identify areas for their continuing professional development. Relevant courses are provided and staff take full advantage of these to promote further the children's learning. Equality, diversity and British social values are actively promoted throughout the EYFS. Since the previous inspection, the setting has made good progress by incorporating challenging activities for the more able children into planning. Equipment, resources and facilities have also been improved.
- 5.7 Throughout the school, leaders and managers at all levels are successful in ensuring that the school meets its aims, that policies are fully implemented in practice and that pupils are safeguarded at all times. Since the previous inspection, the school has created a new leadership structure with clearly defined responsibilities. The posts of deputy head and four assistant heads have been

established, and this has enabled senior staff to introduce a systematic approach to directing the work of the school. Those staff with leadership responsibilities manage their areas competently and efficiently so that the school runs smoothly. Processes for the regular assessment and tracking of pupils' progress have been embedded in the school's practice and the data used to plan the school's priorities for improvement. Information on trends in pupils' reading scores, for example, led to a focus on building their comprehension skills to help them interpret what they read.

- 5.8 Greater opportunities have been created for senior staff to monitor and evaluate the work in classrooms, identifying the school's best practice in teaching and enabling this to be shared with others. A recent focus on ensuring that teachers plan consistently to meet the needs of all pupils, for example, has been highly successful. The individual development of staff is fostered through the appraisal system, which ensure that staff have the chance to improve their professional skills and contribute to the school's targets for improvement. There is a strong sense of team spirit and common purpose. Staff with leadership roles at all levels contribute to the school development planning process, with all subject leaders producing a plan for their subject. The prep school works with the senior school to achieve the objectives of the whole-school five-year development plan, while the prep school's particular priorities are the focus of its own three-year plan.
- 5.9 Leaders are highly successful in recruiting high quality staff and ensuring that they are effectively trained in their roles, meeting the needs of all pupils. The quality of the school's provision and the outcomes for pupils are of a consistently high standard, and this is due to the attention given to the pupils as individuals by all staff. Leaders make sure that all staff are regularly and systematically trained in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, in order to ensure pupils' well-being continuously. On the basis of this evidence, inspectors do not agree with the small minority of parents who questioned the effectiveness of the school's leadership.
- 5.10 Partnerships with parents in the EYFS are exemplary. The setting makes every effort to involve parents in their children's learning and progress. Parents are warmly welcomed into the school. They are able to engage with their children's learning through the many opportunities provided by the school, such as working with their children in class, parents meetings and reports, curriculum and information evenings and regular exchange of information about their child's progress. In parental questionnaires and in discussions, all EYFS parents were highly appreciative of the care and support their children receive. They also value the opportunity to have their children cared for before and after school. The EYFS staff work very effectively with parents and with external agencies, such as speech and language therapists, to ensure relevant help is provided for children needing particular support with their learning and development.
- 5.11 The school maintains a highly constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims. Throughout the school, parents are highly satisfied with the education and support they receive for their children. They are greatly appreciative of the excellent range and quality of information provided by the school, for example through newsletters, home-school diaries, the school website, and via emails. In discussions parents indicated that they felt the teachers were approachable and knew and understood their children extremely well. In the parental questionnaires all who responded indicated that their child was offered an appropriate range of subjects, that their child received appropriate homework, the school provided a good range of extra-curricular activities and that their child is well-looked after at the school. The overwhelming majority of parents indicated that their child was happy at

school. A small minority of parents felt that concerns are not handled well. Inspection evidence found that concerns are dealt with effectively, in accordance with the school's published procedures. The 'open door' policy ensures most concerns are dealt with informally and to the parents' satisfaction.

- 5.12 Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are provided with all the required information about the school, via the website or on request from the school office. Parents have many useful opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children, supporting homework and project work and ensuring that tasks are completed on time.
- 5.13 In the parental questionnaires a very small minority of parents indicated they were not satisfied with the information they received about their children's progress. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Parents receive informative reports on their children's academic and social progress and achievement. These provide useful information on how pupils may maintain progress in specific subject areas. In addition, there are at least two parental consultation meetings each year and parents may talk informally to staff each day or make additional appointments if they wish.
- 5.14 The active parents' association provides many opportunities for the parents to socialise and fundraise for the school, for example through the summer fair, Christmas events, concerts and discos. Parents run a successful second hand uniform shop. In addition, parents support many events to raise money for charities.

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