

King's

Independent Schools Inspectorate Inspection Report 2015



At King's, we are extremely proud that following the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) visit in November 2015, our School has been recognised as "excellent" in all areas. We are delighted that the hard work of pupils, staff, parents and the wider school community has been acknowledged in this glowing report.

"The school is highly successful in meeting its aim to challenge pupils to aspire, work hard and achieve. Pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils benefit from an excellent range of academic subjects and extra-curricular activities. Teaching throughout the school is excellent." ISI

The Inspection team judged King's to be "excellent" in all aspects*:

- quality of pupils' achievements and learning - **excellent**
- curricular and extracurricular provision - **excellent**
- teaching - **excellent**
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social & cultural development - **excellent**
- pastoral care - **excellent**
- welfare, health and safety - **excellent**
- governance - **excellent**
- leadership and management - **excellent**

Highlights

"Pupils' personal development is excellent. The school succeeds in equipping young people with the character and skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing world."

"Teachers develop extremely positive working relations with pupils. They have an excellent knowledge of their subjects, and of the particular needs of the groups they teach."

"Pupils develop a wide variety of skills, often to high levels, including in sport, art and music."

"The school is highly successful in meeting its aim of fostering a friendly, polite and caring community. A key characteristic of the school is the strong relationships that exist between teachers and pupils, resulting in excellent behaviour."

* *The possible ISI descriptors in all aspects are 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.*



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
THE KING'S SCHOOL IN MACCLESFIELD**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The King's School in Macclesfield

Full Name of School	The King's School in Macclesfield
DfE Number	895/6007
Registered Charity Number	525921
Address	The King's School in Macclesfield Cumberland Street Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 1DA England
Telephone Number	01625 260000
Fax Number	01625 260002
Email Address	mail@kingsmac.co.uk
Head	Dr Simon Hyde
Chair of Governors	Dr John Kennerley
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	1223
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (703 boys; 520 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 30 5-11: 293 11-18: 900
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 1223
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Caroline Hulme-McKibbin
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	17 Nov 2015 to 20 Nov 2015

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI integrated/EYFS intermediate/boarding intermediate inspection was in November 2009.

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

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

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 and one other member of the governing body, 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 Robin Gaff	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Gabriel	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Gill Wilson	Team Inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)
Dr Richard Brookes	Team Inspector (Senior Deputy Head, HMC school)
Dr Haydn Griffiths	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Dr Jennette Jefferies	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Ian Lovat	Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Neil Mason	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
Ms Emily McGhee	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Ms Sarah Williamson	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The King's School in Macclesfield is a selective co-educational day school for pupils aged three to eighteen. Founded in 1502, it is an incorporated charity and is the oldest school in the country to have links with the Merchant Taylors' Company. The school's two main sites are located close to the centre of Macclesfield. A third site, used for sporting activities, is situated on the outskirts of the town. Pupils aged 3 to 4, some of whom attend part-time, are admitted to the Nursery class. Other pupils join at various stages in their school career. Boys and girls are educated together in the infant and junior divisions (3 to 11 years) at the Fence Avenue site, and in the sixth form at the Cumberland Street site. Pupils aged between 11 and 16 in the senior divisions are taught in single-sex classes; girls on the former site and boys on the latter. However, they take part jointly in a range of extra-curricular activities.
- 1.2 The school's principal aim is to equip young people with the character and skills necessary to meet the challenges of a constantly changing world. The school strives to challenge pupils to aspire, work hard and achieve, to develop lively and enquiring minds and to foster a friendly, polite and caring community. It places a strong emphasis on the importance of academic achievement, and also on the value of participating in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- 1.3 The current headmaster, as well as several other members of the school's senior management team, has been appointed since the school's previous inspection. There have been a number of other changes, including the refurbishment of some of the school's buildings and facilities, modifications to the school's curriculum and new initiatives intended to improve the quality of teaching.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 1223 pupils in the school. Of these, 102 were in the infant division, including 30 in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), in the pre-school and Reception classes. There were 221 pupils enrolled in the junior division and 900 in the senior divisions, 242 of whom were in the sixth form. Most pupils travel from the surrounding area and come from business and professional families, reflecting the ethnic diversity to be found there. The ability profile of pupils in the school is above the national average.
- 1.5 The school has identified 151 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All receive additional support, according to their individual needs, which cover a range of disabilities and learning difficulties. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care (EHC) plans. There are currently no pupils on roll who speak English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Pre-School	Nursery (3 to 4 years)
Reception	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aim to challenge pupils to aspire, work hard and achieve. Pupils' achievement is excellent. In the EYFS, pupils make an extremely strong start to their formal learning. Throughout the school, pupils show highly positive attitudes, both in their academic studies and in their participation in out-of-school activities. Pupils, including in the sixth form, develop a wide variety of skills, often to high levels, including in sport, art and music. The excellent curriculum is well-matched to pupils' abilities and interests, including in the EYFS. Pupils benefit from an excellent range of academic subjects and extra-curricular activities. Teaching throughout the school is excellent. Teachers develop extremely positive working relations with pupils. They have an excellent knowledge of their subjects, and of the particular needs of the groups they teach. This enables them to plan lesson activities which challenge pupils, in line with the school's recently introduced policies.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. The school succeeds in its aim of equipping young people with the character and skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing world. From the youngest age, pupils learn the importance of treating others with respect and consideration, irrespective of their abilities or cultural background. Pupils gain an excellent knowledge and understanding of the values inherent in British society, such as tolerance and democracy, and a respect for the different faiths and traditions to be found in modern Britain and the wider world. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. The school is highly successful in meeting its aim of fostering a friendly, polite and caring community. Almost all the parents who responded to the survey feel that their children were well looked after by the school. A minority of pupils did not agree that teachers were always fair in giving rewards and sanctions, and inspectors found some inconsistency in this respect. The school's arrangements for promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. Its policies and procedures are implemented highly effectively and meet all regulatory requirements, including those specific to the EYFS.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is excellent. Governors know their school extremely well, provide the school's leaders with excellent support and challenge, and ensure that they have the resources they require to achieve its aims. Leadership and management throughout the school are excellent. Leaders have ensured that all the recommendations from the previous report have been successfully addressed. They have succeeded in raising the staff's and pupils' expectations of what can be achieved, and have significantly raised pupils' achievement and improved the quality of teaching. Not all of the measures that school leaders have introduced have as yet made their full impact on the school's performance. Links with parents are highly positive. A very large majority of parents express their satisfaction with all aspects of the education and care which the school provides for their children and would recommend it to others.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Fully implement the initiatives recently introduced by senior leaders to further enhance the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
2. Promote greater understanding amongst teachers and pupils in the senior divisions of the school's system of rewards and sanctions.

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' learning and achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are well-educated throughout the school in line with the school's aims. Their achievements have improved significantly since the previous inspection. The overwhelming majority of parents, and most pupils, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that pupils make good progress in their work.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children greatly enjoy their learning and their progress is excellent in relation to their starting points and capabilities. The majority of children reach the expected levels of development by the end of Reception, and many exceed them. Those with SEND also make strong progress, due to the support they are given. Children communicate clearly, and they can explain their learning confidently. Children in the Nursery class are developing excellent skills in preparation for writing, developing correct pencil grip and experimenting with mark-making. They develop their understanding of number and other mathematical concepts extremely well. Children in the Reception class demonstrate a secure awareness of the links between letters and sounds and by the end of the year most write sentences independently in a range of contexts. The children are highly inquisitive, and display considerable independence in their learning. They confidently immerse themselves in activities, and can sustain their concentration for long periods. They think critically, for instance when deciding how best to repair the roof of a den. They are creative in their play, as seen when Reception children made a witches' potion using a variety of ingredients.
- 3.4 In Years 1 to 6, pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding extremely well in all subject areas and through their participation in extra-curricular activities. They read enthusiastically for pleasure, speak clearly and confidently on a variety of topics and write with a clear sense of their audience. Pupils' numeracy skills are highly developed, and their listening and reasoning skills are strong. Their enthusiastic participation in sport considerably increases their pupils' physical skills.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 6 cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national norms, but on the evidence available from lesson observations, interviews and work scrutiny, it is judged to be high in relation to age-related expectations. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.6 In the senior divisions, including the sixth form, pupils continue to develop high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects. This is evident from the quality of their written work, as well as their responses to teachers' questions and their contributions to classroom discussions. Pupils express themselves clearly, accurately and convincingly, both orally and writing. They gain an extremely secure grasp of mathematical and scientific principles and processes and can apply these in a range of subjects. Pupils use their well-developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills in order to research topics and to present their work.
- 3.7 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. The pupils' performance at GCSE has been similar to the national average for

maintained selective schools. Performance in the IGSCSE has been higher than worldwide averages. At A level, pupils' attainment has been above the national average for maintained selective schools. Results improved significantly between 2012 and 2014, and in 2014 were well above the national average for maintained schools. An initial analysis of the results at all levels in 2015 indicates that the proportions of pupils gaining the highest grades at both GCSE and A level are well above national averages

- 3.8 Pupils' attainment at GCSE, together with standardised measures of progress and evidence from lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, indicates that they have made good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Pupils' levels of attainment at A Level indicate that they have made progress in the sixth form which is excellent compared to that of pupils of similar abilities. Most pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 11 successfully enrol on A level or equivalent courses at local maintained schools and sixth-form colleges. Pupils who leave the sixth form proceed to courses at a variety of universities and other higher education institutions, many with demanding entrance requirements.
- 3.9 Throughout the school, the achievement of pupils with SEND, including those with statements and EHC plans, is similar to that of other pupils. These pupils generally make excellent progress owing to the effective support they receive. The most able pupils also make excellent progress in reaching the standards of which they are capable. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls.
- 3.10 Pupils have outstanding musical skills; they learn to play a variety of musical instruments and sing in a wide range of styles and genres. They achieve considerable distinction in art, winning competitions and exhibiting their work at prestigious regional and national venues. Pupils also achieve extremely well in sport. Many have gained regional and international honours, especially in rugby and cricket, but also in sports ranging from hockey and netball to taekwondo and cheerleading. Pupils are also successful in areas such as debating and national mathematics and short-story writing competitions.
- 3.11 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They take a great deal of pride in their work, which is well-presented and well-organised. They are highly-focused and attentive during lessons, respond promptly to teachers' instructions and questions, and work very productively together. They also make excellent use of opportunities to work independently, showing perseverance and resilience in doing so.

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

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extracurricular provision is excellent.
- 3.13 The curriculum in each division covers the required areas of learning, including all aspects of pupils' personal, social and health and economic (PSHE) education. It ensures the school is highly successful in meeting its aims. At each stage, it is extremely well suited to pupils' needs and ages, and includes a rich variety of extra-curricular activities, enhanced by strong links with the wider community. The curriculum fully incorporates the values inherent to British society. The overwhelming majority of parents and most pupils who responded to the questionnaire expressed their approval of both the curricular and extra-curricular provision.
- 3.14 In the EYFS, staff plan exciting educational programmes that foster children's interest, cover all the required areas of learning highly effectively, and help children

to reach or to exceed expected levels of development. Staff make excellent use of their assessments of children's abilities in planning a curriculum that is extremely well-suited to their needs. The high-quality indoor and outdoor learning environments engage children's interest and imagination, and staff provide a highly successful blend of self-chosen and adult-directed activities. This enables children to learn and practise their skills in different contexts. The curriculum is enriched by activities in the woodland learning environment, as well as lessons taught by specialist teachers in music, physical education and French.

- 3.15 The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 has been re-designed to allow more time for mathematics and English. In addition, the school has a highly successful cross-curricular approach to the teaching of other subjects. The infant and junior curriculum is well-balanced, and staff and pupils are enthusiastic about the new approach, with its strong focus on investigative learning. The curriculum is further enriched by a plethora of excellent extra-curricular activities. Pupils' experience is also enhanced and strengthened by the school's many and varied links with the community: for example a local dentist visited the school as part of a science topic on digestion and teeth.
- 3.16 In the senior divisions, the school's provision, both within the classroom and beyond, is broad and challenging. The school has developed a distinctive curriculum, enabling pupils to develop lively and enquiring minds. Boys and girls comment favourably on the way in which single-sex classes in Years 7 to 11 enhance their concentration and their learning. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 follow a stimulating and wide-ranging academic curriculum, which explores different areas of learning and provides a thorough preparation for study to GCSE. Since the previous inspection, the introduction of critical thinking and of German and Spanish in Year 7 has extended the curriculum. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 remains broad and, following a full curriculum review, the timetable structure has been changed, enabling pupils to benefit from a wider range of options at GCSE, including computer science.
- 3.17 The sixth form curriculum offers pupils a large number of subjects from which to choose. An academic extension programme has been increased to include a 'Global Perspectives' course and the opportunity to study for an Extended Project Qualification. Sixth form pupils may combine a variety of subjects to suit their individual capabilities, interests and career intentions.
- 3.18 The school has successfully developed its provision for ICT and has met the recommendation of the previous inspection for pupils to use high-level ICT skills. Staff present opposing views in an impartial and balanced way in covering political issues, in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- 3.19 The quality of careers guidance is excellent. Pupils highly appreciate the support and advice which they receive, as well as the many opportunities for work experience. This prepares pupils extremely well for higher education and for future employment.
- 3.20 The school has carefully adapted the curriculum so that it meets the needs of pupils with SEND, statements and EHC plans. It has also devised a clear programme for identifying more able students and ensuring that they receive sufficient challenge, including extension tasks and differentiated activities, in line with the previous inspection report's recommendation. The recent introduction of initiatives such as

an essay competition has contributed successfully to an academic enrichment programme which enables these students to excel.

- 3.21 The school provides pupils in the senior divisions with an extremely wide range of extra-curricular activities, from sporting to musical and from the chess and debating club to outdoor activities. Pupils are universally enthusiastic about the range of opportunities available to them and cite it as one of the strengths of the school. A very large number of pupils take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, many of them gain silver and gold awards; the school has received national recognition for this. Pupils, including in the sixth form, benefit from a very extensive range of educational visits, including optional trips to New York and Berlin.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.22 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.23 Teaching is highly successful in promoting the school's aims, including excellent achievement. Teachers throughout the school demonstrate a deep and thorough understanding of pupils' needs, assess the quality of their work accurately and provide them with constructive feedback. A key characteristic of the school is the strong relationships that exist between teachers and pupils, resulting in excellent behaviour. Measures put in place since the previous inspection have succeeded in improving the quality of teaching, enhanced by the introduction of the use of five shared 'learning habits'. This strategy has not yet, however, been fully implemented throughout the school.
- 3.24 Children in the EYFS benefit from enthusiastic and energetic teaching which engages them and encourages them to achieve to the best of their ability. Staff are highly competent and knowledgeable EYFS practitioners, who understand the different ways in which young children learn, and have very high expectations of them. They expertly use high-quality resources and strategies, in both the indoor and outdoor area, in order to engage children and help them to learn. The setting has successfully developed excellent systems for the observation and assessment of children's progress. Information is used extremely effectively to plan future learning to meet children's needs, as well as to identify suitable priorities for individuals. All of the teaching-related recommendations of the previous inspection have been met.
- 3.25 Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching in the junior division has improved significantly: in particular, the school has successfully addressed the recommendation to increase the range of teaching styles. Teachers place a particularly strong emphasis on basic skills in English and mathematics. The previous inspection also recommended that the school should ensure that the work set throughout the school for the most able pupils is suitably challenging. The improved achievement of this group of pupils, as well as inspectors' observations, demonstrate the school's success in addressing this issue.
- 3.26 A wide range of excellent teaching is characterised by the use of teaching methods which foster interest and enable all pupils to share teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects. This contributes to highly effective lessons, almost always of well-judged pace, and to high-quality classroom discussions. Throughout the school, teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teaching successfully promotes tolerance and respect, and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues, as exemplified by the use of well-chosen online resources in a Year 11 PSHE lesson on radicalisation.

Teachers use ICT and other resources effectively to enhance learning, as seen, for example, in individual project work in biology. Teachers also strongly promote pupils' creative skills in subjects such as music, drama and art.

- 3.27 Scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that excellent assessment procedures are in place to encourage pupils to reflect on their learning and to take shared responsibility for achieving their potential. Marking is rigorous and frequent across all subjects. Academic departments successfully use a range of subject-specific approaches within the school-wide reporting and grading framework. Pupils report that they understand these approaches and are given excellent guidance on the steps they should take to improve their work. Since the previous inspection, the school's tracking of pupils' progress has been considerably enhanced. This has enabled teachers to quickly identify any difficulties experienced by pupils, including those who are not meeting their targets. Teachers make excellent provision for the pupils with SEND, including those with EHC plans and statements.
- 3.28 A very large majority of parents feel that their children received appropriate homework for their age, and that the most able pupils received appropriate support. Inspectors concurred with these views. In their responses to the pupil questionnaire, a minority of pupils indicated their dissatisfaction with the large amount of homework set by teachers, particularly in Years 10 and 11, and also that they did not feel that homework helps them to learn. Discussions with inspectors revealed that the amount and type of homework is appropriate and that homework is a key factor in promoting pupils' excellent achievement.

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 In the EYFS, children are mature for their age and behave extremely well. From the time they join the school, children develop skills for the future; they are confident, happy and polite, and respond diligently to the staff's expectations. They are able to make appropriate choices, and are considerate of others, as was seen when Reception class children included Nursery children in their games at break time. Children demonstrate respect for one another, and are keen to learn about and celebrate different cultures and beliefs. Their understanding of British values is reinforced through class discussions, and topics such as World War 1. Children are familiar with all the Year 1 teaching staff, as well as with the older pupils in the school. This, together with an excellent programme of visits, helps to ensure that children make a seamless transition to the next year group.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, pupils strongly develop their self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence. They acquire an acute sense of right and wrong, and behave extremely well in showing courtesy and consideration to all members of the school community. Pupils develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of English institutions, and respect and value their own and other cultures, as well those with different abilities or beliefs. There is no evidence of any discriminatory behaviour. Pupils learn to strongly appreciate the British values, such as democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.
- 4.4 Pupils' excellent behaviour is effectively reinforced by staff, and pupils fully understand the need for rules. They benefit from visits from representatives of public institutions, including the police. As a result, they are well informed about the workings of English civil and criminal law. Pupils know that bullying of any kind is wrong. They display a powerful sense of loyalty to the school and to its code of conduct. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated positive views about pupils' behaviour and many commented on their children's growth in self-confidence. Inspectors' findings support these views.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate an excellent social commitment in taking on responsibility and leadership, and in supporting one another as well as those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils show a keen sense of fair play, and are considerate and kind to each other. They co-operate extremely well in lessons and respect each other's opinions. Their collaboration extends beyond the classroom. Pupils know that individual opinions can be expressed openly and will be respected. They are keen to put themselves forward for election to positions of responsibility, representing the collective views of their peers in a variety of forums. They take their roles extremely seriously and can identify changes that have resulted from their contributions.
- 4.6 Pupils' strong sense of social responsibility is developed through imaginative charitable initiatives that are supported by the whole school community. Pupils often lead fundraising initiatives. A highly positive volunteering culture exists; for example, many sixth formers mentor younger pupils, work within the local community and successfully lead assemblies on topics such as the impact of cyber-bullying.
- 4.7 Pupils display an excellent sense of spiritual awareness and are highly appreciative of the non-material aspects of life, as was evident in the excellent art displays, as

well as their spirited participation in, and appreciation for, musical performances. Pupils can articulate the inspiration behind each piece and confidently express the emotions and ideas explored in its creation. They explore features of different faiths through, for example, philosophical consideration of 'Thought for the Week' quotations in form time.

- 4.8 Pupils acquire a strong appreciation and respect for other cultures. For example, in a sixth-form psychology lesson, pupils confidently evaluated the impact of a variety of cultural influences on relationships. Pupils are very much aware of the risks of extreme views. By the time they leave the school, all pupils have reached an excellent level of personal development. The school is extremely successful in meeting its aim to equip young people with the character and skills necessary to cope successfully with the demands of an ever-changing world.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 All EYFS staff are strongly committed to meeting the individual needs of children in their care. Each child's teacher acts as their key person and is responsible for ensuring that their needs are met, which they do very well. Staff form extremely productive relationships with children and their families, fostering a shared approach to children's learning and development. All the staff know every child in the EYFS, providing highly appropriate support and care.
- 4.11 Staff in the EYFS actively promote the school's behavioural guidelines, reinforcing them sensitively throughout the day. They make sure that children are completely familiar with the school's clear expectations of them, and that they abide by them responsibly. Consequently behaviour is of a high standard. Children are helped to form positive relationships with one another and with staff, and demonstrate that they feel extremely safe. Healthy lifestyles are actively promoted, so that children make sensible choices at mealtimes; they eat well and are keen to discuss their favourite vegetables. They enjoy the benefits of fresh air and engage happily in regular physical activity.
- 4.12 The quality of pastoral care throughout the school has improved since the previous inspection. Staff provide excellent support and guidance for pupils, including those with SEND, in line with the school's aims, and successfully promote harmonious relations between the pupils. Excellent relationships exist between pupils and staff, who provide excellent role models. Pupils state confidently that there is always someone to turn to for help, advice and support. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children were looked after well by the school. This effective support and guidance for pupils is reinforced through an extensive PSHE and tutorial programme. The high quality and consistent delivery of this programme demonstrate the school's success in remedying the weakness highlighted by the previous inspection.
- 4.13 The school is successful in encouraging positive behaviour and guarding against any form of bullying or harassment, including cyber-bullying. The school has a well-established reward and sanction policy. The infant and junior divisions have a very strong culture of praise and reward for positive behaviour, through a variety of methods such as stickers and house points. In responding to the questionnaire, a small minority of senior pupils felt that teachers were unfair in giving rewards and sanctions. Inspectors found that, for the most part, staff give rewards and sanctions

fairly and appropriately, and that most pupils appreciated this. However, they also found a small amount of evidence which indicated that, in a few cases, pupils' negative views were justified.

- 4.14 A very small minority of pupils and parents, in their responses to the questionnaire, indicated their dissatisfaction with the school's handling of bullying. No evidence was found to support this view. Rare incidences of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively, and strong systems are in place to protect those who are vulnerable.
- 4.15 Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to be healthy through developing healthy eating habits and taking regular exercise. Staff successfully encourage pupils to participate in a very extensive range of opportunities for physical activity.
- 4.16 The school employs effective methods to seek pupils' views through, for example, the school and learning councils and regular surveys of pupils' opinions. Leaders make changes as a result of this feedback. Inspectors found no evidence to indicate that the negative opinions expressed by a small minority of pupils in the questionnaire about this issue were justified.
- 4.17 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and or disabilities. Provision for pupils with SEND has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 The school has effective arrangements, in all divisions, to safeguard pupils. All the school's policies and procedures, including those that are specific to the EYFS, have regard to the most recent official guidance. This includes preventing radicalisation, which is very much in accordance with the school's aims. Appropriate training in child protection is undertaken on a regular basis by all staff. The policy and procedures are fully understood and consistently implemented. Staff who have specific responsibility for safeguarding benefit from regularly updated training. They ensure that all staff are suitably equipped to deal effectively with the potential dangers arising from the misuse of internet-based technology. This, together with regular presentations from the police and other outside organisations, further enhances the school's ability to keep pupils safe.
- 4.20 Checks required to ensure the suitability of staff are carried out thoroughly and are appropriately recorded. Arrangements for the supervision of all pupils whilst on site are rigorous, and the movement of pupils around the school is carefully monitored. Pupils' attendance, including that of children in the EYFS who attend part time, is checked meticulously and any unexplained absences are followed up promptly and rigorously.
- 4.21 The school takes all necessary measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Concise and efficient arrangements are in place and staff are appropriately trained. Regular fire practices are held and the results are noted. Comments are carefully recorded and used to improve the school's practice still further. Health and safety policies are updated annually. Pupils who are ill or injured are well cared for on-site and there are appropriate facilities in each division of the school for sick pupils to be looked after, as well as those with SEND. Throughout the school, a high proportion of staff receive appropriate training in first aid.

- 4.22 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the required period of time.
- 4.23 The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that their children feel safe at school. In their questionnaire responses most pupils indicated that they like being in school. Inspectors' findings support these views.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors provide an outstanding level of support and challenge to the school's leaders. Their extensive knowledge and in-depth understanding of the school enable members to provide highly effective oversight of the school, including the EYFS and the sixth form. Staff comment favourably on the regular involvement and support of the governors. This has played a significant part in the rise in achievement, especially in the senior divisions, as well as the improvements in teaching since the previous inspection. Governors' accurate evaluation of the school's performance and their astute assessment of its priorities for development have contributed to leaders' success in meeting the school's aims and in addressing the recommendations from the previous inspection. This has also helped governors, working closely with the school's leaders, to create ambitious and well-founded plans for the future.
- 5.3 The governors ensure that the school has the staffing, financial and other resources required to meet its aims. This is especially evident from the governing body's role in enabling the refurbishment and extensions to school buildings and the provision of up-to-date facilities, including those for sport and for ICT.
- 5.4 Governors keep themselves very well informed about welfare and educational issues by undertaking appropriate training. They regularly review policies and the success with which they are being implemented, including the annual review of the safeguarding procedures undertaken by the whole board. They have ensured that the school complies fully with all regulatory requirements and that its arrangements for promoting pupils' welfare, health and safety, including for recruiting new staff, are robust and highly effective.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 At all levels of responsibility, leaders and managers are highly successful in meeting the school's aims and strategic objectives and in discharging their responsibilities, including for policy implementation and the safeguarding of pupils. Despite the relative complexity of the school's organisation and its two main sites, leaders have established high levels of cohesion and common purpose among staff across its different divisions. Values which encourage respect for others and democracy are highly evident in the ethos of the school.
- 5.7 Leaders provide extremely clear educational direction, as reflected in the high quality of the pupils' education and the standard of their personal development. Leaders have identified appropriate areas for development and have already met many of their targets. Their monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, including in the EYFS, is rigorous and accurate, and is used effectively to establish priorities for future development and to inform planning. Some of the measures introduced by senior leaders, such as the 'Building Learning Habits' programme, have not yet had

time to have their intended impact across the whole school, because they have not yet been fully implemented.

- 5.8 The EYFS is extremely well led and managed at all levels. Leaders ensure that safeguarding and welfare procedures are understood and followed consistently by all staff. Due care and attention are given to making both the indoor and outdoor environments safe and interesting, meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection. Work has been undertaken in the outdoor area to make access easier and provide an area in which children are free to explore and play safely. Leaders actively promote equality, diversity and British values, and parents' views are sought on these and other matters in order to inform planning. Staff have an extremely good knowledge of the quality of provision, are quick to identify areas for improvement, and act on these appropriately. Staff are supervised well and are provided with good opportunities for professional development. For example, an EYFS forum enables dialogue and training to take place with other independent schools. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, and has helped to enrich children's experiences still further.
- 5.9 Leaders throughout the school ensure that pupils are always encouraged to strive for excellence and to prepare for the challenges they will face in the modern world. Individual educational needs are met effectively by management support strategies, resulting in excellent support for pupils with SEND, and equally for the more able. Pupils' views are sought regularly and help to inform leaders' planning.
- 5.10 Changes in the school's senior management structure and personnel since the previous inspection have encouraged a style of management which is appreciated by all staff, and is characterised by discussions at all levels followed by incisive decisions. As a result, managers at all levels feel valued and supported and play an active role in promoting the vision of the school through day-to-day operations, as well as in contributing to strategic planning. Heads of departments consistently monitor standards of teaching and learning across all subject areas. There are comprehensive and effective procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. The marking of pupils' work is regularly checked.
- 5.11 An effective appraisal system is in place and identifies relevant opportunities for continuing professional development. Staff, including the designated senior leaders, are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, and in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. Appropriate systems for the recruitment of staff and governors are meticulously applied, with all required checks completed before staff start work at school. Policies and procedures are revised at suitable intervals and are consistently implemented with close reference to the governing body. Induction training and guidance, including on safeguarding, for new staff are implemented effectively.
- 5.12 EYFS leaders fully recognise the importance of working closely with parents, and engage them fully in their children's learning. Staff include parents in events and invite them in to enrich the curriculum, for example by bringing farm animals into school. There is excellent, daily communication, and more formal meetings regularly take place. Should the need arise, staff work closely with parents and external agencies to secure appropriate support for children with SEND. Comprehensive information is provided for parents through a variety of media. Staff share with parents their children's exemplary learning journals, which regularly record children's learning experiences at home. These elements foster highly successful working partnerships between home and school. In their questionnaire responses, the

overwhelming majority of parents of children in the EYFS were extremely satisfied with all aspects of their care and education. Equally, those spoken to during the inspection voiced their high levels of satisfaction with the provision.

- 5.13 The school establishes and maintains constructive relationships with all parents. Information is readily available to current and prospective parents through the parent portal, as well as a variety of regular publications, meetings and information packs. Parents receive extremely clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress both at meetings with teachers and through regular written reports. Parents have excellent opportunities to become involved in their children's education, for example by supporting extracurricular activities and the work of the careers department.
- 5.14 Parents express highly favourable views about the school. The overwhelming majority of those who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed, that information about the school and its policies is readily available and that they receive timely responses to their questions. Most feel that they are well informed about their children's progress and that the school encourages them to be involved in events and other aspects of its work. The school has an effective complaints policy, and, in the event of a complaint, all procedures are rigorously followed. Most parents agree that the school handles well any concerns they have had. Parents have excellent opportunities to become involved in their children's education, for example by supporting extra-curricular activities and the work of the careers department.

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