



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

PRESTFELDE SCHOOL

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Prestfelde School

Full Name of School	Prestfelde School
DfE Number	893/6008
Registered Charity Number	1102931
Address	Prestfelde School London Road Shrewsbury Shropshire SY2 6NZ
Telephone Number	01743 245400
Fax Number	01743 241434
Email Address	office@prestfelde.co.uk
Head	Mr Mark Groome
Chair of Governors	Mr Brian Newman
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	281
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (191 boys; 90 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 92 5-11: 129 11-13: 60
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 277
Number of Boarders	Total: 4 Weekly: 1 Part time: 3
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Emma Thelwell
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	06 Oct 2015 to 09 Oct 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 November 2013 and the previous ISI integrated inspection was in October 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 the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Richard Johnson	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Anne Camm	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Nicholas Hopton	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Mrs Susan Wade	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Prestfelde School is a co-educational, boarding and day preparatory school for pupils aged from three to thirteen. Founded in 1929, it became a charitable trust as part of the Woodard family of schools in 1949. It is overseen by a board of directors.
- 1.2 The school aims to enable all pupils to develop their love of learning, academic potential and individual talents in a caring Christian community which fosters sensitivity, confidence, a sense of service and enthusiasm for life.
- 1.3 The school occupies a 30 acre site on the edge of Shrewsbury in Shropshire. The original buildings have been extended and now provide specialist teaching areas for music, art, information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology. Sports facilities include an indoor swimming pool, tennis and netball courts and a sports hall. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) department is situated within the main school. The boarding accommodation is located within the main school building.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection the school has opened a new combined chapel and theatre; introduced new personal development and mentoring programmes for pupils; implemented new policies for teaching, assessment and appraisal; increased its outdoor learning provision and extended its extra-curricular activity programme.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Most pupils have ability that is at least above the national average, and in some cohorts a notable proportion is well above average ability. Pupils mostly come from professional and business families, and reflect the predominantly white British heritage and cultural background to be found in the local area. Most pupils leave at the age of 13 and transfer to local independent schools.
- 1.6 Currently, 281 pupils are on the roll; 191 boys and 90 girls. Of these, 46 children are in the EYFS. The school offers weekly and occasional boarding opportunities; there are currently 4 regular boarders; 1 weekly and 3 occasional. There are also special events, which allow other pupils to experience life in the boarding house. Also, 29 pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and all receive additional learning support as an integral part of their education. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan. One pupil receives support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims, most notably in enabling pupils to achieve their potential and in developing their self-confidence and a sensitivity towards others. The achievements of the pupils are excellent. Children in the EYFS make rapid progress. Older pupils are successful in gaining entry to their choice of senior school, and many gain awards. Pupils have outstanding attitudes towards learning, and benefit from an excellent curriculum. This gives them a broad range of academic experiences and also provides strong foundations for their personal development. Standards of teaching are excellent; teachers plan effectively to ensure that the needs of all learners are met. The recommendation of the previous inspection to develop the school's assessment process has been met, and this is now a key factor in the success of many lessons.
- 2.2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent. The school's Christian ethos can be observed in the strong mutual respect, sensitivity to the needs of others and exemplary behaviour of the pupils. They understand the values inherent in modern British society, and show respect for other cultures and faiths. Pupils receive excellent pastoral support, and relationships between all members of the school community are outstanding. The procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent. Safeguarding arrangements are strong, and potential risks and hazards are monitored with care. The school's boarding provision is good and boarders benefit from excellent levels of care. Outcomes are limited by the small numbers of boarders. The school has identified the future development of boarding as a priority.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is excellent. The arrangements have been strengthened in line with the recommendation of the previous inspection, and governors provide strong support and oversight. The leadership and management of the school are excellent. Leaders have brought about substantial improvements to the curriculum and in the personal development of the pupils, and ensure that high standards are maintained in all areas, including the EYFS. Development planning is detailed, and has ensured that all recommendations of previous inspections have been met. Leaders have established strong links with parents, who express high levels of satisfaction with the education and care provided for their children.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Ensure that the boarding experience fully contributes to all aspects of pupils' personal development.

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 The school is highly successful in meeting its aim of enabling all pupils to develop their love of learning, academic potential and individual talents in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all parents and pupils indicate that pupils make good progress.
- 3.3 Pupils have outstanding levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. In the EYFS, children are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They enter the Nursery with attainment which is broadly in line with expected levels of development. They make rapid progress, by the end of Reception most children achieve a good level of development and about a third exceed this. Those children who have been identified as needing extra support receive skilled help, which often enables them to catch up with their peers. When children enter the Nursery their language skills start to develop, and they become articulate and confident in making comments. Early mark making in the Nursery develops into clear letters and simple sentences in Reception as children's writing skills improve. By the end of their Reception year they start to understand how two groups of small objects can make ten. The children are active learners, keen to explore and investigate their environment and their fine motor skills develop well. They work independently and are creative from a young age. As a result, children in the EYFS are ready to move confidently from one year group to another.
- 3.4 Throughout the school, pupils can read well, write clearly and can apply these skills effectively across all areas of their learning. They listen attentively and speak confidently. They have excellent mathematical skills which they use to support their learning in other subjects, such as science. Pupils have strong ICT skills, which they use to investigate problems and to undertake independent learning tasks. Pupils have well-developed linguistic skills. They approach problems logically and show high levels of creativity. The standard of pupils' work in art and their musical development are both excellent. Pupils' physical skills are outstanding; almost all enjoy taking part in sport and they achieve high standards.
- 3.5 The extra-curricular achievements of the pupils are excellent. School sports teams have a strong record of success. Football, cricket and tennis teams regularly compete in county competitions and have qualified for regional and national championships. The lacrosse, rounders and netball teams have also been successful in county events. The school has an excellent record in regional cross-country and athletics competitions. Individual pupils regularly gain places in county teams, and one has been awarded an international cap for golf. Standards in music are equally strong; pupils' results in external music examinations are excellent and many take part in high quality instrumental and choir performances. In their drama activities they demonstrate confidence and skill.
- 3.6 Pupils are successful in gaining places at the senior school of their choice. Most move at the age of 13 to local independent schools; their results in Common Entrance examinations are excellent. They receive many scholarships and other awards that are based on their academic performance, as well as reflecting their skills in areas such as sport, music and the performing arts. The few pupils who leave at age 11 are successful in gaining entry to local selective schools.

- 3.7 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available from standardised tests it is judged to be well above national age-related expectations throughout the school. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their written work, shows that pupils of both sexes are judged to make excellent progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.8 Progress for those pupils with SEND is excellent, due to the specialist teaching they receive and the effective support they are given in the classroom. Pupils with EAL also make rapid progress. The most able pupils make outstanding progress in relation to their abilities. This can be seen in the high quality of their work undertaken in preparation for scholarship examinations.
- 3.9 Pupils show a positive, reflective and resilient attitude towards learning. They are highly conscientious and their behaviour in lessons is excellent. Their written work is usually presented and organised well. They exercise their own initiative. Pupils enjoy an excellent rapport with their teachers and display highly effective co-operative learning skills. They enjoy opportunities to work together in groups and show outstanding teamwork skills in their sporting and extra-curricular activities.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The broad and challenging curriculum fully supports the school's aims and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. It stimulates progression, curiosity, independent study and effective collaboration. In questionnaire responses, both pupils and their parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the opportunities offered through curricular and extra-curricular experiences.
- 3.12 The educational programmes for children in the EYFS provide an excellent variety of learning experiences, with a well-judged balance between activities. Effective planning ensures that the needs of all abilities are met, and children are challenged appropriately so that almost all reach the expected levels of development. In the Nursery, activities encourage children to develop their language skills through simple rhymes. In Reception, activities ensure a secure knowledge of the sounds letters make, in order to read and write simple sentences. Resources are plentiful, of good quality and teachers use them expertly. Carefully planned assemblies allow the children to learn about the ethos of the school, and to reflect on virtues such as courage and being kind to others. They are well prepared for their move to Year 1 and to contribute to life in wider British society.
- 3.13 In addition to the required subjects, all pupils take French and religious studies (RS). Older pupils study Latin and Spanish. Lessons in ICT are complemented by increasing opportunities to use digital technology to aid learning in other subjects. Effective use is made of the excellent specialist facilities for such subjects as art, design technology, drama, music and outdoor sports. Creativity is fostered, cross-curricular links developed and transitions within the school are well managed. The school has worked with other educational institutions to ensure that its curriculum is supportive of those taking entrance and scholarship exams.

- 3.14 Pupils' personal development is promoted well through a carefully-planned personal, social, health and economics education (PSHEE) course and the introduction of the school's own programme, 'SECRET', which relates to learning characteristics, and promotes skills for lifelong learning. This is enriched by pupils' experiences in RS lessons and Christian worship. Mutual respect, teamwork, cultural awareness and inclusivity are promoted in many subject courses. Economic and careers education is provided through thought-provoking curricular activities and visiting speakers. The curriculum successfully promotes understanding of values inherent in modern British society and a respect for other faiths and cultures, for example through English lessons that explore tolerance and individual liberty.
- 3.15 Pupils with SEND and EAL have their needs met effectively through careful, curriculum planning and the efforts of a strong learning support team. The most able pupils are challenged academically. A scholarship group prepares older pupils for demanding papers in a highly effective manner. The curriculum enables both girls and boys to achieve high academic standards relative to their ability.
- 3.16 A wide range of engaging and well-delivered extra-curricular activities and competitions complement the school's academic lessons. The school organises numerous sporting fixtures, sensitively matched to the capability of pupils. Inclusivity, fair play and endeavour are encouraged, whether pupils are representing the school or participating in well-planned training sessions. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to participate in musical activities, as well as an increasing variety of drama productions.
- 3.17 A programme of stimulating educational visits is offered, some of which take place during an identified co-curricular week. Outings to museums, heritage sites and technology centres extend and enliven learning. Adventurous expeditions, including residential overseas trips to France, develop older pupils' confidence and teamwork. The school has established strong links with local maintained schools and charitable organisations. Pupils benefit from undertaking charitable projects such as hosting residents of a care home and a sponsored run that is held to support a local disabled riding centre, thus increasing their social awareness.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 Throughout the school teachers ensure that pupils develop their love of learning, academic potential and individual talents in line with the school's aims. Teaching is well planned, builds on previous work and uses assessment information effectively. Thorough preparation takes into account individual pupils' learning needs with activities matched to the abilities for different groups. The more able are suitably challenged and pupils with SEND receive excellent intervention and support.
- 3.20 Teaching is excellent throughout the EYFS. Imaginative activities engage the children. For example in the Nursery, children confidently went on a dinosaur hunt, and children in Reception were fascinated by a teacher's 'magic box' that turned two dimensional shapes into three dimensional ones. Assessment is frequent and rigorous, and high quality activities ensure that each child's learning is reinforced and extended appropriately. Resources are plentiful and used effectively.
- 3.21 Throughout the school, almost all teaching proceeds at a good pace with a variety of activities and resources used to engage pupils' interest. A thorough review takes place at the end of lessons to clarify learning. Questioning is used to good effect.

Across the school, open questions are used as a powerful tool to encourage pupils to think for themselves and so increase understanding of topics.

- 3.22 Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and a tangible enthusiasm for their subject. Their commitment to high standards encourages pupils to engage fully in lessons and plays an important role in enabling and supporting independent learning. This was observed in a group of pupils who were working on projects about different countries, using computers for research. Teachers organise their classrooms well to provide attractive learning environments. Excellent wall displays are used as a learning tool and also as a celebration of pupils' achievements.
- 3.23 The marking of pupils' work is excellent across all year groups and departments. Staff follow school policies and work is marked regularly and thoroughly with positive comments and guidance on how to improve. This feedback clearly takes into account the individual pupil's ability and needs. Pupils respond to the guidance written in their books, so marking effectively furthers their progress. Peer and self-assessment is used in most year groups and subjects, and this helps pupils to consolidate their learning.
- 3.24 In response to a recommendation from the previous inspection to develop the assessment process, all areas of assessment have been revised to inform planning and so improve teaching. This is now a key factor in the success of many lessons. The school uses a range of formal assessments which are analysed thoroughly. Teachers routinely assess pupils' knowledge and understanding during lessons. The school has an effective data tracking system and pupil progress is monitored through regular progress meetings in which children are discussed individually. This information is used to inform planning and the choice of teaching styles. All pupils have individual targets and they meet regularly with their teachers and mentors to discuss their progress. Older pupils said that they find this target setting extremely useful in helping them to make progress.
- 3.25 A very small minority of pupils felt that the homework set is not appropriate. Discussions with pupils, and scrutiny of work, indicated that homework is generally well set and so therefore inspection evidence does not support this view. Teaching across the curriculum promotes tolerance and respect. It is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues, as was observed in an English lesson for older pupils when discussing government and protest movements.

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 high standards of pupils' personal development reflect the school's aims of fostering sensitivity, confidence and a sense of service. From the start of the Nursery they learn to share resources and to be kind to each other. Children take turns with large wheeled toys and are careful not to collide, and they confidently choose the activity they wish to pursue. In Reception they co-operate, listen to each other politely, discuss amicably and think independently. They understand the school's system of values, showing that they are aware of attributes such as courage in themselves and in others. Children in the EYFS attend chapel with older pupils, giving them the opportunity to feel part of a larger community. They are keen to gain points for their houses and share their rewards with everyone. Children understand the values inherent in British society, such as fairness. They celebrate other cultural traditions, such as Chinese New Year, and show respect for other people's views.
- 4.3 All pupils have a well-developed sense of spirituality that reflects the school's Christian ethos. This is nurtured and supported by the school's chaplain. They appreciate non-material aspects of school life. Pupils express their beliefs clearly and have high self-esteem, which is encouraged by the effective system of rewards, praise and celebration of success. They talk confidently about their experiences. Pupils feel valued as individuals and have a secure knowledge of their abilities.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They develop a strong moral code through the school's clear system of values and the excellent example set by staff, known as the 'Prestfelde Way'. Each class agrees a behaviour charter and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils can justify their opinions and actions, and contribute well to discussions on matters such as democracy and current affairs. Pupils are considerate and helpful towards their peers. They demonstrate their awareness of ethical issues through their involvement in charitable fundraising, such as selling harvest goods for refugees. Pupils understand the importance of truth and fairness. They explore sensitive or personal issues within the curriculum, confident that their views and experiences are respected.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate outstanding social awareness and a sense of responsibility. Older pupils show consideration for younger pupils, and the house system enables a strong team spirit to develop. Pupils are confident and articulate when speaking to adults. They show respect for other people, living things, property and the environment. Older pupils take on responsibility with enthusiasm. Representatives on the school council, heads of school and house captains take their roles seriously. They display an excellent appreciation of those less fortunate than themselves by raising a substantial amount of money each year for charity, and show fair competitiveness in their sporting fixtures and house competitions.
- 4.6 Pupils have an excellent appreciation of cultural diversity, founded in their understanding of their own culture. Lessons in RS and PSHEE look at liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of other faiths. Visiting speakers of different faiths are invited to discuss festivals that they celebrate. Pupils express themselves creatively and their imagination, inspiration and cultural insight can be identified in their

musical and dramatic productions and in their art work. The personal development of pupils is enhanced as they learn about English institutions and services, the wider community and how they should respond in difficult situations. Pupils respect and understand English criminal and civil law. They have a clear understanding of the values of British society including democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.

- 4.7 The pupils' excellent standard of personal development means that by the time they leave the school, all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and the most able, exhibit confidence, have clear understanding of the needs of others and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Highly positive relationships exist between all staff and pupils. Pupils are provided outstanding guidance and support, ensuring that the school is successful in meeting its aim of being a caring, Christian community.
- 4.10 The children in the EYFS are happy to attend school. Staff give high priority to fulfilling their role as key people and ensure that the atmosphere is warm, welcoming and safe. Children learn to trust the staff, and are confident to try new experiences. Staff communicate high expectations that children will behave well and build harmonious relationships with both adults and classmates. Children learn about healthy eating and enjoy nutritious snacks and meals. They have plentiful opportunities to play outside and start to understand the effect that exercise has on their bodies.
- 4.11 Pastoral issues are communicated efficiently throughout the school by frequent staff meetings, and staff show an excellent knowledge of their pupils. Secure processes support pupils during transitions between departments, and they are prepared well for their senior schools. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, all parents indicated that their children are looked after well. The pupils indicated that they are happy and positive about school, feel that they are well cared for and kept safe.
- 4.12 The school has effective processes to promote good behaviour. Pupils display exemplary standards of conduct; they are extremely polite and welcoming and have excellent manners. Behaviour records show that serious incidents are rare and are managed effectively in accordance with the school's procedures. A few parents and pupils raised concerns over the way in which the school responds to incidents of bullying. Evidence from interviews with pupils and staff, observations around the school and a scrutiny of behaviour records, indicates that such incidents are rare and that the school has effective procedures to deal with any that occur. Pupils are aware of how to stay safe online. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 The school is successful in promoting a healthy lifestyle through its PSHEE programme, actively encouraging healthy menu choices at meals and providing excellent opportunities to be involved in physical activities. The Pupil Council allows pupils to share their ideas and opinions with the school. There are numerous examples of the impact this has made to school life, including changes to the school uniform and menu choices.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is excellent.
- 4.15 Provision in the EYFS for children's welfare, care and safety is excellent. All staff have received appropriate training, and place high importance on ensuring that health and safety and safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously. They are aware of the additional needs of vulnerable children and are alert for any unexplained changes in children's behaviour. School attendance is monitored closely and parents are contacted in the event of unexplained absence. Risk assessments are carried out rigorously. Older children manage their own hygiene and the youngest ones quickly become accustomed to washing their hands regularly to prevent the spread of germs.
- 4.16 The school's safeguarding arrangements are effective and appropriately linked to the current official guidance. All the required checks are made to ensure the suitability of staff and governors to work with children. Staff receive regular training in child protection, including the designated senior leaders, and this has recently included training on the dangers of radicalisation. The school has excellent links with local child protection agencies. Pupils and their parents report that they feel safe and secure in the school environment.
- 4.17 The arrangements for health and safety are thorough and implemented highly effectively. A wide range of policies and procedures covers all aspects of school life. All activities that take place on site, and any educational visits, have suitable risk assessments in place. The extensive site and its premises are regularly checked and maintained to a high standard. Any issues are addressed promptly. Excellent measures are in place to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular emergency evacuation drills are carried out and appropriate records are kept. Procedures for the testing and maintenance of electrical, water and gas supplies and equipment are robust, and take place at the required intervals.
- 4.18 The school has excellent medical procedures in place. Two matrons provide medical care for pupils and staff, and suitable accommodation is available for pupils if they become unwell or injured. Staff have regular first-aid training; thirteen have basic qualifications and many have additional paediatric and higher-level training. They are well informed about the medical conditions of their pupils. Medicines are stored securely, administered with care and staff record and inform parents of any accidents or injuries. Well-stocked first-aid boxes are located throughout the school.
- 4.19 The attendance and admission records are properly maintained and stored. Effective systems are in place to follow up pupils' absence and lateness.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The overall quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are good. Boarders develop confidence within a safe and healthy environment where their individual welfare and well-being needs are identified and met well. As a result of the small numbers of boarders, opportunities to interact with others of different backgrounds, cultures and abilities within the boarding community are limited, though boarders make excellent use of the opportunities provided more generally by the school. New boarders are carefully introduced, welcomed and inducted. The older boarders are keen to take responsibility within the house. These opportunities are limited due to the low numbers of boarders.
- 4.22 Boarders are confident, polite and articulate. They are enthusiastic about their boarding experiences and describe these with pride. Relationships between staff and boarders are outstanding and based on mutual trust. Appropriate policies ensure equality of opportunity for all, including the different sexes, and those with SEND or EAL. Relationships are strong between the small group of boarders, senior boarders naturally assume the role of mentor and guide for first-time and occasional boarders. The boarders know that their opinions matter and that boarding staff will take their ideas seriously and influence the provision accordingly.
- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are encouraged to be fit, healthy, considerate and kind. Their behaviour is exemplary and they thrive in the nurturing atmosphere. Pupils feel that they are well looked after and readily confirm that they have a choice of adults with whom they could discuss personal matters. Contact numbers for helplines and an independent listener are readily available. The accommodation is furnished to a high standard and is clean, bright and airy. The dormitories are colourful and comfortable, and the bathrooms are well-appointed and ensure the boarders' privacy. The social areas are welcoming, homely and equipped with entertainment systems. Ready access to telephones ensures ease of communication with parents. The variety of planned evening activities is good. Pupils can partake in additional optional activities and sport on Saturdays, and so some choose to board on Friday evenings.
- 4.24 The catering provision is outstanding. Experienced, well-trained and knowledgeable chefs plan varied menus and make special arrangements for individual dietary needs. The kitchen areas are efficient, clean and well managed, as are storage areas and dining rooms. The meals provided are of high quality and much appreciated by the boarders.
- 4.25 Medical matters are overseen by experienced matrons. The storage and administration of medication is careful and appropriate. The pupils' rights to privacy and confidentiality are respected. The boarding matron is resident and on call to attend to boarders who feel ill at night. Record keeping is thorough. The accommodation for the care of sick children is bright and comfortable, and appropriate for the needs of this setting. The matrons communicate with parents and help to manage sick children, including the provision of specialist services and support for chronic conditions if necessary. Boarders have ample storage for their possessions and are proud of the way that they have personalised their dormitories with books, posters and soft toys to make them more homely. Laundry arrangements are available as required. Valuables can be stored under lock and key.

- 4.26 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. Contractors and unauthorised visitors are well supervised. Security cameras are installed to aid in keeping the entrances secure. They do not impact on boarders' privacy. High quality anti-bullying and behavioural policies and procedures ensure that any bullying concerns and infrequent incidents of unkindness are swiftly resolved. In addition, anti-bullying initiatives are delivered through whole-school activities. The school's recruitment and safeguarding policies and procedures are understood by all staff and governors. Excellent relationships are evident across the whole school and boarders feel secure and confident that any concerns (personal, academic or to do with their boarding life) are taken seriously and dealt with promptly.
- 4.27 The school's database is used effectively to keep comprehensive records by which every individual, including boarders, can be monitored to ensure their well-being and safety. Communications with parents are frequent and staff are easily contactable. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for the premises, grounds and activities and boarders are always well supervised by experienced staff. Boarders are taught to consider risk management as part of their boarding routine. The missing pupil procedure is known by all staff. Comprehensive health and safety and fire safety policies and procedures are efficiently implemented. They are regularly reviewed and evaluated to inform improvement plans. New boarders are briefed in evacuation procedures and drills are regularly carried out during boarding hours.
- 4.28 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. Boarding is well led and managed. This is apparent from the smooth running of the boarding house and enjoyment of the boarding nights. The boarders show a good standard of personal development. They are cared for by a highly committed, caring and cohesive team of experienced staff who feel well supported in their roles. All benefit from clear job descriptions, regular appraisal and opportunities for personal development. The school has responded positively to the recommendation in the previous inspection by including boarding in the appraisal of all staff who have boarding involvement. The parental responses to pre-inspection questionnaires and in conversation were overwhelmingly positive concerning boarding provision. However, the small numbers of boarders on a typical night in the house restrict the personal development opportunities inherent in being part of a wider boarding community. Both governors and leaders recognise that addressing this situation has not been a high development priority, and acknowledge the need to decide on the future direction of boarding.

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 maintain an effective oversight of the school, including the EYFS, and provide strong support and challenge for the senior leaders. In doing so, they ensure that the school is highly successful in meeting its aims. The recommendation of the previous report to review the relationship between governance and the leadership of the school has been met. Governors are fully involved in the creation of the school development plan, and monitor its delivery with care. The board has recruited new members to strengthen its oversight of the educational provision. Some are former parents or pupils, giving them an additional understanding of the school and its ethos. Governors also benefit from the strong links and mutual support available from other Woodard schools.
- 5.3 The governors monitor the school through regular visits, including the annual governors' day, which give them an excellent insight into the educational experience of pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS. They visit lessons and hold meetings with senior staff, as well as attending many school functions. Governors not only appraise the head annually, ensuring that he is able to carry out his role effectively, but also appraise each other. Prudent budgeting in staff and resources has allowed the completion of a major building project, which has considerably enhanced the school's facilities.
- 5.4 Governors discharge their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety highly effectively. Committees report to the full board on all relevant aspects of the school's performance, and policies and procedures are scrutinised to ensure that high standards are maintained. This includes the annual review of the safeguarding arrangements, which is carried out by the full governing body.

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 school's success in meeting its aims can be observed in the excellent academic achievements of the pupils and outstanding levels of personal development and pastoral care. The strong and highly committed leadership team ensures the distinctive ethos of the school is maintained. They encourage a respect for others and highlight the importance of a democratic society where all members have the right to have their opinions heard.
- 5.7 The leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent, ensuring that the setting is compliant with requirements, and that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met in full. The development plan reflects an excellent vision for the future with priorities derived from clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the setting. Staff receive regular training to improve their expertise, in addition to appraisal and supervision meetings. They are trained in the latest safety and welfare requirements. Staff are alert to unusual behaviour and

prioritise opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of the ethos of the entire school. Educational programmes are monitored closely.

- 5.8 Since the previous inspection, there has been excellent progress in the quality of the EYFS planning and assessment. A woodland area has been created which provides excellent outside learning opportunities. The setting has further developed its outstanding partnership with parents by enabling them to access information about their children's achievement and progress online. Children with SEND are extremely well provided for. Parents are involved in every step of their children's progress and are kept fully informed.
- 5.9 All leaders are excellent role models, highly visible and enjoy outstanding relationships with all members of the school community. They have high expectations and communicate these effectively to both staff and pupils. Leaders provide clear guidance to all staff on how to fulfil the aims of the school. Since the previous inspection the senior management team has increased in size, allowing it to meet all of its responsibilities successfully.
- 5.10 The school has a detailed self-evaluation process, which is linked effectively to the highly detailed comprehensive development plan which clearly identifies current priorities. All members of staff appreciate the opportunity they are given to contribute to this process. Most notably, it has led to the introduction of an excellent personal development programme, new arrangements to ensure the quality of teaching and learning, and a major new building project. The leaders responsible for the school's boarders are highly successful in ensuring high standards of care for them. The school recognises that it needs to ensure that decisions concerning the future development of the school's boarding provision, are given greater priority in school development planning.
- 5.11 Frequent staff meetings take place where all staff can share relevant information about the pupils in their care. Careful attention is paid to monitoring their academic progress and to highlighting any pastoral issues. As a result, all staff are well informed about pupils, and leaders can ensure that effective interventions are put in place to support individuals. The highly committed administrative and support staff play an important role in providing the high standards of care enjoyed by the pupils.
- 5.12 The senior leaders are effective in the discharge of their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. Training in safeguarding is carried out conscientiously. The induction process for new staff and volunteers is detailed and thorough, pays careful attention to safeguarding aspects and ensures that they can carry out their roles effectively. All appropriate checks are made to ensure the suitability of staff and governors, and these are recorded carefully. Detailed policies cover all aspects of school life, including all the required aspects of health and safety, and these are rigorously implemented. All buildings and facilities are well maintained so that they provide a safe and stimulating setting in which pupils can learn and develop.
- 5.13 Leaders have been successful in recruiting well-qualified and experienced teachers to ensure that the high levels of academic achievement are maintained. A new appraisal system monitors the quality of teaching and ensures that strong support is provided if necessary. Teachers report that they find this a significant help in improving their professional practice.
- 5.14 In addition, there are frequent opportunities to share teaching strategies, which staff use to full advantage. They regularly attend training courses linked to identified school development priorities or agreed personal targets. The role of the heads of

department has strengthened; they now play an important role in monitoring the delivery of their subject across the school and its future development. The school's teaching policies provide clear guidance to staff and are linked to the recent curricular changes, so that they promote the development of strong learning skills in pupils.

- 5.15 The recommendations of the previous inspection have been fully met. The governance arrangements now ensure effective oversight of the school and provide leaders with excellent support and challenge. A new assessment system has been introduced. This allows the leadership team to monitor the achievements of pupils and the quality of teaching, making a significant contribution to the high standards the school has achieved. All staff involved in boarding now have their roles annually reviewed as part of their appraisal process.
- 5.16 The school maintains strong links with parents. Those who responded to the questionnaire and those interviewed in school were supportive of all that the school provides. Almost all feel their children are happy and well-looked after, that information about the school and its policies is readily available and would recommend this school to another parent. They commented upon the warm family atmosphere and the ready availability of staff at the start and end of the day, and parents expressed confidence that any concerns are resolved speedily. The school handles and records any formal complaints with care, in accordance with its published policies.
- 5.17 The school ensures that parents receive regular information about the school and their children's activities, either through the school's website or electronic communication. Parents are encouraged to give feedback about events at any time on the school website, so that the school is aware of their opinions. Prospective parents also receive a detailed information pack about the school and its policies.
- 5.18 Parents receive informative reports each term and then have opportunities to discuss these with staff at termly meetings. A full report is issued in the summer term, containing targets for improvement to which the children themselves have contributed. In addition, frequent information meetings ensure that parents can understand developments within the school and wider educational topics.
- 5.19 Parents have many opportunities to become involved in the life and work of the school. The parents' committee is active in arranging social events such as a fireworks party in November and an annual summer ball, which raise money for the school and charities. They are encouraged to give relevant talks and provide support on school trips.

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