



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ARNOLD LODGE SCHOOL**

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Arnold Lodge School

Full Name of School	Arnold Lodge School
DfE Number	937/6004
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Head of Senior School	Mr David Preston
Head of Lower School	Mr Andrew Pollard
Proprietor	Newman Schools Limited
Age Range	4 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	187
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (129 boys; 58 girls)
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS): 9 4-11: 90 11-19: 88
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	26 Jan 2016 to 29 Jan 2016

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI interim inspection was in March 2011.

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

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for 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 directors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Desmond Dunne	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Lynda Corry	Team Inspector (Former Head Teacher, ISA school)
Mr Alistair McConville	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Samantha Michau	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Miss Valerie Craven	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Arnold Lodge School is a day school for pupils from the ages of 4 to 19, situated in the heart of Leamington Spa. Founded in 1864 as a boarding school for boys, it developed into a co-educational preparatory school for pupils up to the age of 13. In 2008 the decision was taken to expand the age range incrementally up to 16. In September 2013, the school began admitting pupils into Year 12 to prepare for post-16 qualifications. Owned by a company whose directors administer governance, the school is housed in a variety of buildings surrounding a central playground and grassed area.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a safe environment and to develop the social, physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs of pupils so that they reach their full potential, and are equipped to meet the challenges of the future. Since the previous inspection, the Nursery has been taken over by a separate company and is now registered with Ofsted. A headteacher was appointed in 2012 and subsequently left in December 2015. Leadership is currently shared between two heads of school; a head of senior school (Years 6 to 13) and a head of junior school (Reception to Year 5). Since January 2016, the directors are advised by an external consultant who also acts as executive head to support school leadership.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the school is in line with the national average, although a wide range of abilities are represented. At the time of inspection, 187 pupils on roll of whom about two-thirds are boys. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises of 9 children. The school has 90 pupils in Years 1 to 6, 80 in Years 6 to 11 and 12 in Years 12 and 13. The school's cosmopolitan population reflects its local community. It includes a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The majority of the pupils live within 5 miles of the school and come from business or professional family backgrounds. English is an additional language (EAL) for 11 pupils. A total of 27 pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and receive specialist learning support. Also, 9 pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is extremely successful in fulfilling its aims to provide a safe environment and to develop the social, physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs of pupils so that they reach their full potential. Pupils' achievements from their various starting points are excellent overall. Very soon after their arrival into the school, pupils become highly committed learners and demonstrate excellent behaviour in lessons. Individual achievement by pupils across all age groups is excellent, particularly in music and sport. The curriculum is good. A wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities take place in the school and the local community. Opportunities to develop information and communication technology (ICT) computing skills and to learn about other countries through international partnerships are limited. Teaching across the whole school is excellent. The EYFS provides children with a good start to their education, although they have limited opportunities to access ICT to support their learning. As the pupils move through the school they are well prepared for the next stage of learning. Teachers know their pupils very well and the atmosphere in classrooms is friendly and purposeful.
- 2.2 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent. Children in the EYFS are happy, and willing to share and work co-operatively. Many examples were observed of pupils in the lower and senior school demonstrating great respect for each other and for the school as a community. Older pupils are encouraged to support and work with younger pupils, and they enjoy doing so. Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils, and among pupils themselves are of a very high quality. Pastoral care is excellent and highly effective pastoral systems ensure that extremely good communication takes place between staff and leadership about pupils' needs. The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good. Some aspects of practical arrangements for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are managed well but checks on a small number of recently appointed staff, concerning prohibition from teaching or the receipt of suitable references, were not undertaken or received before they started work. By the end of the inspection all checks were in place.
- 2.3 Governance is sound; the directors have ensured that the school meets the previous inspection's recommendations concerning introducing an appraisal system, improving the consistency of marking and assessment, and producing an EYFS development plan. They have not sufficiently monitored regulatory requirements for safeguarding and recruitment effectively, and as a result they have not demonstrated good skills and knowledge or fulfilled their responsibilities effectively in consistently meeting the independent school standards. In addition, they have not kept parents sufficiently informed about recent leadership changes or about the future development of the school. Leadership and management is good; leadership at all levels remains sharply focused on improving the educational experience for all pupils in line with school priorities. Staff promote effective links with parents.

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 take the following action.
1. Ensure that all appropriate recruitment checks, including prohibition orders from teaching and references, are undertaken on staff before they begin work at the school [Part 4, Paragraph 18(2)(b), under Suitability of staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraph 7(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].
 2. Ensure that all people with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently [Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(a) and (b), under Quality of leadership and management in schools].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that the directors' oversight of regulatory requirements is consistently thorough by providing challenge to all areas of the school.
 2. Ensure that communication, particularly with parents, provides information about current changes in leadership and the future development of the school.
 3. Improve the opportunities available within the curriculum for pupils to learn about other countries through international partnerships.
 4. Ensure that ICT skills are fully developed across the curriculum and provide wider opportunities for pupils to develop their computing skills.
 5. Provide children within the EYFS with more opportunities to access ICT to support their learning.

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 of all ages demonstrate very good knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum in response to excellent teaching. The school is highly successful in achieving its aims to encourage pupils to be happy, safe and valued for their strengths and abilities in a supportive and positive environment.
- 3.3 Within the EYFS, children's achievements and progress exceed age-related expectations and are excellent relative to their starting points. Children enjoy exploring and investigating. The frequent letters and sounds activities help to foster speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, and children write in full sentences. Children are very skilful at counting up to 40 and beyond, backwards from 20 and the amount of children in the class. Through the use of a 'magic number machine', children complete complex additions by manipulating a range of everyday objects. They are active learners who are able to concentrate and work independently as well as think critically when supported with problem-solving and creative activities.
- 3.4 In the lower school, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are excellent. Pupils are articulate and confident in conversation with each other and with adults. They are equally courteous listeners, rarely interrupting each other in group work. Pupils read text independently and are able to discuss factual information about topics such as the Great Fire of London and the rainforest. They are encouraged to work in groups to support each other in learning new vocabulary. Problem solving is evident when they engage in activities such as word calculations in mathematics and counting skills in French.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment in the lower school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be above national expectations for their age. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make at least good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The inspection deemed the junior school curriculum to be broad, from the evidence obtained from lesson observations, analysis of pupils' work and pupil interviews. Some pupils leave at the end of Year 6 and transfer to other local senior independent or maintained schools.
- 3.6 In the senior school, pupils are knowledgeable and have well-developed skills for learning. They discuss issues in class with sensitivity and an awareness of the needs of others. As a result, their writing is mature and reflective. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is good, as observed in younger classes regarding the properties of different triangles. Year 12 and 13 pupils become adept at problem solving and in their simplification of complex equations. Independent learning skills are developed effectively and pupils demonstrate these in a range of subjects. They are enthusiastic and willing to tackle significant practical and intellectual challenges, such as dissection in science. The pupils' creative skills can be observed in their use of spatial awareness to produce artwork, which is on display around the school. Pupils use their skills in ICT across the curriculum, but do not have the opportunity to focus sufficiently on their development of these skills through discrete ICT lessons.
- 3.7 The following analysis uses national data for the Years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for maintained

schools. In 2013, girls' results were in line with the national average for selective schools. This level of attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The school entered a small number of candidates for A-level examinations for the first time in 2015. Attainment in these examinations has no national comparative data to be measured against; the small size of the candidate group would make statistical comparison unreliable. From observation of work and discussion with pupils, progress is judged to be good in both Years 12 and 13 in a range of vocational and A-level subjects. Inspection evidence obtained through lesson observation, examination of pupils' work and pupil interviews indicates that some senior school pupils are making excellent progress.

- 3.8 Pupils successfully compete, sometimes at county and national levels, in a variety of sports including cricket and fencing. Others develop their physical skills in boys' and girls' mixed hockey and tennis. The under-tens rugby team were finalists in the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools national competition in 2014. A significant number of pupils receive musical tuition at the school and several of them achieve highly for their age, such as accomplishing grades seven or eight in guitar or piano. Pupils enjoy outdoor pursuits, such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). In 2015 seven pupils achieved silver, bronze or gold DofE awards, which is a significant achievement when considering the size of the senior school.
- 3.9 At all levels of the school, pupils with SEND or EAL make excellent progress as a result of the individual support that they receive from teachers. More able pupils make excellent progress when opportunities for challenge are provided in class.
- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent; they are focused, engaged and keen to learn. They are quick to take the initiative in seeking additional assistance from staff in and outside class in order to support their learning when necessary. Pupils appreciate the dedication and patience of their teachers, and act with a correspondingly high degree of maturity. Senior school pupils take attitudinal tests half-termly which encourage them to reflect on their attitude to learning, and as a result develop resilience skills. Project work illustrates how positively they respond to challenges and to opportunities for individual research, such as GCSE topics on Nazi Germany, or music technology in Years 12 and 13. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of parents indicated that they are pleased with the progress their children make at school, and almost all pupils agreed that they make good progress.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.12 Throughout the school the curriculum covers the requisite areas and fully supports the school's aims by offering a bespoke learning experience to unlock the talents and potential of each individual pupil. This meets the pupils' needs and makes a strong contribution to their achievements. Pupils are encouraged from an early age in Reception to develop a spirit of enquiry. In the lower school, they acquire a love of learning through separate subject study and homework. As they move from lower to senior school, pupils develop independence which prepares them well for Years 12 and 13. Curriculum schemes of work are suitably designed so that they do not undermine fundamental key British values, and opposing views are presented in a balanced way when covering political issues.
- 3.13 The EYFS has a wide range of indoor and outdoor exploration and investigation opportunities in all seven areas of learning, with an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children have access to a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, and the specialist teaching in French, physical education (PE), music and drama all contribute significantly to positive outcomes for them. By the end of Reception, learning becomes more formal with greater emphasis on literacy and mathematics, ensuring that children reach at least the expected levels of development and that each of their individual needs are met.
- 3.14 The lower school curriculum provides a focus for literacy and numeracy development, reinforced by daily practice in mental mathematics and grammar exercises. Thematic skills-based cross-curricular lessons, from Year 1 onwards, allow pupils to be creative and reflective. Pupils also benefit from the expertise of specialist teachers in French, science, music, food technology, art and PE.
- 3.15 In the senior school, all the required areas of learning are provided within the curriculum. The range of GCSE subjects available promotes pupils' speaking, listening, problem-solving, creative and thinking skills. Across the school a diverse and well-structured personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme covers respect for all people, and is taught in lessons and through assemblies. Effective partnerships have been developed with a local university to use their sports facilities and specialist coaches for PE. Drama, classics and religious education are integrated across the curriculum. Computer skills and ICT are not taught as a discrete subject. The school have invested well in resources such as handheld electronic computers, but the pupils only develop these skills through their use in subjects across the curriculum. Inspection evidence concludes that the library is not used sufficiently well in order to support learning.
- 3.16 A key feature of curriculum provision for older pupils is a bespoke accelerated learning programme specifically tailored to individual needs that challenges, excites and encourages them to work hard and enjoy the opportunities made available. Pupils commented positively about the impartial and well-planned careers guidance that they receive, and they are provided with a good range of work placement opportunities as well as advice regarding university applications. Since the previous inspection, pupils in Years 12 and 13 are provided a wider choice of vocational subjects alongside academic A levels.
- 3.17 Curriculum planning for those with SEND is well-developed, as pupils' needs are fully recognised by class and subject teachers. Specific learning support is tailored

to meet these needs effectively, yielding excellent progress and often high levels of achievement. The more able pupils benefit from extension work in some classes, and challenges inherent in independent holiday homework projects. Pupils with EAL receive excellent support and are able to participate fully in all class activities. For example, EAL pupils in some art lessons were provided information related to the task which was translated into their first language.

- 3.18 For a small school, the range of extra-curricular activities available is good and enables pupils to develop personal interests and strong relationships across all age groups. The school has mixed-age clubs for areas such as sport, problem solving, public speaking, skills development in theatre as well as a 'newsround club'. Trips and visits to a nearby outdoor activity centre for lower school pupils and residential field trips and visits to countries of historical and cultural interest for senior school pupils all strongly support the curriculum and engage pupils of all abilities.
- 3.19 The school has a number of local community links, such as carol singing in the local church at Christmas, visits from representatives of local companies, and table-top 'wargame' workshops provided by local residents. Links with the international community are limited and this has an impact on the pupils' ability to know, understand and talk confidently about life in other countries.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.21 Staff in the EYFS plan many stimulating creative and practical activities that successfully foster children's ability to investigate and to use their imagination. These activities are enhanced through the use of high-quality indoor resources, but children have few opportunities to access ICT in order to support their learning. Support is carefully implemented for those children with SEND or EAL, enabling them to reflect on their learning and refine their skills so that they make excellent progress. Adults have high expectations of all children and frequently challenge them through open-ended questioning which successfully extends children's knowledge and understanding, and engages their interest. Information gained through accurate assessments of children's learning and development is used rigorously to identify their next steps, ensuring that all children make the progress of which they are capable. The highly effective sharing of developmental information between staff in Reception and Year 1 ensures that transitions are smooth, and that children's specific needs and interests are taken into account.
- 3.22 Throughout the lower and senior school, teaching is highly effective in supporting the fulfilment of the school's aim of enabling pupils to make the most academic progress that they can. Teaching is well planned and takes into account the individual needs of the pupils. Teachers provide appropriate support and challenge, employ varied resources, manage lessons with an appropriate pace and use a range of teaching strategies. Small class sizes enable tutors and subject teachers to make appropriate adjustments to planned work with tasks that are well matched to the ability of pupils. The individualisation of lessons is a significant strength of the school. Teachers are well qualified, knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects, and ensure that teaching is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues. They work hard to find imaginative ways to engage and motivate pupils. Pupils are frequently provided opportunities to work independently in class, and very good use is made of collaborative activities where pupils support one another's learning.

- 3.23 The school has improved the quality and consistency of marking since the previous inspection. Feedback to pupils on their learning is excellent, both orally in class and in the way that written comments improve pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The implementation of the marking and assessment policy is consistent across both lower and senior schools. The introduction of 'feedback, action and response' for older pupils, referred to as 'FAR', enables them to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the work that they produce. A well-developed school-wide monitoring system ensures that both teachers and pupils understand their current attainment and appropriate interventions are organised if a pupil falls behind. Pupils are encouraged, through self-evaluation, to reflect on their progress towards identified targets across a range of subjects. In the senior school, teachers emphasise intrinsic subject interest when making close reference to the criteria for public examinations.
- 3.24 Teachers have consistently high expectations for pupil behaviour and oversee an atmosphere of purposeful, cheerful learning, in which pupils take considerable pride in their work and demonstrate tolerance and respect. Teachers foster excellent relationships with their pupils, who in turn are highly appreciative of the academic care that they receive. Warm, caring relationships exist between the pupils and staff; each pupil feels valued and is known as an individual. Many pupils spoke of the willingness of teachers to provide them additional support outside lesson time; in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils indicated that teachers help them to learn.
- 3.25 Many examples of useful homework assignments were observed in the scrutiny of pupils' work. A minority of pupils expressed in their questionnaire responses that homework does not help their learning, inspection evidence does not support this view. The recent introduction of a homework-planning application for mobile devices has been well received by pupils. It is used with increasing consistency by staff and, as a result, homework effectively supports the progress of pupils.
- 3.26 Pupils with SEND or EAL are supported very effectively in the classroom. Teachers and learning assistants work very well in partnership for the benefit of the pupils who they support. The provision set out in statements of special educational needs and EHC plans are met. A variety of successful teaching intervention strategies are used, such as role play, to accelerate learning and progress. Provision for the more able pupils is built into lessons, and teachers oversee a well-disciplined atmosphere of mutual respect and support within classes of varying ability.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school takes active steps to promote both the pupils' personal development and their understanding of the key values that characterise Britain. The quality of the pupils' spiritual development is excellent, in line with the school's aims. Children in the EYFS are able to co-operate, share and takes turns, and they demonstrate courtesy and respect towards each other, staff and visitors at all times. They are well prepared for their transition into the main school. Across the rest of the school, pupils' sense of self-worth is enhanced by the shared celebration of achievements in class and assemblies. Their self-confidence enables them to cope positively with the challenges of school and everyday life. Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs is well established within the school ethos, and strongly evident in pupils' interpersonal behaviour. Pupils have a genuine appreciation of the natural world and understand the need to preserve it, for example when Year 1 made 'golden promises to the Earth'. Pupils confidently demonstrate a respectful and courteous manner alongside their caring attitudes and acceptance of others' individuality. Those with SEND or behavioural issues are helped very sensitively by their peers, demonstrating conscious inclusion, tolerance and compassion by even the youngest of children. Lower school pupils like working to music, acknowledging that it relaxes them and helps them to think more clearly.
- 4.3 Throughout the school the pupils' moral development is excellent. They have a keen sense of right and wrong, and understand the need for rules in order for the school to run smoothly. Many classes devise their own class rules and monitor each other's behaviour according to these. Pupils are keen to do their best for their class and for their sporting or house teams. The pupils interviewed spoke of how the detention system works and that they consider it fair. Manners and behaviour around the school are excellent. Pupils smile, hold open doors, move through the school calmly and are keen to be helpful. They are encouraged by staff to show respect, tolerance and kindness to each other, which ensures no discrimination. The school has a happy, busy atmosphere in which all pupils are guided and nurtured. When choosing trips, senior pupils take into account each other's needs and difficulties, and demonstrate concern for each other without the prompting of staff. Lower school pupils show a good understanding of current affairs through watching a weekly news broadcast.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent and is evident in their active contribution to the school. Pupils are welcoming and courteous to visitors. Their knowledge of democracy and of English institutions and law is actively promoted across the school. Reception, children gain an understanding of voting and the democratic process as they choose activities. This understanding is further developed in Years 1 and 2; pupils voted for which book they wanted to read and which song they will perform to a parent audience later in the term. Older pupils demonstrated secure social, political and economic awareness in spiritual, moral, social and cultural lessons, including in a debate about the benefits, or not, of the National Health Service. A small minority of pupils expressed concern in their questionnaire responses about the number of opportunities that they have for taking responsibility. Inspection evidence, gained through pupil interviews and observation of pupils undertaking roles of responsibility, did not support this view. Senior pupils take their responsibilities seriously, whether through individual leadership roles such as

prefects, head of school and deputy head of school or through membership of the school council. They are involved in a number of community service activities, including those that they complete in pursuit of the DofE award.

- 4.5 Pupils of all ages develop an excellent awareness of their own and other cultures. Their understanding is helped by the multicultural nature of the school community which they enjoy sharing with each other. For example, younger pupils are planning how they will celebrate Chinese New Year. In both parts of the school, pupils' artwork demonstrates a sensitive appreciation of cultural differences, pupils reflect on the social and cultural aspects of society in their geography work, and the school chef includes themed 'food from around the world' days for lunchtime menus. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in literature, music, arts, crafts and other cultural visit days and events. For example, they are encouraged to extend their cultural awareness through visits to theatre, museums and concerts. By the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of personal development and they are well equipped to continue into the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 Throughout the school, high-quality pastoral care and guidance fully supports the school's aim to understand and build personal relationships with each pupil to really bring out the best in them. Highly effective pastoral systems ensure that excellent communication takes place between staff and leadership about pupils' needs, and strongly contribute to pupils' personal development. Staff are adept at monitoring pupils' well-being and are devoted to helping them overcome difficulties, whether in their own academic work or in the relationships that they have with others.
- 4.8 Within the EYFS, teachers and support staff work well in partnership to provide a homely, nurturing, happy and stimulating environment in which children thrive. Strong relationships are firmly established between children and their key person who ensures that their needs are met. All adults consistently work together to promote high standards of behaviour. Children understand the importance of washing their hands before lunch, after going to the toilet and after messy activities. All children are involved in regular exercise such as when they explore the open spaces in their immediate outdoor environment at playtimes, and during vigorous indoor physical activities in the school hall.
- 4.9 Across the school, including in the EYFS, teaching and support staff provide excellent role models and ensure that they are well known to all pupils. Relationships between the staff and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, are friendly, positive and respectful. Pupils enjoy each other's company and mix well across age groups and in mixed-gender sports activities. The pupils confirmed in interviews that they feel very well supported and are confident about where and from whom they can access help and guidance. They are confident that concerns will be dealt with swiftly and efficiently.
- 4.10 Lunchtimes were observed to be happy, social occasions where staff and pupils enjoy eating together, in a pleasant atmosphere with locally sourced healthy, nutritious food. The pupils agree that the food is of a good quality and that a wide choice is provided. The EYFS staff make lunchtime and snack time routines purposeful to help foster children's social skills. Guidance on a healthy lifestyle is

provided through PSHEE and through regular tutor group work and assemblies. Physical education holds a prominent position in the life of the school; pupils enjoy sports lessons and the provision of extra-curricular clubs, such as 'Ultimate Frisbee'.

- 4.11 Adults provide very clear guidelines about the expected standards of behaviour which result in a happy and busy atmosphere, where pupils benefit fully from the opportunities provided. Concerns were raised by a small minority of pupils in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses about the perceived inconsistency in the way sanctions and rewards are applied. These views were not supported by inspection evidence, which included scrutiny of the school's records, where sanctions were observed to be applied consistently and appropriately according to the misdemeanour, and involved discussion with pupils. Appropriate rewards and sanctions promote high standards and, as a result, the behaviour of pupils is exemplary.
- 4.12 Pupils confirm that they feel safe and that bullying incidents are rare. A very small minority of parents identified bullying as a concern within the school. Inspection evidence does not agree with this view; any bullying incidents are recorded carefully together with the action taken, and in the last twelve months parents have been fully involved in dealing with any incidents. Pupils during interviews said that they readily recognise that bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable. In their responses to the questionnaire, almost all pupils indicated that bullying is dealt with quickly. New pupils receive careful induction to ensure full integration into their class and the school. The overwhelming majority of pupils say that they enjoy attending the school and value the support that they receive.
- 4.13 The school council represents the pupils' views well. During interviews, pupils said that they appreciated the way it was run and that changes have been made following their deliberations in council meetings. The school effectively seeks pupils' views in other ways, including placing pupils on staff appointment panels and through the use of the school's newly introduced half-termly 'attitude to learning' questionnaire, which provides a forum for discussion and action planning to resolve any matters about their work and learning.
- 4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve the educational access for those pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.16 Provision for children's well-being in the EYFS and across the school is good, with the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicating that their children are happy and feel safe at school. Pupils commented, in discussion with inspectors, that staff at all levels are quick to take action when they identify a need.
- 4.17 All staff and volunteers receive regular and effective safeguarding training, including information about how to prevent radicalisation and extremism. Safeguarding documentation is clearly communicated to parents on the school website. Records relating to any concerns about pupils' welfare are stored carefully, and suitably trained designated safeguarding members of staff maintain close and appropriate contact with relevant agencies. The school has effective relationships with the Local Authority Designated Officer for safeguarding.

- 4.18 The recruitment of a small number of staff in the main school has not been managed in a rigorous manner. Some recently appointed staff, including peripatetic teachers, had started work before the school had received checks about whether they had been prohibited from teaching, and a few others started work before references were received. By the end of the inspection all checks were in place.
- 4.19 Necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are methodical. Fire alarm systems are tested weekly and fire safety documentation is up to date. Drills are held regularly; one observed during the inspection demonstrated that evacuation procedures are clear, with exits well signed. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out for premises, trips and activities, with meticulous records. Access to the internet is filtered and all pupils receive guidance on e-safety. Maintenance of the buildings and the site is very well managed.
- 4.20 Attendance is carefully monitored through morning and afternoon registration, with registers efficiently completed and archived. Absence is meticulously followed up by administrative staff, and prompt and regular attendance is promoted particularly in the EYFS. The school immediately took steps to ensure that all admission registers were properly completed, whereas previously some were not, and by the end of the inspection admission registers for three years were appropriately archived.
- 4.21 Many staff are trained in first aid or paediatric first aid, with eighteen staff completing four-day training. The medical room is well organised and staff follow careful protocols for storing and dispensing medicines, and dealing with illnesses and accidents. Records of incidents are stored by the Reception staff for both lower and senior schools. Accidents are recorded and parents are personally informed. The welfare of those pupils with SEND is sensitively and carefully taken into account. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that their children are well looked after at school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 In some areas, including a vision for teaching and learning and financial forward planning, governance is good. The monitoring of regulatory requirements and the implementation of policies, and the effectiveness of communication with stakeholders have not been sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.3 The directors are fully committed to the ethos and values of the school and provide strong support for the school's leadership to help the school be a success. They have not evaluated sufficiently rigorously the way in which leadership undertakes delegated responsibilities. The directors take a keen interest in the pupils' academic, social and emotional development and strive to support the school to improve. For example, they have ensured successful fulfilment of the previous inspection's recommendations over a period of five years by engaging the services of a wide range of consultant support and external agencies, and the recently developed strategic plan provides a clear stimulus for future improvement. The directors ensure that the school is well resourced, appropriately staffed and accommodated, and they receive regular reports on health and safety particularly in relation to fire regulations and building maintenance.
- 5.4 There is a named director for safeguarding who also takes a particular and effective interest in the EYFS, and both directors ensure that a review of the school's main policies and their implementation, including safeguarding, occurs on an annual basis. The directors ensured that the areas of development from the previous inspection were addressed concerning an appraisal system, improving the consistency of marking and assessment, and producing an EYFS development plan. They did not successfully keep up to date with, or monitor, the changes in regulatory requirements for safeguarding and recruitment sufficiently well.
- 5.5 Communication with the school community and stakeholders, particularly parents, in a period of change has not been informative or helpful. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of parents indicated that they feel that the school is not well led or managed, inspection evidence supports this view. Very recently, directors and leadership have placed a high priority on informing parents about how the school will continue to serve the pupils well in the future. This message has not been received clearly by parents. The directors have appointed an advisory consultant, in the role of executive head, to inform governance about how to improve and to support the recently modified school leadership team.

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 good.
- 5.7 A significant number of recent changes to school leadership has benefited the provision and outcomes for pupils across the whole school. The senior management team has been restructured and now consists of the head of senior and head of lower school, advised and supported by an executive head. New appointments to other leadership roles have also been made across the school and, despite the necessity for multiple responsibilities associated with a small school, leadership at all levels remain sharply focused on improving the educational experience for all pupils in line with school priorities and its aims. Performance against school improvement targets is evaluated, including effective monitoring of teaching and learning through frequent lesson observation and work scrutiny.
- 5.8 The recommendation from the previous inspection concerning the EYFS development plan has been addressed by making good progress with the identification through self-evaluation of priorities for improvement. Procedures to safeguard children are rigorous. Staff receive regular appraisals that clearly identify training needs, and the supervision of staff is regularly undertaken. Senior staff effectively monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the educational provision in all seven areas of learning.
- 5.9 Committed vigorous and focused senior leadership in the lower and senior school is successfully establishing an aspirational, innovative ethos amongst the staff and pupils, with ambitious plans. They have worked effectively with the executive head and directors to identify the issues for the future development of the school. Many successful steps have recently taken place to ensure greater consistency in the implementation of policies and procedures. Regular meetings ensure that the school's ethos and values of democracy and respect for others are appropriately supported, including in the EYFS. The appraisal process, in response to recommendations from the previous inspection, is effectively linked to in-service training opportunities and these are supported as a priority. The use of data to improve pupils' achievement and to support staff in improving academic standards is consistently used. Leaders ensure that staff across the school value diversity and promote equality in the context of British society.
- 5.10 Middle leaders work well across subjects to ensure thematic areas of learning in the lower school are relevant to the pupils. New initiatives such as the introduction of FAR marking in the senior school are having a significant impact on the quality of oral and written feedback provided to pupils. Highly effective revisions to the structure for academic and pastoral monitoring have consolidated the pupils' excellent levels of personal development. The pastoral work undertaken by all staff successfully supports pupils' academic learning.
- 5.11 The recruitment of well-qualified teachers and teaching assistants, and their effective deployment across the school, is beneficial for the social and academic achievement of the pupils and their welfare. A few recruitment procedures were not carried out on a small number of staff before they began work at the school. The required enhanced disclosures and barred list checks have been carried out on all staff. All staff are trained in safeguarding and for their roles in welfare, health and safety. Support for those pupils who have SEND or EAL is particularly strong as a

result of the effective partnership promoted between class teachers and teaching assistants.

- 5.12 On a day-to-day basis the school promotes effective links with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents criticised the availability of information relating to school leadership and policies. Inspection evidence supports these views. In the EYFS, parents are well informed about their children's achievements and progress, and are invited to share their own observations from home. They are encouraged to be involved in the work of the EYFS, particularly through the celebration of festivals and topic-based activities.
- 5.13 Parents of prospective pupils receive a good-quality brochure that clearly highlights the aims and ethos of the school. A suitable range of up-to-date and accessible information is available on the school's website, including copies of key policies. Parents receive a weekly newsletter and regular emails which contain detailed information about the work of the Reception class and of the lower and senior schools.
- 5.14 The school seeks parent's views through its own questionnaires, and responds to these through updated policy and practice. Concerns raised with class teachers are logged and handled in an appropriate manner, leading to a timely resolution. The school resolves complaints according to the recently updated complaints policy, and examination of the detailed records for the last twelve months demonstrates that care and sensitivity have been used appropriately. A strong parent association ensures active involvement by parents in the work of the school, such as through a wide range of fund-raising events. The school has benefited greatly from these activities, for example the lower school received new equipment for its outdoor area as a result.
- 5.15 Parents of all pupils, including those in the EYFS, receive three end-of-term reports. These are detailed and informative about pupil's learning and development, each containing very encouraging and personalised comments linked to pupils' progress and achievement.

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