



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

WALTHAMSTOW HALL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Walthamstow Hall

Full Name of School	Walthamstow Hall
DfE Number	886/6054
Registered Charity Number	1058439
Address	Walthamstow Hall Holly Bush Lane Sevenoaks Kent TN13 3UL
Telephone Number	01732 451334
Fax Number	01732 740439
Email Address	headmistress@walthamstowhall.kent.sch.uk
Head	Mrs Jill Milner
Chairman of Governors	Mr Ian Philip
Age Range	2½ to 18
Total Number of Pupils	560
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 35 11-19 343 5-11: 182
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Diane Wood
EYFS Gender	Girls
Inspection dates	12 Nov 2013 to 15 Nov 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2007.

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) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Rodney Fox	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Mark Brain	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS/GSA school)
Mrs Vicky Buckman	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Crump	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr Christian Daw	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Ms Annie Lee	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Cathy Williamson	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Lynda Sharpe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Walthamstow Hall is a day school for girls between the ages of almost three and nineteen. It aims to educate girls with academic potential, to lead confident, challenging and fulfilling lives in the 21st century. The school sets out to be a community: that respects and values girls and their individuality; in which achievement is encouraged and expectations are high; where consideration for others and self-discipline are promoted, and good behaviour is the norm; and in which girls learn both to lead and to serve, developing a sense of responsibility both within school and for the wider community. One of the oldest girls' schools in the country, founded in 1838 for the daughters of Christian missionaries, Walthamstow Hall is an educational charity, governed by its trustees.
- 1.2 The school relocated to its present site in the town of Sevenoaks, Kent, in 1882. Since 1992, the junior school has occupied separate premises, about a mile from the main school site, although both parts of the school are governed and managed as one school. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting occupies one wing of the junior school building, with its own entrance and outdoor area.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection in 2007, the senior school buildings have been significantly developed, and construction work is currently in progress to provide a new junior school dining room and a new Nursery room for the EYFS. Since April 2012, the EYFS has ceased to admit children until the term in which they become three. The head of the junior school was appointed in September 2013.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 343 pupils were in the senior school, 78 of whom were in Years 12 or 13. There were 217 pupils in the junior school, including 35 in the EYFS, of whom the 19 children in the Nursery, known by the school as Little Shipmates, attended part-time. Most pupils live within a ten-mile radius of the school, with a significant proportion coming from business or professional families. About two-thirds of pupils in the junior school continue into the senior school.
- 1.5 Entry to the school is selective. The ability profile in the school is above the national average. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. In the senior school, 63 girls have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 36 receive specialist learning support, mostly for dyspraxia or dyslexia. In the junior school, 19 girls have been identified by the school as having SEND, all of whom receive specialist learning support. Five girls in the senior school, and six in the junior school, have English as an additional language (EAL). Any learning support considered necessary is provided by their teachers.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school from Reception onwards and throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils receive a high quality education from a very committed team of staff. Throughout the school, pupils achieve excellent standards in their work and activities. This is evident in lessons as well as from the good and sometimes excellent results that they achieve in public examinations relative to their abilities, and from the high levels of success in many of their activities, such as in junior school swimming competitions and in the performing and visual arts by senior school pupils. Pupils are eager and committed learners. Teachers know and understand them extremely well and so are able to support them with approaches that are well matched to the needs of individuals. The curriculum throughout the school provides an excellent range of subjects and is adaptable to meet individual requirements, although the timetabled curriculum for Years 12 and 13 does not include a general programme to supplement their examination courses. Teaching throughout the school is good. Systems for sharing the practices and skills of the best teaching, including marking, are not wholly effective.
- 2.2 At all stages, the personal development of pupils is excellent. They are confident and articulate young people, with a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and a high degree of emotional maturity. They treat each other with tolerance and respect. The school provides strong pastoral care. Arrangements to secure the pupils' health and safety are excellent.
- 2.3 The school benefits from very effective governance, leadership and management, which provide clear direction and vision for all sections of the school and have ensured its high level of success in meeting its aims. The overall quality and standards of the EYFS are excellent. Both parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed strong endorsement of the school and its values. The school has made good progress in meeting all three of the recommendations of the previous inspection, although in both sections of the school, measures to embed the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a teaching and learning tool are still being implemented. The school's excellent standards of achievement and very good curriculum and extra-curricular provision represent continued progress and improvement since the previous inspection.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Strengthen systems for sharing best practice in teaching and marking, in both the senior and the junior school.
 2. Enhance the sixth-form curriculum with the addition of a general interest programme.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 In the EYFS, Nursery children are learning to count and order numbers, and they blend and segment sounds as a pre-reading activity. They show excellent levels of imagination and are starting to explore and think creatively. They enjoy role play; for example, in their own 'baby clinic', they used insights gained from the visit of a mother with her baby, with great enthusiasm. By the end of Reception most children can read well, write in sentences using simple punctuation, add and subtract competently, use mathematical language and solve number problems. They are articulate and have a good vocabulary. They enjoy creative work and can manipulate a range of ICT equipment. All, including those with SEND or EAL, make excellent progress towards the Early Learning Goals and are beginning to develop very good skills for the future.
- 3.3 Pupils are extremely well educated in full accordance with the school's aims. In the junior and senior schools, pupils achieve excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in their curricular activities. They have strong literacy and numeracy skills, and are highly articulate and confident in expressing their ideas. Pupils read responsively and write fluently and accurately. They are able to think logically and creatively. Excellent learning support programmes enable those with SEND to achieve to a high level, as do more able pupils in response to the more challenging tasks undertaken, evident in the vocabulary that they use.
- 3.4 Achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent and varied. Pupils perform particularly well in sport, art, music, chess, speech and drama, athletics and a national mathematical challenge, amongst many other pursuits. The school is well represented at county level in sport and sometimes at national or international level. The rehearsals for a production of *Guys and Dolls* taking place during the inspection confirmed pupils' high standards in music and drama.
- 3.5 Attainment in the junior school and in Years 7 to 9 cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but on the evidence available is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils follow a demanding curriculum and those in the junior school successfully transfer either to the senior school or to other selective schools. The following analysis uses national data for the years 2010 to 2012, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been high, relative to the national average for girls in maintained schools, and good relative to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results in International GCSE subjects have been higher than both worldwide and UK norms. In 2013, 80% of grades awarded at GCSE were A* or A. A-level results have been good in relation to the national averages for girls in both maintained schools and maintained selective schools. In 2013, 70% of the grades achieved in the pre-university (Pre-U) examinations were at distinction levels, and nearly 90% of the A-level grades achieved were in the A* to B range. Almost all pupils leaving the senior school proceed to higher education, the great majority of them gaining places in their first choice of university.
- 3.6 The progress of pupils in the junior school and in Years 7 to 9, as seen in lessons and in pupils' books and files, and from discussion with them about their work, is high compared with pupils of similar ability. The level of attainment at GCSE and nationally standardised measures of progress confirm that pupils at this stage also make progress

that is high relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The level of attainment at A level and nationally standardised measures indicate that pupils in Years 12 and 13 continue to make good progress relative to pupils of similar abilities. The school's own analysis of standardised test results of particular groups of pupils, confirmed by inspection evidence, shows that pupils with SEND make progress that is at least as good and often above that of their peer groups in the school, while the most able progress at a similar rate to their contemporaries.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent at all stages. In the EYFS, all children, including those with SEND or EAL, are confident, independent learners. They share, take turns and display exemplary behaviour. In the junior and senior schools, pupils are eager and co-operative learners who are able to work independently and think critically, and whose creativity is very well developed. They listen carefully to teachers and to their peers, and have very positive attitudes to their work and activities. Throughout the school, pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers. They develop a valuable range of learning skills, including in the use of the libraries and ICT. They evidently enjoy learning and are ambitious to succeed.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 Pupils and parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaires showed strong appreciation of the school's provision. The school is successful in achieving its aim to educate girls with academic potential in order for them to lead confident, challenging and fulfilling lives in the 21st century.
- 3.10 The provision made to meet the needs of the range of children who attend the EYFS is excellent. The setting offers them a particularly wide range of opportunities. The curriculum is well balanced and enhanced by specialist teaching in music, swimming, physical education and ballet. The children are able to attend extra-curricular sessions in taekwondo.
- 3.11 The curriculum throughout the school is highly effective in its coverage of all the required areas of learning, and in providing comprehensive opportunities to develop skills in numeracy, literacy, speaking and listening, and ICT. The recommendation of the previous inspection to improve curriculum provision for design and technology in the senior school has been met, and a dedicated room has been equipped as a workshop. The junior school curriculum is wide ranging and well balanced, and is planned to facilitate pupils' progression from being taught by class teachers to learning from specialist subject teachers.
- 3.12 The curriculum is broad and flexible throughout the school, successfully meeting the needs of pupils with differing abilities. In the senior school, for example, pupils can fulfil their interests and potential by being able to opt for dual- or triple-award science, for a range of modern and ancient foreign languages or to study additional GCSEs during after-school sessions. Older pupils can choose from an extensive range of GCSE, A-level and Pre-U courses, although the timetabled curriculum in Years 12 and 13 does not provide a general course for all pupils to extend their interests beyond the examination courses. In the junior school, arranging teaching groups by ability in some subjects allows pupils to receive challenge suitable to their ability, and the curriculum for older pupils is enhanced by an accelerated programme of preparation for senior school scholarships. Throughout the school, the most able are identified to class teachers and given more challenging tasks.

- 3.13 In all parts of the school, the procedure for identifying pupils with SEND is effective and excellent support is provided, both by matching work in class to their needs and, if appropriate, through individual learning support. Pupils with EAL are identified and supported in class. Ready access to the school libraries, and the easy availability of school laptops, provide pupils with good opportunities to enhance learning and to conduct independent research.
- 3.14 High quality careers education and advice are provided at relevant points through the senior school, and as part of personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons.
- 3.15 At all stages, and for the range of abilities, the extra-curricular programme is extensive and varied, providing pupils with abundant opportunity to develop their interests and talents. The programme contributes effectively towards the considerable successes achieved in the extra-curricular life of the school. The range of opportunities to participate in sporting pursuits, both competitive and recreational, is excellent. Those in Years 12 and 13 make very good use of the new fitness centre, and early morning swimming squads and lacrosse practice sessions are provided for and attended by committed and enthusiastic pupils. Activities are well attended, and often involve older pupils assisting younger ones, adding benefit to both groups and to the sense of community within the school. Opportunities to participate in a rich panoply of artistic, musical, dramatic, speaking, creative and academic clubs and activities abound, and support curriculum interest.
- 3.16 In both parts of the school, the curriculum is enhanced by the number of visiting speakers and by a range of visits and expeditions, which supplement the pupils' educational experience. Visits to Hever Castle and Hastings add realism to junior school history lessons. The curriculum is further enriched in both schools by visits overseas and, in the senior school, by a link with a school in South Africa. The school fosters effective links with the local community. Numerous connections, including with a local primary school, provide opportunities for service and charity fund raising, and greatly add to the all-round education of the pupils.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 Teaching effectively promotes progress in fulfilment of the school's aims, as recognised by parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires.
- 3.19 Highly effective teaching in the EYFS demonstrates high expectations and clear understanding of how children learn. Appropriate individual challenges are provided in many areas, enabling all children, including those with SEND or EAL, to make significant progress. A good balance is maintained between child-initiated and adult-led activities. This enables children to develop high levels of confidence, independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration.
- 3.20 In both the junior and senior schools, lessons are typically planned with meticulous care, paced well and include a good variety of interesting and stimulating activities designed to challenge the pupils. Lessons often involve continuous checking of understanding, and teachers readily deviate from their plans to reinforce an idea or correct a misconception. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, are keen to share their enthusiasm and often make learning fun through the use of games. Less successful teaching, at all levels, relies too heavily on teacher direction and so inhibits pupils being more actively involved in their learning, and some overly focuses on the use of photocopied sheets. Teaching in both parts of the school uses a variety of styles and

tasks to match the different needs of the pupils, thereby satisfying a recommendation of the previous inspection, and enabling both the most able and those needing additional support to experience success and challenge.

- 3.21 Pupils with SEND are sensitively supported in class and perform very well relative to their abilities. The more able pupils are often supplied with extension work and more complex tasks, but are not always sufficiently challenged with open-ended tasks. Pupils benefit from much individual attention and assistance, both in and out of the classroom, and staff give generously of their time.
- 3.22 Resources are plentiful throughout, including excellent and well-used libraries in both parts of the school. The EYFS accommodation is spacious and welcoming, and the outdoor area, which includes an adventure playground, is used to good effect across all areas of learning. Throughout the setting, excellent resources are used and managed well to support learning. The recommendation of the previous inspection that, in both the senior and the junior school, the application of ICT should be extended to all areas of the curriculum to enrich teaching and learning has been addressed, with increased provision of equipment and its accessibility in the classroom. As a result, the use of ICT to enrich teaching is evolving and very effective use was seen in a number of subject areas in both parts of the school, although interactive whiteboards are more often used as a tool for teaching rather than by pupils to enhance their learning. A virtual learning environment is being developed in the senior school and some departments are making good use of this new resource.
- 3.23 Some excellent use of assessment helps pupils to understand errors and move forward. Assessment through observation is part of daily practice in the EYFS, and the detailed 'All about Me' and 'Marvellous Me' learning journals are shared with parents and used effectively to guide planning, target next steps and track progress. In the junior school, the best marking is evaluative but this is not consistent. In the senior school, target setting, and self- and peer assessment are used to good effect, and small class sizes allow frequent and constructive verbal feedback to be given. The progress of pupils is carefully tracked and monitored at all stages.

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 Children in the EYFS demonstrate positive behaviour and their personal, social and emotional development is well supported through 'circle time', PSHE, reward stickers and certificates. They show good independence in their self-care routines; for example recognising the importance of regular hand washing. The excellent liaison amongst members of staff ensures that transitions between EYFS classes and into Year 1 are well managed.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding, nurtured by the school's understated but all-pervasive Christian ethos. This builds up confidence and self-esteem, and contributes to pupils' high degree of emotional maturity for their ages. Junior school pupils regularly participate in assemblies and in the senior school pupils lead prayers, both of which promote a well-developed understanding of their own significance in the world. In line with the school's foundation, all pupils take a GCSE course in religious education, promoting their increased understanding and awareness of the significance of religious belief in the lives of people around the world. Pupils appreciate the wonder and complexity of the universe, as was seen in lessons such as biology and physics. Some pupils use the Christian Union as an opportunity to develop their personal faith. The excellent art on display around the school reveals the pupils' appreciation of beauty and their capacity to think beyond day-to-day issues.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is very strong. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, and show considerable personal integrity and tolerance. School behaviour codes are clear, signed by pupils and displayed in school, but are rarely needed. The extremely high standards of behaviour stem from the school's ethos. Pupils find that they are treated with care and respect, and so co-operate with staff in their learning. These attitudes and expectations are transmitted throughout the school as older and younger pupils work together in a wide range of situations. From a young age, pupils are actively compassionate, supporting local and overseas charities by fund raising in school. Many older pupils volunteer for service in the local community.
- 4.5 Social development is excellent. Pupils are very considerate and helpful. They contribute to school life in many ways, such as volunteering to run an errand for a teacher. Pupils develop excellent formal social skills through debates, presentations, and participation in school and food councils. They work productively together in activities such as Young Enterprise and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions. Pupils actively seek responsibility as monitors, form prefects and house leaders. Older pupils run clubs, assemblies, and house, charity and social events very effectively, and take a strong lead in sports teams, and in music and drama activities and performances. Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate very good understanding of English public institutions and structures.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent, within the school's tradition of tolerance and regard for those from different cultures. Pupils are open, friendly, curious and accepting. They readily avail themselves of the many opportunities the school offers for cultural enrichment, such as musical, theatre and gallery visits. Pupils gain understanding of their own heritage and of other faiths and cultures in lessons, and through a wide range of visits to places of worship and of historical and cultural importance. From Year 5 onwards, pupils enjoy overseas trips and take part in cross-

cultural projects, such as video conferencing with pupils in America to investigate child poverty in both countries.

- 4.7 Pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the school. Other aspects that received a high level of pupils' endorsement were that teachers help learning, and that there are good opportunities to take on responsibility. A very small minority of pupils did not agree that homework helps their learning or that teachers make sure that they have an appropriate amount of work to do. Inspection found some support for the view that the pupils' workload is sometimes not evenly spread through the week.
- 4.8 By the time that they leave the school, the pupils are well equipped by their excellent personal development to face the challenges of the 21st century, in line with the school's aims.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 The school is successful in fulfilling its aim to educate girls in a community that respects and values them for their individuality.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, provision for the children's well-being is excellent. Key people enable strong relationships to be formed and children feel safe and able to share any concerns with staff. The children's awareness of healthy lifestyles is extremely well promoted through daily opportunities to enjoy fresh air, exercise and the healthy food provided for them.
- 4.12 Strong and effective pastoral systems in all parts of the school ensure that high quality support and guidance are provided to all pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, are very positive and they display caring and supportive attitudes to each other. A constant flow of pastoral information amongst staff, both formally and informally, ensures a high level of awareness about the individual needs of pupils. Staff are positive role models and demonstrate a genuine interest in the lives of the pupils. Pupils appreciate the care they receive and are happy to talk with their teachers if they have concerns.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy through the comprehensive PSHE programme. Healthy eating habits are encouraged through careful menu planning and well-considered options in the dining room. Younger pupils have plenty of opportunity to play outside, and all pupils enjoy a range of sports clubs available to them after school or in the lunch hour.
- 4.14 The school is very successful in promoting good behaviour. Members of staff have high expectations and pupils respect the agreed rules. In all parts of the school they appreciate the importance of being considerate. Pupils understand the potential risks of bullying and know how to act in response to it. The school has effective procedures for dealing with bullying should it occur.
- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.16 A small minority of pupils did not agree, in their response to the questionnaire, that the school seeks their opinions and responds to them. Inspection evidence did not support this view. The school seeks the views of pupils through a variety of informal and formal

ways, but particularly through the school councils, which are effective groups that bring about change. Members of the school councils are proud of their input to the life of the school, having influenced, amongst various things, the establishment of the new fitness centre in the senior school.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.18 Attention to safeguarding, throughout the school, is thorough and pays suitable regard to official guidance, including in the EYFS. Members of staff receive regular child protection training and have an excellent knowledge of school policies. The school enjoys an excellent relationship with local welfare agencies. Procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff are robust and accurately recorded in the central register. Pupils understand the importance of safeguarding, as evident in the pupil-friendly policy displayed in the medical centre. The approach to e-safety throughout the school is excellent.
- 4.19 Appropriate measures to minimise risks from fire and other hazards are meticulously observed on both school sites. Members of staff are suitably trained in safety precautions. Fire evacuation practices are conducted regularly. Staff are confident in preparing thorough risk assessments and know that appropriate support is available if needed. The culture of health and safety is deeply embedded throughout the school, evident in the diligence of staff and the maintenance of outstanding facilities. The health and safety committee continuously monitors standards. Members of staff confirm that if they report safety issues they will be remedied promptly.
- 4.20 Qualified nurses provide on-site healthcare. They are fully involved in the pastoral life of the school and contribute significantly to the PSHE programme. The medical centre is welcoming and well equipped, and medical supplies are safely stored. Teaching staff receive basic emergency training, and trained first aiders ensure that medical assistance is available at all times. Suitable attention is given to accessibility and the needs of those with SEND.
- 4.21 Attendance and admission registers are appropriately maintained and stored for the required period.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The school benefits from the support of a hard-working, committed and experienced body of governors. A well-constructed committee structure ensures that governors have effective oversight of all aspects of the school's life. Their active participation with staff from both parts of the school in development planning enables the governors to know and understand the school's educational and financial priorities. Over recent years the governors have invested significantly in buildings and resources, to the considerable benefit of the education that the school is able to provide. Their close interest in and vision for the school are key factors in the pupils' excellent academic achievement and personal development.
- 5.3 Governors are frequent visitors to the school. They attend school events, visit lessons and receive reports on aspects of the school's work from departmental managers. They take a keen interest in all aspects of the school's work and, for example, recently received training about the EYFS, followed up by visits of a number of governors to observe the children at work. As a result, the governors are very well placed to exercise their monitoring role and to provide effective support, advice and challenge to the staff. Members of staff know many of the governors and recognise the contribution that they make to the school's continued progress.
- 5.4 The governors take their responsibilities for ensuring the welfare, health and safety, and the safeguarding of the pupils very seriously. They undertake training, including online courses, to equip them to fulfil their governance role effectively. The safeguarding and child protection policies, and their effectiveness, are rigorously reviewed on at least an annual basis, firstly by the chairman and group of committee chairmen, and then by the whole 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 is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are highly effective in ensuring fulfilment of the school's aims. The school has established excellent links with parents, which strongly support the education and care of the pupils.
- 5.7 Leadership at all levels provides a clear educational vision, arrived at with the involvement of staff and governors in regular self-evaluation and development planning. The recently appointed leadership group in the junior school is already having an impact and plays a full part in the development process. In both parts of the school, a high level of priority is given to the effective implementation of policies and procedures, particularly those related to safeguarding and safety. The effectiveness of the school's leadership and management is reflected in the high quality of the education, care and personal development of the pupils; they are happy and achieve very well.
- 5.8 Management structures are clearly defined through detailed job descriptions that effectively delineate areas of responsibility, and good collaboration amongst team members ensures a collegiate approach. Monitoring of the pupils' work is undertaken,

along with lesson observation, but not yet systematically in all departments. Heads of department produce individual departmental development plans and have responsibility for monitoring the performance of members of their departments, although the further sharing of good practice through mutual lesson observation is limited. A teaching and learning group has been established to promote discussion about best professional practice.

- 5.9 Development planning is vigorous and thorough, with departmental objectives feeding in to the whole-school development plan through an annual planning activity that involves governors and staff from all sections of the school, fostering a strong sense of involvement and shared goals. The analysis of examination results and nationally standardised measures of progress is undertaken thoroughly to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning and to set targets for the future.
- 5.10 The school successfully attracts and retains high quality staff. Thorough induction arrangements ensure that new appointees, as well as all other staff, are well informed of school routines, health and safety, safeguarding arrangements and other areas covered by school policies and procedures. Annual appraisal is well established throughout the school and is effective in promoting the professional development of staff.
- 5.11 In the EYFS, rigorous implementation of the detailed policies and procedures facilitates the safeguarding of children and ensures that their individual needs are fully met. Senior leaders set clear direction for developments within the EYFS, with a strong focus on the well-being of each child, personal achievement and individual learning journals. This has ensured continued good progress since the previous inspection. Effective self-evaluation is undertaken through regular staff meetings.
- 5.12 The school has established strong links with parents, which reflect its constructive and collaborative relationship with them. A suitable complaints procedure is in place for parents' concerns to be considered. Scrutiny of correspondence confirms that parents' concerns are promptly and diligently handled by the school. The parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very satisfied with the education and support provided for their children, expressing a high level of approval for the school's provision, with almost universal agreement that they would recommend the school to others. They praise its leadership and the rapid and satisfactory responses to their questions and concerns. No significant dissatisfaction was expressed with any aspect of the school's life.
- 5.13 The provision of information to parents is highly effective, with frequent contact through a parent email system. The school website is a valuable source of information, with a secure parents' section. The school also maintains a social media presence to provide another accessible method for disseminating information about its activities. Parents of pupils in the junior school are provided with a useful handbook at the start of every year and an informative weekly newsletter. Senior school pupils' parents receive a termly bulletin, and a high quality school magazine is published annually.
- 5.14 Parents of prospective pupils are provided with all required information about admissions and school policies and procedures, both on the website and in specially produced literature.
- 5.15 Members of staff in the EYFS have excellent relationships with parents and other agencies. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all aspects of the provision. Regular informal communication and consultation meetings keep them well informed about and involved with their children's progress.

- 5.16 In all parts of the school, parents receive clear and very useful reports and information about their children's progress and achievements, which provide an indication of effort and progress in all curriculum areas and targets for further development. Parents' evenings are held in both the junior and senior schools, giving parents the opportunity to view their children's work and to meet class and subject teachers. In the senior school, information evenings enable parents to be involved in making key decisions with their children, for example about option choices or university applications.

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