



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**CLIFTON HIGH SCHOOL**

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## Clifton High School

Full Name of School	<b>Clifton High School</b>
DfE Number	<b>801/6001</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>311736</b>
Address	<b>Clifton High School College Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3JD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>0117 973 0201</b>
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Email Address	<b>schooloffice@cliftonhigh.bristol.sch.uk</b>
Head	<b>Dr Alison Neill</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Hugh Stebbing</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>528</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys and Girls (249 boys; 279 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): <b>56</b> 5-11: <b>191</b> 11-18: <b>281</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>528</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>0</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Sarah Barker</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Boys and Girls</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>26 Jan 2016 to 29 Jan 2016</b>

## 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 boarding intermediate inspection was in April 2013 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in February 2010.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff 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 accommodation provided for boarders by host families and the facilities for sick or injured pupils, and examined records relating to pupils who had been boarders in the past. 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 Robin Gaff	Reporting Inspector
Mr Paul Bate	Team Inspector (Former Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Rosemary Chapman	Team Inspector (Head of Department, GSA school)
Mrs Susan Court	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, ISA school)
Mr David Edwards	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Helen Higginson	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Miss Sue Duff	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Susan Bennett	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years
Miss Victoria Plenderleith	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Clifton High School is a selective co-educational day school for pupils aged three to eighteen. It was founded in 1877, close to its present site in the Clifton area of Bristol. Most sporting activities take place at Coombe Dingle, just under four miles from the school itself. The school is a charitable trust that is overseen by a council of governors.
- 1.2 Pupils aged three to four, some of whom attend part-time, are admitted to the Nursery class. Other pupils join at various stages during their school career. Boys and girls are taught together in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in Years 1 to 6, in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. They are taught in separate classes (the 'Diamond Edge' model) for English, mathematics, the sciences, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE) in Years 7 to 9, but are taught together in other subjects. Together with an external company, the school provides a programme for international pupils, which enables those for whom this is appropriate to fulfil the requirements of the French national curriculum.
- 1.3 There is no boarding accommodation on the school site, but a small number of sixth-form pupils, all of whom come from overseas, may be hosted by local families. At the time of the inspection, there were no boarders enrolled at the school. The school also enrolls international pupils who live at home, or with guardians whom the school does not appoint, and are therefore not represented in this report.
- 1.4 The school is non-denominational, with a Christian ethos. It aims to provide a safe and secure environment that fosters curiosity, creativity and confidence, and inspiring and challenging teaching. It strongly emphasises the importance of realising individual brilliance in enabling pupils to become young people who have the ability to think independently, a strong belief in themselves, and resilience, flexibility and adaptability.
- 1.5 Since its previous inspection, the school has completed the process, begun in 2008, of changing from a co-educational Nursery to Year 6 school with an all-girls senior school to a fully co-educational 3 to 18 establishment. It has also reconfigured its leadership and management structures. A number of its senior leaders have been appointed to their posts within the last year.
- 1.6 At the time of the inspection, there were 528 pupils in the school. There were 56 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in the Nursery and Reception classes, 191 pupils in Years 1 to 6 of the junior school and 281 pupils in the senior school, including 214 in Years 7 to 11 and 67 in the sixth form. Most pupils travel from the Bristol area, come from professional and business backgrounds, and reflect the local ethnic composition. The ability profile of the pupils in the school is above the national average.
- 1.7 The school has identified 101 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 80 receive additional support, according to their individual needs. These cover a range of disabilities and learning difficulties. A very small number of pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are currently 70 pupils on roll who speak English as an additional language (EAL), 23 of whom receive additional support.
- 1.8 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 succeeds in meeting its aim of enabling individual pupils to develop their particular gifts and talents. Pupils' achievement, especially in extra-curricular activities, is excellent. Children in the EYFS develop a love of learning and make excellent progress. Pupils throughout the school, including in the sixth form, are highly enthusiastic about and have responsible attitudes towards their studies and their participation in extra-curricular activities. Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, develop a wide range of skills in subject-related, sporting and cultural activities, often to high levels. Thanks to the extremely diverse curriculum, programmes are very closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities, including those in the EYFS and international pupils. Teaching, overall, is good, with examples of excellence throughout the school. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge, together with their enthusiasm and their strong working relations with pupils, leads to pupils' high levels of motivation and success in their studies and extra-curricular pursuits. There is some excellent practice in marking and target setting, but this is not fully consistent across the whole school.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. The school is highly successful in achieving its aim of enabling pupils to develop attributes and skills that equip them extremely well for the future. In the EYFS, children learn to co-operate extremely well together and to respect one another's diverse backgrounds and abilities. Pupils in all stages develop an excellent appreciation of the values underpinning British society. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. Almost all those parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that their children are well looked after by the school. The pupils agree that this is the case. The school's arrangements for promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. Its policies and procedures meet all regulatory requirements, including those particular to the EYFS, and staff implement them extremely effectively. The quality of boarding education is excellent. Boarders are cared and catered for extremely well by their host families, and reach high levels of achievement and personal development. These pupils benefit from well-tailored academic programmes and an extremely wide range of out-of-school activities.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. Governors have a detailed knowledge and an accurate understanding of the school's performance and ensure its full compliance with all regulatory requirements. They successfully guided the school through its transition from single-sex to co-educational education and have developed coherent and well-conceived plans for the future. Leadership and management are excellent. Leaders have successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection and have significantly raised pupils' levels of achievement by the time they leave the school. Those senior leaders who are new to the school have already made a strong contribution to its development. Leaders and managers do not all have sufficient opportunities to improve the quality of teaching. Links with parents are extremely positive. The overwhelming majority of parents believe that the school is well led and managed, and would recommend it to others.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Promote greater consistency in the quality of teachers' written feedback, so that pupils always know, in detail, their targets and how to reach them.
  2. Ensure that all leaders with responsibility for the quality of teaching have sufficient opportunities to share excellent practice within the school.

### **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 Pupils develop high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects and are extremely well educated, in accordance with the school's aims.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children greatly enjoy their learning experiences. By the end of their time in Reception, the overwhelming majority have made excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, including those with SEND and those who have EAL. In the Nursery, children answer questions relevantly. Most recognise their names and some write the first letter correctly. They count competently and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. In Reception, children read and write simple sentences, and display excellent reasoning skills for their age when answering questions. They have a secure understanding of simple addition and record their calculations correctly, using the plus and minus symbols. Children in both Nursery and Reception are active learners who relish opportunities for creativity, exploration and investigation. They concentrate and persevere extremely well in a variety of tasks, for example in using appropriate tools to undo small screws, and software to open computer programs.
- 3.4 Pupils in all sections of the school make at least good and often excellent progress, especially in the senior school, in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in all subjects. Pupils show strong listening skills and well-developed powers of reasoning, and they communicate clearly, accurately and convincingly, both orally and in writing. Their extremely secure grasp of mathematical concepts enables them to solve a range of complex problems and to apply their skills in other areas, such as science. Pupils' competence in physical activity, as demonstrated by their skilful and enthusiastic participation in sport, is strong. Pupils throughout the school use ICT confidently and expertly for research and to present their work.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. The results of standardised tests of attainment in the junior school indicate that pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is above national age-related expectations. These results indicate that pupils have made good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The pupils' performance at GCSE has been above the national average for maintained schools as a whole, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In the sixth form, A-level results have been above and, in 2014, well above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. Pupils' attainment at both GCSE and A level, together with standardised measures of progress, indicates that they make progress in the senior school that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The proportion of pupils gaining the highest grades at both GCSE and A level is well above national averages.
- 3.6 The evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with them shows that current pupils, boys as well as girls, are making excellent progress from their different starting points.

- 3.7 The achievement of pupils with SEND, including those with an EHC plan, and of those with EAL is excellent in relation to their various levels of attainment when they join the school. The most able pupils, as well as those whom the school has identified as having particular gifts and talents, make excellent progress in reaching the standards of which they are capable, especially in the senior school. These factors demonstrate the school's success in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection.
- 3.8 The qualifications they gain and the skills that they develop enable pupils, on leaving the sixth form, to proceed to courses at a variety of universities and other higher education institutions, a large majority of which have very demanding entrance requirements.
- 3.9 Pupils develop a range of skills in a variety of disciplines, often to a very high level. Their performance in music and success in examinations show their very well-developed skills in playing a variety of musical instruments and in singing, including in choirs. Pupils achieve much distinction in art and design, and in drama. They also perform extremely well in sport, where a large number have gained regional honours, including in rugby, hockey and cricket, with some going on to represent their country. Pupils compete successfully at very high levels in other areas, for example debating, including in French and Spanish. This demonstrates the school's success in fostering pupils' individual gifts and talents, in line with its aims.
- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are excellent. They take pride in their work, which, for the most part, is very well organised and well presented. Pupils are attentive, highly focused and strongly engaged during lessons and extra-curricular activities, and work very purposefully in co-operation with others. They work extremely well on their own, and show determination and resilience, as well as enjoyment, in doing so.
- 3.11 Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that they were pleased with the progress their children are making at school, and the overwhelming majority of pupils reported that they are making good progress in their work.

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

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.13 The curriculum fulfils the school's aim of providing an inspiring and challenging environment that fosters curiosity, creativity and confidence, and hence contributes significantly to pupils' excellent personal development and achievement. Departments plan successfully to meet the needs of individual pupils of all ages and give due consideration to their provision for pupils with SEND or EAL, as well as pupils whom the school has identified as being particularly able, gifted and talented. For example, teaching provided by an outside organisation allows French speaking pupils the opportunity to follow the French as well as the English curriculum.
- 3.14 In the EYFS, the educational programmes for both the indoor and outdoor areas are thoroughly planned, providing stimulating activities that help all children to reach at least their expected levels of development. The curriculum is enhanced by music and PE sessions taught by specialists. Children's interests are central to all learning activities, which are planned to provide an extremely close match to their needs. For example, Nursery children dismantled a radio set and a keyboard after showing an interest in how things work, developing their technological understanding extremely

well. In Reception, children from a wide range of backgrounds within the class initiated a world mapping activity. This had an extremely positive impact on their knowledge and understanding of the world.

- 3.15 The curriculum throughout the school is broad and well balanced, and covers effectively all the required areas of learning, including personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE). Pupils benefit greatly from the small classes enabled by the 'Diamond Edge' model in Years 7 to 9 and from the way that teaching is adapted to meet the differing needs of boys and girls.
- 3.16 Pupils are able to choose from a wide range of courses at both GCSE and A level. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses and discussions with pupils, pupils and parents indicated that they are highly satisfied with the range of subjects offered. In both the junior and senior schools, pupils receive good quality careers advice. Excellent, wide-ranging academic support is available for all pupils, including 'booster clubs' and specific preparation for higher education courses.
- 3.17 Since the previous inspection, a highly successful programme has been introduced in Years 10 to 13 through which pupils are able to gain additional qualifications, for example in certificated courses such as first aid and sports leadership, in addition to continuation and expansion of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils gain greatly from the opportunities for independent research and academic challenge provided by the Extended Project Qualification and Higher Level Project Qualification. Enrichment is further provided by access to online journals and a range of periodicals in the library.
- 3.18 The school's extensive PSHEE programme actively promotes the key values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance. For example, Year 9 pupils were asked to explain what it means to live in a tolerant and diverse society. Political issues are covered in a balanced and impartial way. Pupils' economic awareness is developed through curricular, extra-curricular and charitable activities, such as the highly successful Year 1 toy sale which took place during the inspection. Extensive use is made of staff's broad range of expertise to develop pupils' wider education.
- 3.19 The outstanding programme of extra-curricular activities leads to excellent achievement. Pupils benefit academically, personally and socially from participation in an extensive array of clubs, activities and trips ranging from bee keeping to astronomy, rugby to creative writing and ski race training to choral singing. Younger pupils make extensive use of senior school facilities, for example in the technology department. With its very large range of well-attended activities, the school continues to be a hive of activity at the end of each day. The school succeeds in attracting distinguished outside speakers to address pupils about their areas of expertise. A high number of pupils undertake voluntary work within and outside the school. Leadership opportunities are available for all members of the sixth form. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires showed that almost all parents and a very large majority of pupils express their satisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities which the school provides.
- 3.20 The school has developed extremely strong and productive links with the local community. These include sharing high quality sports facilities with a university, joint participation with primary schools in a mathematics competition, and extensive use of sites of historic and scientific interest.

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

- 3.21 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.22 Teaching is effective in promoting the pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school.
- 3.23 In the EYFS, staff are highly knowledgeable about children's needs. They have a comprehensive understanding of how to support and extend children's learning and development, including those with SEND or EAL. Staff set high expectations and provide an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities within tasks. In the Nursery, staff allow children time to explore and choose activities and then engage appropriately and enthusiastically in them. Staff provide excellent support for developing children's communication skills when they introduce new comparative language. In Reception, staff develop children's problem-solving skills extremely well by setting challenges, such as to design a ramp to roll a ball down, using lengths of plastic guttering. They encourage children to think of ways in which the model can be improved, greatly extending their learning. Staff undertake regular observations of each child's progress and achievement. These are carefully recorded and monitored to ensure that future activities are carefully structured to correspond with each child's next steps in development. Children with SEND or EAL benefit significantly from the individual support of staff within planned activities. Staff provide children with a wide range of good quality resources, both indoors and outside, in order to support teaching and to enable children to develop their own learning.
- 3.24 Teachers throughout the school plan their lessons extremely well, successfully fostering pupils' interest and enjoyment. Lessons are usually briskly paced and well timed, and provide appropriate challenge for all pupils. A particular strength observed throughout the school is the positive nature of teacher-pupil relationships, which contribute significantly to pupils' progress. Effective teaching meets pupils' individual needs by means of a variety of strategies. For example, in a Year 12 Spanish lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to respond to the topic in a variety of ways, including by writing and performing songs. Occasionally, the pace of teaching is not rapid enough to ensure that all pupils remain fully engaged in their learning throughout the lesson.
- 3.25 In line with the recommendations of the previous inspection, the school has developed more formal procedures to support the learning of those pupils for whom English is an additional language. As a result, these pupils' progress is tracked systematically throughout the year and their parents receive regular, specific reports. Teachers implement appropriate strategies in their lessons for pupils with EAL, and for those with SEND. Teaching for pupils who have EHC plans takes fully into account the provision that is specified in them.
- 3.26 Marking and assessment are constructive. Excellent marking was especially evident in the senior school, for example in Year 9 where there was evidence of productive dialogues about pupils' work between pupils and teachers in English and history. Inspectors noted effective target setting, particularly in biology and art in Year 10. This level of practice is not yet fully consistent across the school and not all teachers give pupils sufficiently detailed advice about how to improve their work.
- 3.27 Teaching displays excellent subject knowledge overall and promotes intellectual curiosity, particularly in the sciences. Teachers' implementation of the 'Diamond

Edge' model is highly successful in that they modify activities to suit the single-sex groups. An example of this was seen in a Year 7 boys' English lesson on 'Private Peaceful', where the focus on war propaganda inspired pupils to think deeply about the topic. Teaching has clear objectives and uses a range of questioning methods to assess pupils' understanding and progress. Teaching methods in the sixth form are also very well adapted according to the needs of particular groups. Examination of pupils' written work showed that they have numerous opportunities for independent work. This indicates the school's success in addressing the recommendation from the previous inspection.

- 3.28 Additional support is readily available to all pupils, and teaching provides opportunities for those with particular needs to develop their skills through a variety of strategies in lessons, after-school clubs and small group sessions. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues, as seen in a Year 7 lesson on British identity.
- 3.29 In discussions and questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of pupils indicated that they appreciate the help they are given, including outside of lessons, by their teachers, and the constructive nature of assessment which enhances their learning. In response to their pre-inspection questionnaire, many parents made clear efforts to praise the quality of teaching. The overwhelming majority of parents confirmed that their children receive appropriate homework for their age. Inspectors judged that this is the case, despite the disagreement expressed by a small number of pupils.

## **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 pupil is excellent.
- 4.2 Throughout the school, pupils' personal development is excellent, in line with the school's conviction that promoting their individuality, as well as their achievement, is fundamental. Pupils have belief in themselves, the confidence to pursue their ambitions, and the resilience, flexibility and adaptability to succeed in life. Pupils have excellent manners, and are confident when speaking to adults. They have great respect for each other and work together collaboratively. Pupils readily take on roles as 'buddies' to support younger children in reading or as playground helpers.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children are happy, confident and independent; they develop extremely strong personal skills for their future lives. The values that permeate British society are strongly promoted throughout the setting. For example, in the Nursery, children understand the importance of taking turns and sharing, in demonstrating the traits of a good friend. In Reception, children appreciate the importance of listening to others. They respect their classmates and are keen to help one another solve problems, as observed during their play with construction apparatus. Children behave and interact with one another in a highly positive manner. Reception children have designed their own class rules and are developing a clear understanding that inappropriate behaviour has consequences. By the end of their time in Reception, children's high levels of personal development show that they are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 Pupils have a well-developed spiritual awareness. The school is non-denominational, with a Christian ethos that is reinforced by weekly assemblies and the annual Rose Day service at Bristol Cathedral. Pupils learn about different religions in lessons and special events: for example, an external speaker led an assembly on World Religion Day about his own faith. Younger pupils' sense of awe and wonder is enhanced by visits to local woods, for example to see a badger hole.
- 4.5 Pupils are reflective and self-critical, participating in the assessment of their work by successfully analysing and evaluating it and by responding to teachers' comments. They are proud of their school and their work, and readily explain how they have selected topics for independent project work. Pupils have high levels of self-awareness and self-esteem.
- 4.6 Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the lives of those less fortunate than themselves and take every opportunity to support them. They take part in regular fund-raising events organised by school houses and different year groups for a wide range of charities, both local and national. Pupils benefit, for example, from a long-standing link with a school in Mozambique.
- 4.7 Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour and have a strong sense of fair play and of right and wrong. They have many opportunities to explore moral issues when discussing topics such as child labour, slavery and migrants' journeys. Pupils develop their understanding of the shared values that characterise modern multi-cultural Britain through well-structured PSHE lessons. They also acquire a strong awareness of public institutions, such as magistrates' courts, and an understanding of democracy, which is exemplified throughout the school in processes such as the

election of school council members. A small minority of pupils commented in response to the questionnaire that they are not given chances to take on responsibility. Inspectors found that they have many such opportunities, with the youngest enjoying roles such as tidying-up monitors, and pupils acting, for example, as form captains and junior house captains, and in the sixth form, where all pupils have specific responsibilities.

- 4.8 Pupils have excellent relations with each other and staff, and also understand wider social responsibilities, such as the need for conservation and recycling, which have earned the school Green Flag status. Many pupils have attended training in life saving, and older pupils have benefited from a talk on mental health issues.
- 4.9 Pupils are extremely tolerant of each other's different abilities and backgrounds. They are keen to celebrate them and to take opportunities to learn about each other's cultures and beliefs. Year 1 pupils delighted in greeting the teacher in different languages in registration. Pupils celebrate occasions such as Chinese New Year, and such events are enhanced by the serving of foods from the relevant countries. Pupils have many opportunities to travel to different countries, including Germany, France, Barbados and Costa Rica. These residential experiences and exchanges further promote their social development.
- 4.10 Pupils' appreciation of diversity is shown by the respect they demonstrate towards those with SEND or EAL, as well as those who are able, gifted and talented. These pupils benefit from the same opportunities for personal development as others, through the support of staff who know them very well and understand their needs.

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

- 4.11 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.12 The school gives pastoral care a very high priority. This helps to ensure that the pupils are cared for extremely effectively. Throughout the school, staff who have day-to-day responsibility for the pupils in their care are extremely well supported by thorough documentation, clear structures and a highly dedicated and effective team of senior pastoral staff. Staff know their pupils very well, thoroughly understand their needs and provide them with an extremely caring environment. As a result, pupils feel secure and valued as individuals and proud members of the community, in accordance with the school's aims. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children are well looked after by the school. Inspection evidence strongly concurred with this view.
- 4.13 In the EYFS, all staff work closely together to provide a nurturing environment, within which children feel safe and secure. The key person system provides extremely strong support for children's welfare and well-being. Key people have a comprehensive understanding of each child in their care. Highly effective links with parents ensure that any emerging concerns are quickly addressed. Staff are excellent role models for the children. They make extremely good use of both specific praise and gentle reminders to reinforce the significance of harmonious relationships. Children learn about the importance of healthy eating, during cookery sessions and snack time discussions. They develop a strong understanding of hygiene, being very well aware, for example, that washing their hands regularly and thoroughly can prevent the spread of germs. Daily access to the outdoor areas ensures that all children benefit from fresh air and exercise.

- 4.14 Across the school, relationships between staff and pupils are extremely strong. Excellent systems for rewarding effort and achievement of all types, including 'brilliance' points', motivate pupils and good behaviour is widely celebrated. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is excellent. The system of rewards and sanctions is thorough and clear, with pupils' behaviour being rigorously recorded and tracked, and monitored effectively. The school deals well with the rare instances of unacceptable behaviour, paying due regard, where appropriate, to any related difficulty or disability. A small minority of pupils expressed concern in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire about staff's fairness in giving rewards and sanctions in the school. As a result of their examination of the school's records and discussions with pupils, inspectors judged that staff operate the school's systems fairly and to very good effect.
- 4.15 Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and pursue an active lifestyle. The food is nutritious, with much choice, and pupils have many opportunities to enjoy sport and games, both within and beyond the school day.
- 4.16 The school's anti-bullying policy is extremely effective, including in respect of harassment and cyber bullying, and is well understood and respected by all pupils, from the youngest to the oldest. A few pupils disagreed with this view in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Inspectors found no evidence to support their concerns. Pupils are clear about whom they can turn to in case of need. Pupils with SEND benefit from extremely well-tailored support, as do those with EAL. Arrangements to further develop access for pupils with SEND are in place and effective.
- 4.17 The school provides pupils of all ages with numerous opportunities to experience leadership and responsibility roles. School councils are valued by the pupils, who are able to express their views, and to request and help to bring about change and innovation, such as the introduction of a Year 2 choir. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils did not agree that the school asks for and responds to their opinions. Inspectors found that the school gives pupils many opportunities to express their views, and that it heeds them.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 In the EYFS, staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to ensure children's welfare. The designated safeguarding leader has attended advanced training and ensures that all staff receive regular updates on safeguarding practice, including the prevention of radicalisation and extremism. During discussions, staff demonstrated a clear understanding of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child. Attendance registers are carefully maintained and any absences are promptly followed up.
- 4.20 Throughout the school, arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare take full account of official guidance. Promoting a culture of safety is central to the school's aims and evident in practice throughout the school. The designated safeguarding team members have all been appropriately trained and have a comprehensive understanding of their roles. All members of staff receive regular update training in child protection practice. They have a secure understanding of what to do if they have any concerns. A wide range of highly detailed policies and procedures provides clear and helpful guidance for staff. Pupils are taught to keep themselves

safe, for example when using the internet or mobile telephones. The school has established excellent relationships with external agencies, and any concerns are swiftly reported.

- 4.21 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly, correctly recorded and closely monitored by senior staff. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of these measures. Premises and equipment, including electrical and gas appliances, are regularly inspected by external specialists and prompt action is taken to rectify any identified issues. Meticulous risk assessments cover all aspects of the school's premises, as well as educational visits and residential trips. This confirms the rigour of the school's safety procedures. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, parents were overwhelmingly positive about their children's safety.
- 4.22 Excellent arrangements are in place for pupils who become ill or injure themselves whilst at school, including those with SEND. Fully qualified medical staff maintain meticulous records for accidents and any medication administration, and parents are promptly informed about any incidents involving their children. An appropriate proportion of staff have suitable levels of first-aid training. Throughout the school, pupils are very well supervised by qualified and experienced staff, who have an excellent understanding of any specific needs individuals may have. Registers for pupils' admission and attendance are accurately maintained and stored for the required period of time. Staff implement consistently the school's rigorous procedures for dealing with any absences.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.23 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.24 The school has the provision to support excellent outcomes for boarders. The host-family boarding which the school arranges for international pupils enables boarders to reach an excellent level of personal development in terms of their self-confidence, self-reliance, integrity, and respect for and tolerance of others. They become a part of the families that they are living with and join in with their family life during term time. Boarders are immersed in British family life and that of the wider world, being included in family activities as well as in the plethora of extra-curricular options provided by the school. School staff, working closely with the host families, ensure that each boarder has a very good balance of work, activities and exercise. Staff meet very regularly with boarders, both formally and informally, to discuss their individual experiences and ensure that the range of care that each boarder receives is closely co-ordinated. Boarders do not have a specific prefect role but play a very significant part in the school-wide system. As part of their comprehensive induction programme, the boarders, most of whom have EAL, are extremely well supported in their understanding of, for example, fire procedures and rules for behaviour. Those who need additional help with their English have a special programme designed for them and are able to work towards specific qualifications, including those needed for university entrance. The excellent relationships that the staff have developed, both with the host families and the boarders, ensure that they feel very well looked after and provided for throughout their time at the school.
- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The accommodation and care provided by the host families chosen by the school are of an exceptional standard. These families usually have close connections with the school and often have children of a similar age to the boarders. All boarders have their own rooms,

with shared bathrooms. They always have a place in their bedrooms in which to work, and the boarders are successfully encouraged to join the family for rest and relaxation time. They eat breakfast and supper with the host families, while lunch is provided at school. The boarders can prepare food in their lodgings and on occasion work with the host families to prepare and share food representing their own cultures. The school's catering department provides for and monitors effectively any individual dietary requirements. Catering staff also work with the pastoral team to ensure that the boarders receive any support they need. Drinking water is available throughout the school and in the family houses.

- 4.26 The medical room is run by a fully qualified nurse who looks after pupils throughout the school during the day. In the evening, if boarders have minor ailments, the host families ensure that they receive the care and treatment they need. If they require medical appointments, including with specialists, these are organised by the host family, as the boarders are registered with the families' own doctors. Both the school and host families receive comprehensive information from the boarders' parents to ensure that they are fully aware of individuals' medical history. The medical room provides secure storage for all medication and appropriate records are kept, shared with the teachers and carers of all boarders.
- 4.27 Staff work closely with the host families and boarders to meet particular cultural requirements, for example working with local practitioners who recognise in depth pupils' cultural diversity. In accordance with the school's relationship agreement, host families are required to carry out safety checks to ensure, for example, that smoke alarms work properly. The host families look after the boarders as their own children, washing their bed linen and their clothes while helping them to learn how to operate equipment themselves. This helps to prepare them for independent living, including in higher education. The boarders may visit nearby shops to buy personal items and stationery, although the host families are always happy to provide items they may need.
- 4.28 The value of family life is highly appreciated by the boarders. The host families are carefully selected to ensure that they will support the boarders with the highest level of care throughout their time at school, and the ongoing communication between the families and the school makes the boarders feel particularly well looked after. They know that there are several people whom they can contact at any time in addition to the host family, including 24-hour telephone access to school staff and an independent listener. Boarders are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their own families, and the school communicates very effectively with boarders' parents, carers and guardians.
- 4.29 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. The boarding statutory requirements for safeguarding are fully met. All host families are fully trained and appropriate checks are made for all family members, as required. There is a comprehensive contract between the school and the host families to make sure that all aspects of the boarders' welfare are taken care of in a suitable manner. The pack for host families provided by the school covers all areas required to maintain high levels of welfare for each individual boarder. There is always at least one responsible adult staying in the house overnight, and the boarders know exactly who is responsible for them at any given time. School staff have a job description that fully emphasises the importance of communication, both with the boarders and the host families. These relationships help to ensure that any boarders who are enrolled are extremely well cared for while they are at the school.

- 4.30 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Leaders, including the school's senior leadership, ensure high levels of care for the boarders through close liaison with all the school staff involved. Reports on host family boarding are provided for each governing body meeting. A dedicated governor is responsible for guiding the staff should the need arise. Leaders specifically responsible for boarding are very well trained and are successfully encouraged to constantly develop their expertise. The recommendation from the boarding intermediate inspection, which highlighted the need for staff responsible for provision for pupils with EAL to work more closely with the boarders, has been thoroughly addressed. As a result, the school has enhanced and accelerated the language acquisition of pupils with EAL.
- 4.31 Leaders have ensured that the boarders benefit from the excellent provision and support they receive from a combination of carefully selected host families and school staff. Their focus, which is appropriate to the school's aims and its ethos, is on boarders' individual well-being and development, and on their integration within the school and wider British culture.

## **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 provide the school's leaders with a high level of support and challenge. They have a detailed knowledge and comprehensive understanding of the school, as well as a wide range of skills and experience. This has enabled governors to provide extremely effective oversight of the school's performance, including in the EYFS and the sixth form, and has played a key role in its improvement since the previous inspection.
- 5.3 Governors have steered the school's successful completion of the transition to a fully co-educational establishment. They have also made sure that the school has thoroughly addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. Governors are very well aware, from their frequent visits to the school and the detailed reports they receive from its leaders, of the school's strengths and its relatively weaker areas. Together with school leaders, they have created ambitious but realistic plans for its future development.
- 5.4 The governing body is strongly committed to furthering the school's aims and to promoting its ethos. Governors make sure that the school has the staff as well as the financial and other resources it needs to achieve its aims.
- 5.5 Governors are extremely effective in discharging their responsibilities for child protection, welfare, health and safety throughout the school. By undertaking relevant training, they keep fully up to date about developments in education and welfare. Governors regularly review policies and procedures, including the success of their implementation. This includes the annual review of the school's safeguarding procedures, which is carried out by the whole governing body. Governors have helped to ensure that the school complies fully with all regulatory requirements, and that its arrangements for promoting pupils' health and safety, and for recruiting new members of staff, are both fit for purpose and effective.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 The extremely strong safeguarding culture which permeates the EYFS helps to ensure that the setting is a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment for children to enjoy and in which they thrive. Senior leaders and managers in the EYFS have developed highly effective self-evaluation systems, which include taking into account the views of all staff. This enables leaders to successfully identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement. The resulting targets inform development planning and demonstrate an ambitious vision for the future, to ensure the best possible outcomes for children. Improvements since the previous inspection include the relocation of the Reception area closer to the Nursery rooms, which has enhanced the continuity of provision for children. Leaders have placed significant focus on improving teaching strategies and children's attainment in literacy, leading to the purchase of new reading books and the deployment of specialist staff. The leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching through lesson observations, and by scrutinising staff's planning and children's assessment records. Regular supervision meetings with staff to evaluate and help them improve their practice also ensure that equality, diversity and the shared values of British society are successfully promoted throughout the setting. Staff have good opportunities to further their professional development by attending in-house training and external conferences.
- 5.8 The senior leadership provides strong leadership for the whole school and is strongly committed to furthering the school's aims and ethos. Senior leadership works very well together. They have clearly designated roles within the school, and provide positive and effective support for staff in meeting pupils' individual needs and promoting their well-being, in line with the school's aims. Policies and procedures and their implementation are regularly reviewed, and reports to governors provide them with the information they need to ensure full regulatory compliance. This contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and well-being, as well as to their achievement. The senior leadership has effectively promoted fundamental British values, such as respect for others and democracy: this is very evident from discussions with pupils and in displays around the school.
- 5.9 Since the previous inspection the school has undertaken a transition to a new line management structure. In a discussion with a group of parents, inspectors found that there is very positive support for the new system and that parents are clear about whom to approach if they have any concerns.
- 5.10 The senior leadership provides clear educational direction, which is evidently reflected in the quality of the pupils' education and their levels of personal development. Senior leadership has identified the need to adapt to change and have successfully introduced new initiatives since the previous inspection. They have made, for example, significant improvements in communication within the school and with parents, for example improving reporting on pupils' achievement. Line management structures include clearly designated responsibilities, and leaders and managers at all levels are actively involved in formulating and implementing the school's development plan. Changes in senior leadership since the previous inspection have resulted in the introduction of new approaches, which has been welcomed by the majority of the staff.

- 5.11 Pupils' academic performance, which has improved significantly since the previous inspection, is carefully monitored across all subject areas throughout the school. Able, gifted and talented pupils, and those with SEND or EAL, are all clearly identified and their progress monitored closely by the senior leadership. There are regular staff meetings, as well as meetings of heads of department and of separate departments. However, some departmental heads have too few opportunities for contact with one another to be fully effective in sharing and implementing excellent practice throughout the school. Planning in individual subject areas is highly effective and self-evaluation processes are rigorous. The staff benefit from an excellent appraisal system, for which they have a high regard and which supports their career development. Teachers benefit from training and guidance that enhance their practice, and all new staff undertake a comprehensive induction programme, which has a very strong focus on safeguarding pupils.
- 5.12 The school has been successful in recruiting highly qualified staff and all required checks are completed before they commence work. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The premises are well maintained and promote a safe and secure environment for the school community.
- 5.13 The excellent links between parents and the school strongly support pupils' achievement and their personal development, in accordance with the school's aims. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that parents are extremely positive about the school and almost all confirmed that they would recommend it to others. The overwhelming majority agreed that information about the school and its policies is readily available, and most reported that the school deals well with any concerns they may have. Almost all the parents indicated agreement that the school is well led and managed. Inspectors found no evidence to contradict these views.
- 5.14 Throughout the EYFS, staff maintain extremely strong relationships with parents. The recommendation in the previous inspection to involve parents more fully in children's learning and development has been successfully addressed. The new electronic assessment system gives parents the opportunity not only to view their children's progress and achievements on line, but also to help their children to meet their targets at home, and to contribute such successes there to the school's records. Formal meetings and twice-yearly reports ensure that parents are kept very well informed about children's learning and progress. The 'open-door' system enables parents to have a daily opportunity to speak to staff about any concerns or issues. This ensures that any specific needs are quickly addressed and appropriate interventions put in place to support children's learning and meet their development requirements. A speech and language specialist visits the setting regularly to support children with developmental language delay.
- 5.15 Excellent communications with parents are the norm across the whole school. Parents have recourse to an effective complaints policy, and any complaint is taken seriously, given prompt attention, and rapidly and thoroughly followed up. A very wide range of other policy documents, including all those that are legally required, is available on the school website or can be requested from the school. Parents regularly receive information from the school by email and through social media, and report that they find the school website particularly useful. Parents receive helpful information booklets, which are issued according to their children's stage in the school. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents were satisfied with the information that they are given about their children's progress.

- 5.16 Parents have very many opportunities to be actively involved in the life of the school. They report that the parents' association is a "sociable, active and enthusiastic arm of the school". It organises school events throughout the year and enriches the life of the school community. Parents are regularly invited to the school for special events, and parental ambassadors help at school functions. They also take part in discussion groups and can join in meetings with staff who are considering specific school issues. The school has strong links, through parent and historical contacts, with the local community, including businesses, churches and the emergency services.
- 5.17 Full reports, issued twice a year, together with interim reports, keep parents very well informed about their children's progress. Regular parents' evenings enable parents to receive further information about their children's achievements. These meetings also focus strongly on pupils' social development and their general welfare, in accordance with the school's aims. Parents are able to express any concerns that they may have, and are made fully aware of pupils' set targets for the future. Parents report that they are pleased with the way in which the quality of reports has improved since the previous inspection, and that they have greater opportunities to be involved in the school and to express their views.

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