



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## St Lawrence College Junior School

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

Full Name of School	<b>St Lawrence College Junior School</b>
DfE Number	<b>886/6040</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>307921</b>
Address	<b>St Lawrence College Junior School College Road Ramsgate Kent CT11 7AF</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01843 572912</b>
Fax Number	<b>01843 572913</b>
Email Address	<b>jsoffice@slcuk.com</b>
Head	<b>Mr Simon Whittle</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr David Taylor</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 11</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>200</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (98 boys; 102 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): <b>53</b> 5-11: <b>147</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>186</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>14</b> Full: <b>14</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Sarah Peskett</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>17 to 20 March 2015</b>

## 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 2011.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Serena Alexander	Reporting Inspector
Mr Matthew Lovett	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Brian Melia	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Deborah Buckenham	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Lawrence College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged three to eighteen, situated close to the centre of Ramsgate in Kent. The junior school was founded in 1884 as a boys' preparatory school and following a restructuring in 1999, now caters for boys and girls aged three to eleven. It is housed in its own buildings, with adjoining recreational space. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) was established in 1996. It is located with Years 1 and 2 in a separate building, linked to the main junior school buildings by a Victorian tunnel. Junior-age boarders share purpose-built accommodation with pupils in Years 7 and 8 of the senior school. Since the previous inspection, much of the teaching accommodation has been refurbished and a new learning area has been opened, incorporating an information and communication technology (ICT) suite and the library.
- 1.2 The junior school is an integral part of the college. It shares the same site and facilities and the same Christian tradition and educational philosophy. The school aims to provide a rich learning experience and to instil personal confidence. It seeks to nurture Christian values and to foster a sense of service. It strives to develop intellectual curiosity and raise performance through a diverse range of educational opportunities. The school also sets out to forge strong partnerships with parents and to make a real difference to children's lives. All stages of the school are administered by a board of governors known as the Council. Both the junior and senior schools operate independently on a day-to-day basis under the overall leadership of the principal, who took up his appointment in 2013.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 200 pupils on roll. In the Lower School (Nursery to Year 2) there were 90 pupils, of whom 53 were in the EYFS. In the Upper School (Year 3 to Year 6) there were 110 pupils. There were 14 boarders, most of whom are pupils from overseas or from families serving in the armed forces.
- 1.4 Standardised data indicates that the ability profile of the school is above the national average overall, with most pupils having ability that is at least above average. The school identifies 25 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive on-site specialist help. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care plan. Of the 23 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), 6 receive support for their English. The pupils are drawn from neighbouring towns in East Kent. They come from a wide range of urban and rural backgrounds; a small number are from ethnic minority groups.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Pupils participate in learning with enthusiasm. They are well supported by good teaching, with excellent provision for those with SEND or EAL. Whilst there is challenge for the most able pupils in the core subjects, this is not consistent in all classes and for all age groups. Pupils are very successful in their entry examinations to senior schools and several win scholarships. Excellent curricular provision provides a broad range of academic and creative subjects, and an equally strong variety of extra-curricular activities. Since the previous inspection, thinking and learning skills have been integrated into the Upper School curriculum, and successfully assist preparation for entrance examinations and encourage independent, investigative learning. Children in the EYFS make excellent progress. In response to the previous inspection, individual targets for EYFS children are recorded as part of their ongoing assessment.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are supported by the school's open and embracing culture. Children in the EYFS know how to share, take turns and form happy relationships. Older pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and understand the recently reviewed behaviour policy. Their relationships with each other are strong and mutually supportive. The excellent quality of pastoral care is characterised by the kindness and concern shown by staff. Comprehensive health and safety measures are in place throughout the school and premises are maintained to a high standard. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are understood, but recruitment procedures have not always been followed correctly. Boarding is good overall; the quality of boarding provision and care, and outcomes for boarders, are excellent. Boarders develop confidence and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where their individual welfare needs are fully met. The recommendations for boarding from the previous inspection have mostly been met, with the exception of that for recruitment procedures.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is good. Several governors have personal experience of the school as past pupils and parents. Working closely with senior managers, governors provide prudent financial planning and ensure suitable investment in staff, accommodation and resources. The full governing body have undertaken their statutory annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures; however, monitoring has not always been sufficiently robust to ensure that appointment procedures have been correctly followed. A committed leadership team provides a clear vision that gives strong academic and pastoral direction and fully supports the aims of the school. In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection, procedures for monitoring teaching and methods of reviewing and evaluating school development are fully established. In the EYFS, there are supervision meetings for the support of individual staff, although these are not yet formally recorded. The school has excellent links with parents, who expressed high satisfaction with the education and support provided for their children.

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

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

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to:
- ensure that checks against the barred list, where a criminal records check is delayed, of medical fitness, and right to work in the UK, are undertaken on staff, and that references are obtained before they begin work at the school and, where required, are correctly entered in the single central register of appointments [Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(a), (c)(ii)(iii), (f) and 18.(3), and 21.(3)(a)(ii) and (vii), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b) and 8.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, and for the same reason National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection and National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults];
  - ensure that the leadership and management of the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that all independent school standards are met consistently [Part 8, paragraph 34.(1)(b), under Quality of leadership and management of schools].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, as described above.

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

- 2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Establish and implement a policy for challenging the most able that extends existing good practice to all areas of the school.
  2. Monitor the continued effectiveness of the recently reviewed behaviour and sanctions policy.
  3. In the EYFS, keep formal minutes of all meetings, including those for supervision.

### **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 good.
- 3.2 The school is successful in meeting its aims to develop intellectual curiosity and raise performance through a diverse range of educational opportunities. The pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed well in all subjects and particularly well in the core subject areas of English, mathematics and science. Their achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent. Pupils are articulate, using good subject-specific vocabulary in science, for example, and contribute effectively to discussions both in small groups and amongst the whole class. They read fluently and write expressively in a variety of subject-specific styles. They can apply mathematical skills to problem solving, both numerically and geometrically. The pupils' reasoning skills are good, particularly when responding to questions from, or asking relevant questions of, their teachers. They show their creativity in art and design technology (DT). Good ICT skills were demonstrated in a variety of contexts, such as writing simple computer programs and designing a presentation. Pupils are successful at winning places at local senior schools, both selective maintained and independent, and several have been awarded scholarships. The very high levels of participation in physical activities develop the pupils' skills to an excellent standard.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children's individual needs are identified at an early stage, and all children, including those with SEND or EAL, make excellent progress overall in relation to their starting points. By the end of Reception, a large majority of children have achieved the Early Learning Goals in all areas and some exceed them. They are active learners, can work independently, and enjoy playing, exploring, creating and thinking critically. They are articulate when talking to adults, express themselves extremely well and have excellent listening skills. Nursery children can identify initial sounds and suggest words beginning with those letters. They can recognise and count confidently up to ten and sometimes beyond. In Reception, children can recognise letters and sounds, and by the end of the spring term all are enjoying reading books and can independently write simple sentences. They can all count up to 20, and some beyond. The children can correctly identify two- and three-dimensional shapes.
- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent. The choir regularly achieves distinctions for its performances at a local music festival, and a large number of pupils gain first places in their individual classes. Many pupils playing a variety of instruments achieve passes in individual music examinations, with a good proportion gaining either merit or distinction. The school achieves considerable success in sport, with the under-eleven hockey team winning the county hockey championships in 2014, and pupils being selected to play for the under-eleven county cricket squad.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from lesson observations, pupil interviews and the scrutiny of work, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to the national average for pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with SEND or EAL make good progress because of the high level of awareness and careful management by staff of their specific needs. The more able pupils, when

given the opportunity, demonstrate that they are capable of achieving to a high standard, particularly by the end of Year 6 and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but are not enabled to do so by all teaching. Over half of the pupils continue their education at the senior school. The remainder move mainly to selective maintained secondary schools.

- 3.6 The pupils' attitudes to learning are good and often excellent. They participate in lessons with enthusiasm, although very occasional poor behaviour can hamper progress. The pupils work well individually and in pairs and small groups; they often help each other to understand new ideas, readily correcting each other and themselves.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The school successfully meets its aim of developing intellectual curiosity and providing a rich learning experience. Throughout the school, the curriculum provides effective coverage of all areas of learning. There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and investigative science. The curriculum offers a suitably wide range of subjects; French is introduced from Year 3 and art and DT are taught as separate subjects in the Upper School. The modern learning centre provides well for ICT; it also houses the library. Sport and music make very significant contributions to the curriculum. The addition of lessons in thinking and learning skills is a positive advantage to the pupils' education; it provides a balance between preparation for senior school entry examinations and independent, investigative learning.
- 3.9 Pupils are prepared for the opportunities and responsibilities of life in British society through a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme that is delivered through the curriculum and at form time, house meetings and assemblies. The curriculum is further enhanced by exciting cross-curricular enrichment days; for example a Brazilian day, in which a range of stimulating activities included samba music, a rainforest study and Brazilian food for lunch. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents felt that their children are offered an appropriate range of subjects and areas of experience.
- 3.10 In the EYFS, all children are engaged in a wide range of practical adult-led and child-initiated activities that help them to reach high levels of development. For example, in a topic, 'We are scientists', Nursery children experimented in a potions laboratory, mixing their own colours and using different methods of adding to them. The classrooms are enhanced by high quality displays of the children's work. Children are proud of this; following a recent visit to a local contemporary art gallery they painted self-portraits of themselves, in different media. All the EYFS children enjoy using a wide range of ICT resources, such as computers, robots and cameras, and they play games on the interactive whiteboards.
- 3.11 There is very strong provision for pupils with SEND and effective support for pupils with EAL. Support is helpfully focused; varied tasks are planned to match ability and teaching assistants provide extra help, particularly in the younger years. Judicious use of setting, team teaching and paired or group work between pupils further enhances this support. More able pupils are provided with sufficient challenge in the core subjects and at times elsewhere but this is not consistent. Since the previous full inspection, there has been some curriculum development and updating of

schemes of work, although this is not consistent across all departments. Planning is effective for all ages.

- 3.12 An excellent range of extra-curricular activities is on offer. In the Lower School, creative and sporting activities take place after school. In the Upper School, instrumental group and choir sessions take place during the week, as well as swimming and hockey, but the majority of activities take place on Saturday mornings, most organised by school staff. Pupils have many options to choose from, such as ICT, gardening and cookery, as well as sporting opportunities that extend beyond the core sports, to include fencing and scuba diving. These sessions are extremely well supported, and in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils and parents expressed their satisfaction with the range of experiences available.
- 3.13 The curriculum is positively supported by links with the local community. Older pupils in the choir sing at a local home for the elderly. Year 6 pupils, in keeping with the school's Christian foundation, participate in workshops in a local parish church. Many pupils enjoy sporting and educational events hosted by the school for the local community, including neighbouring primary schools. Members of the local community also contribute to the pupils' learning where appropriate, such as a visiting speaker to a Year 6 history lesson who was an evacuee in World War Two. A number of trips enhance the pupils' education, such as a Year 3 history outing to an archaeological dig in Canterbury and a Year 4 visit to the seals of Goodwin Sands.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 Teaching contributes well to the attainment and progress of pupils. It is successful in achieving the school's aims. Most teaching is good; some is excellent, particularly in the Lower School and in physical education and games sessions.
- 3.16 In the EYFS, enthusiastic staff work well together, with high expectations of the children, engaging and motivating them most successfully. An efficient assessment system informs planning and individual targets for all children. This meets the recommendation of the previous inspection. Teaching promotes learning and development, and encourages the children to think creatively and critically. Staff are well supported by excellent resources. Daily assessments are suitably recorded. This provides effective evidence of all children's progress and their achievement of the Early Learning Goals, used to plan the next stages of their learning.
- 3.17 Most teaching is well planned and provides an appropriate range and level of work that holds the pupils' interest. Many lessons are brisk and dynamic; they use a variety of resources. Individual paired and group work provides opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways. For example, in thinking and learning skills, older pupils worked in groups to design a new product and then gave a marketing presentation to the class. Where teaching is less successful, over-long exposition by the teacher is not directed to the full range of abilities, for instance it fails to stretch the most able pupils. In a minority of lessons, this leads to poor behaviour.
- 3.18 At all stages, information from standardised tests such as reading ages, and non-verbal and verbal reasoning skills, is used to inform planning and to target support for the pupils' academic progress. Most marking is encouraging and constructive, often providing helpful targets to advance the progress of individual pupils further.

For instance, in English in the Upper School, a 'two stars and a wish' marking practice is used. This encourages pupils with two positive assessment comments and directs their further progress with a target for improvement. Such excellent practice is not consistently evident in all subjects. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that homework does not help them to learn. From pupil feedback in interviews and from work scrutiny, inspectors judge this not to be the case.

- 3.19 Teachers are well informed about pupils with SEND or EAL. Effective strategies promote their learning, such as suitably varied tasks matched to ability and focused support from teaching assistants throughout the school. The most able pupils are provided with appropriate challenges in core subjects, and on some other occasions, but this is not consistent across all subjects and year groups. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of pupils agreed that their teachers help them to learn and would always give individual help when needed.
- 3.20 Teaching is supported by excellent resources, such as a new ICT suite, a well-equipped and purpose-built science laboratory in the Upper School, and extensive sports facilities, including all-weather pitches and a heated indoor swimming pool. These are used well in teaching to enable the pupils' progress.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The school fulfils its aims to instil confidence and to encourage pupils to develop a true sense of spirituality. Pupils explore and nurture their own spiritual lives, supported by the school's open and embracing culture, and its Christian values. They find inspiration in small moments of awe such as when using bubble lamps for the first time in a science club or when visiting a local art gallery. Through the recently introduced subject of thinking and learning skills, pupils debate and discuss how they can influence and change the world.
- 4.3 Children in the EYFS know how to share, take turns and form happy relationships. For example, children worked happily outdoors, drawing around each other with chalk on a wall and deciding in pairs who was the taller and shorter. They play together harmoniously, show kindness to others and are happy coming to school. Exemplary behaviour was seen throughout the setting. Children in Reception enjoy sharing their well-resourced and supervised playground with Years 1 and 2 at playtimes, ensuring that they are well prepared for transition to Year 1.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is excellent. The pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and are keen to ensure that fairness prevails, whilst understanding that this is not always easy. They recognise that staff, on occasion, manage challenging behaviour with sensitivity. The pupils understand the recently reviewed behaviour policy and the introduction of more relevant sanctions; most acknowledged in interviews that this has been beneficial. The pupils have excellent manners, which are deeply embedded within the culture of the school; they politely greet visiting adults. Pupils show great consideration towards each other and work well together, such as when several in Year 6 helped a pupil new to cricket by showing him how to bowl.
- 4.5 The social development of the pupils is excellent. The pupils' relationships with each other are strong and mutually supportive. They show respect for other people and understand the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination. They have a clear understanding and respect for the teachers, who they acknowledge as wanting to achieve the very best for them as pupils. The pupil school council is effective in initiating change, such as improvements to the play areas. The pupils show a strong sense of British values and demonstrate a growing awareness of political institutions through the PSHEE programme, where, for example, Year 4 pupils tracked a parliamentary bill's progress and then successfully prepared their own version, which they presented to the leadership for consideration. They have a keen sense of wanting to support those in need, undertaking charitable fund raising through, for example a 'wear a onesie' day. The school's Christian Union helps to support a student in Tanzania and orphans in Borneo.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Within a diverse community, and alongside a number from overseas, the pupils demonstrate genuine understanding and tolerance for each other and for cultures different to their own. In religious studies, the pupils gain a good understanding of both Christianity and other world religions, and they have visited a local synagogue. Festivals such as Chinese New Year provide opportunities for pupils from different cultural backgrounds to share

their traditions with the rest of the school. The artwork throughout the school, such as the Aboriginal paintings by pupils in Year 2, often embraces cultural difference and celebrates diversity.

- 4.7 When opportunities arise, the pupils demonstrate leadership; for example, Year 6 boys lead their house groups in warm-ups before a games lesson. The pupils leave the school very well prepared for the next stage of their education. They are excellent ambassadors for the school, being well mannered, confident, articulate and curious.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Through excellent relationships and efficient lines of communication, each pupil's needs are identified and supported. Personal confidence is nurtured, and co-operation and fair play are actively encouraged. In interviews, pupils cited the kindness, friendliness and care of staff as key features in their enjoyment of and happiness at school.
- 4.10 The school promotes a healthy lifestyle. Regular healthy meals and snacks are enjoyed and there are many opportunities for exercise in lessons and activities. Pupils are also encouraged to be active at playtimes.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, provision for the children's well-being is excellent. Each child knows his or her key person, who ensures that children feel safe and secure, and that their needs are met in a warm and welcoming setting. Children enjoy warm relationships and understand the need for good behaviour. They know the importance of exercise, enjoying free-choice times outside with hoops, balls, bicycles and tricycles. They all manage their own personal hygiene. Children understand healthy eating, sharing the preparation of fruit for their snack and trying new foods at lunchtime, where they enjoy a hot, nutritious meal.
- 4.12 The school has a positive ethos in which pupils recognise unkindness and bullying as unacceptable behaviour. A small minority of parents and a few pupils responded to the questionnaires with concerns about the management of bullying. A large number of pupils were interviewed during the inspection; evidence shows that there is very little bullying and, when any is brought to the attention of the staff, it is dealt with promptly and effectively. In addition, a few parents voiced concerns about poor behaviour and a small minority of pupils were unhappy with the fairness with which sanctions are applied. After consultation with pupils earlier this term, agreed sanctions have been more consistently applied, whilst still paying due care for the emotional and educational needs of individual pupils. The pupils report that the system is now effective. Inspection evidence supports this view. Thorough records are kept and are now being refined to enable the analysis of any patterns and trends. The school has a detailed plan to maintain and improve access to the school provision for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 In response to the questionnaires, a few pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Pupils are consulted on a variety of issues formally through assemblies and informally in the classroom. Their views are also communicated through the respected school council, which has achieved several changes and contributed to the organisation of a variety of events.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.15 Comprehensive health and safety measures are in place throughout the school, closely monitored by a health and safety committee. Premises are maintained to a high standard. Risk assessments for the site and for visits out of school are thorough and regularly reviewed. A suitable policy makes provision for these. Checks on equipment are carried out systematically and detailed records are maintained. Comprehensive fire prevention and safety policies are implemented effectively and a fire risk assessment is undertaken annually. Fire drills for the whole school now take place at least termly.
- 4.16 Pupil welfare is a high priority for all staff, including those in the EYFS. Throughout the school, procedures for safeguarding pupils are understood and policies now follow all points in the updated guidance. There is a clear code of conduct for staff. Pupils are educated on keeping themselves safe, including sensible use of the internet. Designated staff receive suitable safeguarding training from the local authority and all staff receive child protection training regularly. On a few occasions in the past, staff members and volunteers have been allowed to start work, albeit after risk assessment and under supervision, without all the necessary checks and references being completed. At the time of the inspection all adults working in the college had undergone the required checks.
- 4.17 The pupils' medical needs are fully met. The medical centre is well equipped and provides a friendly haven for those who are injured or unwell, including for pupils with SEND. In addition to the staff in the school medical centre, many teaching and auxiliary staff are trained in first aid. Medicines are stored securely and staff are kept well informed about pupils with various medical conditions. All accidents or injuries are recorded and parents are duly notified. The admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

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

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.19 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The aims of boarding, available in the boarding handbooks, and on the website and notice boards, are achieved. The boarders develop confidence and flourish in a safe and healthy environment where their individual welfare and well-being needs are identified and fully met. A happy, friendly atmosphere pervades the school and boarding areas.
- 4.20 Boarders are confident, polite and articulate. They happily present their school and boarding accommodation with enthusiasm, sometimes overcoming language difficulties, in order to make visitors welcome. Relationships between staff and boarders, and amongst the boarders themselves, are friendly and mutually supportive. The difference in cultural traditions is celebrated. Boarders remark that one of the best things about the school is making friends from other countries. Boarders' birthdays are celebrated with the singing of Happy Birthday in their own language. Boarders know that they can communicate concerns or views through the school council and have informal conversations with house staff. Informal contact with the older boarders, together with positive and supportive relationships with their teachers and boarding staff, help to prepare the boarders for the transition into senior school.

- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are encouraged to be active, healthy, considerate and kind. They feel that they are well looked after and readily confirm that they have a choice of adults with whom they could discuss personal matters. New boarders quickly feel at ease in the welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Boarders say that they were helped to cope with homesickness when it was needed. Individual achievements are celebrated, and kindness and helpfulness are praised. Contact numbers for helplines and the independent listener are made available.
- 4.22 The junior school boarding accommodation is within a relatively new and purpose-built boarding house and shares its atrium, recreational areas and common rooms with the younger boarders in the senior school. It is appropriately secure and only accessible to boarders. The attractive dormitories are spacious, bright and airy, and all boarders have space that they can personalise with pictures, photographs and soft toys as they wish. The modern furnishings are colourful and comfortable. The en-suite bathrooms are well equipped and ensure the boarders' privacy. All areas are clean, tidy and well maintained. The social areas are equipped with games, televisions and DVDs. There is ample space in the atrium for table tennis and physical games, as well as quieter pursuits. The inner tower houses a library and computers, which allow easy and appropriately supervised access to email. Mobile telephones are made available to the boarders to call parents in the evenings. Boarders enjoy table tennis, swimming and free time in the evenings, as well as a selection of clubs and activities on Saturday mornings. The weekend programme is varied, providing for trips out and time for relaxation.
- 4.23 The catering provision is excellent. Exciting menus take into account, and make special arrangements for, individual dietary needs. The kitchen areas are efficient, clean and well managed, as are storage areas and the large traditional dining room, all located in the senior school building. The meals provided are of high quality and enjoyed by the boarders, who are also all happy with the availability of snacks and drinking water outside of mealtimes. Junior school boarders who require regular medication are supervised in the medical centre, which is staffed by qualified nurses throughout the week. The care of any serious allergies and chronic conditions is appropriate. The storage and administration of medication are suitable and carefully organised; record keeping is thorough. The accommodation for the daytime and overnight care of sick boarders is spacious, bright and comfortable. Doctors' surgeries are held three times each week. Local dental, optician and physiotherapy services can be arranged as necessary. Privacy and confidentiality are respected.
- 4.24 Appropriate care is taken of the boarders' possessions. The laundry provision is efficient and effective. Clothing is checked and named or mended if necessary before being sent to the central laundry and returned to its owner. Every boarder has a lockable drawer. Mobile telephones and other valuables are looked after securely by staff.
- 4.25 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good but requirements relating to staff recruitment checks have not always been met in full. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed effectively. Staffing is generous and the boarders are well supervised, whether in the house, around the site or away on trips. They are escorted when moving about the site and encouraged to behave sensibly and safely when crossing driveways. Relationships are friendly and the boarders report occasional disagreements but no bullying issues. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are known by all staff, including support staff and governors, and implemented conscientiously. Cordial

relationships are evident across the community and boarders feel secure and confident that any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Boarders say that boarding staff are fair and always kind. Good behaviour is reinforced and misdemeanours dealt with constructively and quickly. Health and safety, and fire safety policies and procedures are effectively implemented, including evacuation drills in boarding time. Routine cleaning and maintenance take place when the boarders are not in the boarding house. All accidents are reported and accurate records kept. Detailed risk assessments are in place, including those required for educational visits.

- 4.26 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good and is reflected in the quality of the relationships and personal development of the boarders. The school has responded positively to the previous boarding inspection and all of the recommendations have been met except for the carrying out of all recruitment checks prior to staff starting work. Pupils were not at risk because, following risk assessments, supervision arrangements were put in place. All staff involved in boarding have appropriate job descriptions and induction training that includes safeguarding. Managers in boarding develop a reflective approach to the role. As yet, newly appointed boarding managers have had limited time to be involved in the development of junior school boarding and the extension of opportunities for boarders' further development of independence and self-reliance. Staff are appropriately qualified, receive thorough induction and safeguarding training, and undertake programmes of continuous professional development. Welfare and incident records are kept efficiently and are being refined to enable more complete integration between school and boarding information. Communication with parents is good, and the boarders' news and information about activities are regularly sent electronically. Good relationships have been established between senior boarding staff and boarding assistants, and with management and support teams. Parents expressed great satisfaction with the organisation of boarding and the care received by their children.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors provide a wide range of professional expertise, including relevant educational experience, and several have personal experience of the school as past pupils and parents. Although there is a joint governing body with the senior school, two specific governors have close working relationships with the junior school. Working closely with senior management, governors provide prudent financial planning to ensure that the school fulfils its aims. As well as suitable investment in both teaching and administrative staff, accommodation is regularly updated and refurbished, and the school is well resourced.
- 5.3 Governors are kept well informed on educational standards through detailed reports from senior managers and regular presentations by subject leaders. These give them a good insight into the working of the school and the changing educational environment. In addition to their committee duties, many governors also attend special events, visit classes and observe lessons. New governors follow a structured induction programme that includes appropriate training. There is a named governor for safeguarding and regular reports are received on any child protection matters. The full governing body has undertaken its statutory annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures. However, it has not always ensured through monitoring that appointment procedures are scrupulously followed, Oversight of health and safety matters is effective.
- 5.4 Governors monitor the effectiveness of overall provision and are continually looking ahead to consider potential future improvements. A school development plan includes appropriate timescales for both material and educational improvement. The various committees provide appropriate support and challenge to the school, including appraisal systems for senior staff. Governors appreciate the importance of the EYFS and their involvement is effective. Since the previous inspection, they have facilitated improvements such as an outdoor covered area and high quality ICT resources.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 The leadership team provides a clear vision that gives strong academic and pastoral direction and fully supports the aims of the school. Since the previous inspection, roles have been redefined and the management structure simplified. The junior school works closely with the management of the whole college, including the effective facilities department. Excellent links with parents are maintained.
- 5.7 In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection, the appraisal system is now supplemented by a programme of monitoring teaching. Self-evaluation is conducted at all levels. Staff are well motivated and speak highly of the commitment of the leadership team. New resources, including ICT facilities and

- equipment, are kept in line with current educational requirements and staff receive suitable additional training as necessary.
- 5.8 Leadership provides strong academic direction and ensures that provision for the oldest pupils has a focus on preparation for secondary education, including the local authority test that governs entry to selective maintained schools. Careful monitoring of each individual's progress ensures effective intervention and support when necessary and is a major contributory factor to the achievement of the pupils. In addition, the leadership team is committed to the overall well-being of every pupil. This quality of care sets the standard for the whole school. Older pupils speak warmly of the individual attention and positive guidance that they receive from senior leaders.
- 5.9 The EYFS is well led and managed. Clear vision ensures that children thrive in the welcoming, safe and stimulating environment, and the setting has made excellent progress since the previous inspection. Regular team meetings provide effective opportunities for self-evaluation and the continued improvement of the setting. Educational programmes are very effectively monitored. There are regular supervision meetings for the support of individual staff; however, these and other meetings are not yet formally recorded, which means that no records exist for future reference and monitoring. An appraisal system is in place which is linked to continuous professional development, and staff are actively encouraged to undertake further qualifications to extend their knowledge and skills. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in welfare, health and safety.
- 5.10 School development planning for the whole college incorporates the junior school, with additional focus on junior school subject and pastoral development. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, methods of reviewing and evaluating developments have been established. Committed leadership monitors policy implementation, keeping well informed through consultation with staff, parents and pupils. From this, priorities are established and effective changes are instigated when necessary. There has been some updating of the curriculum in both the Lower School and the Upper School. In addition, an innovative thinking and learning skills programme has been introduced. Results are evaluated and the process is continually under review. Additional new whole-school initiatives include Enrichment Week, which recently centred on celebrating the arts, in partnership with a local gallery.
- 5.11 Members of the leadership team fully discharge their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils, including in the EYFS; when concerns arise, careful records are kept and excellent pastoral support is provided. Safe recruitment procedures are followed and the required checks are carried out, although in the past these have not always been completed before staff have taken up their posts.
- 5.12 The school enjoys strong links with parents. This fulfils the school's aim to forge strong partnerships, working closely with parents, keeping them informed and involving them in their children's education. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed high satisfaction with the education and support provided for their children. Prior to pupils' entry, parents are provided with a useful handbook detailing information such as daily routines, before-and after-school clubs, and relevant policies.
- 5.13 Parents of children in the EYFS appreciate the daily contact with staff as well as other ready lines of communication, including reading records. Parents are invited

to share with the setting their children's special achievements at home, such as dressing themselves. A parent and toddler group has recently been introduced for parents for registered children and toddlers with older siblings in school. The setting has useful links with external agencies to ensure appropriate interventions for those children who need them.

- 5.14 Parents have many opportunities to be actively involved with the life and work of the school. They are invited to volunteer to become reading partners, support swimming, accompany pupils on trips, and attend sporting fixtures, assemblies, concerts and plays. Parents are kept informed of the day-to-day events in school, through an emailed weekly newsletter, the school website, with a recently improved parents' portal, and school email.
- 5.15 A very small minority of parents expressed dissatisfaction in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire with the information given about their children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Detailed and informative biannual school reports, containing effort and achievement grades, house points earned and detailed subject comments, as well as parents' evenings, ensure that parents are kept well informed about their children's work and progress. Reports in the EYFS include targets for each child, identified through assessment, as recommended at the previous inspection. Parents are welcome to make further appointments should they wish. In addition, there is regular informal communication, and parents may contact the school or email staff at any time should they have a concern or query. A suitable complaints procedure, available on the website, is implemented effectively.
- 5.16 The Parents Association is a particularly active and supportive body, holding social events to welcome new parents, for example, a family barbecue early in September and a summer fair. It also holds fund-raising events to secure items for the school, such as extra play equipment and hire of a mobile planetarium during Science Week.

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