



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

LEICESTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Leicester High School for Girls

Full Name of School	Leicester High School for Girls
DfE Number	856/6009
Registered Charity Number	503982
Address	Leicester High School for Girls 454 London Road Leicester Leicestershire LE2 2PP
Telephone Number	0116 270 5338
Fax Number	0116 270 2493
Email Address	enquiries@leicesterhigh.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Alan Whelpdale
Chair of Governors	Mrs Margaret Bowler
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	375
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 30 5-11: 85 11-18: 260
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Christina Pow
EYFS Gender	Girls
Inspection Dates	10 Nov 2015 to 13 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 inspection was in September 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 of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Ms Margaret Burnet	Reporting Inspector
Mr Kim Parsley	Team Inspector (Former Assistant Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Barbara Denning	Team Inspector (Former Senior Leader, GSA school)
Mr Neal Parker	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Dr Mary Short	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Ms Lucy Sumner	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Leicester High School for Girls is an independent girls' day school for pupils aged from three to eighteen, situated in a residential area. The school was founded in 1906 as a Christian foundation, welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. It was constituted as a charitable trust in 1975 and is administered by a board of governors which has oversight of both the Junior Department and the Senior School. The school aims to: create a friendly, caring community where every individual is valued; develop intellectual curiosity, academic excellence and a lifelong love of learning; discover and nurture individual talents, creativity and self-belief; develop personal values of respect, acceptance, understanding and determination.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has redeveloped its site. It has also introduced a new curriculum, increased links between the Junior Department and the Senior School, constructed a five-year strategic-development plan and increased extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. A new head of the Junior Department was appointed in 2010 and a new headmaster in 2013.
- 1.3 Of the 375 pupils on roll at the time of inspection, 115 are in the Junior Department which includes 30 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and Years 1 to 5. The Senior School has 260 pupils, including 75 in the sixth form. The majority of pupils live in the immediate vicinity. A large majority are from minority ethnic families. Most pupils are from business or professional families.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the Senior School is above the national average. Most pupils have ability that is at least average, with few having below average ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is above the national average. Over half of pupils are of above national average, with around a quarter having ability that is similar to the national average. Of the 24 pupils identified by the school as having specialist educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 3 receive specialist learning support. Also, 4 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), 3 of whom receive additional support. No pupil has a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims, including in the EYFS and the sixth form. Pupils' achievements and learning are excellent. They attain excellent results in national examinations. Overall, pupils make rapid progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. They are equally successful in achieving high levels in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They benefit from an excellent curriculum and a wide range of subjects to choose from, particularly in the sixth form. Teaching is excellent, although in a few lessons insufficient challenge is provided to allow more able pupils to achieve commensurate to their potential. The achievement of SEND and EAL pupils is excellent, as is shown in the rapid progress they make. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary, which contributes to their success. They enjoy their lessons, working together well to attain high standards of learning.
- 2.2 The school is active in promoting principles that contribute to the pupils' personal development. By the time they leave, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are articulate and outgoing. They have high levels of self-esteem and understand the importance of contributing positively to the lives of others. Their social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils reflect the strength of their spiritual and moral development through activities such as participation in assemblies and undertaking charitable work. Much of the success of the pupils is underpinned by excellent pastoral care and the meticulous arrangements for safeguarding, welfare and health and safety. In interviews, pupils throughout the school reported that they felt well-supported by their teachers both academically and pastorally.
- 2.3 The school's significant progress since the previous inspection has been supported by excellent governance. Governors know the school well and through their combined expertise and experience they provide it with a high level of support and challenge. They have a clear vision for the school's future and are committed to achieving it. Leadership and management are excellent with a strong framework for self-evaluation and effective monitoring of pupils' well-being. A significant number of initiatives from the leadership team have been put in place to provide opportunities for staff collaboration across the school, but these are not yet fully developed to support the sharing of expertise and professional staff development. The recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. A development plan has been drawn up in the EYFS. The Junior Department now has a well-developed PSHCE (Personal, Spiritual, Health, Citizenship and Economic) scheme of work and staff have sufficient time to devote to key subject areas. Curricular transition arrangements across the school have been strengthened, with stronger links and co-ordination between staff. Links with parents are excellent.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that sufficient challenge is provided for more able pupils.
2. Across the school, including the EYFS, extend the opportunities for staff to share the best of their skills and develop further opportunities for their professional development.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 In the EYFS, children of all ages and abilities make good and often excellent progress, and achieve well in their learning and personal development relative to their starting points. They clearly enjoy their learning and are eager to participate in activities. Children are articulate and able to express themselves clearly, according to their age and stage of learning. The youngest children enjoy exploring and investigating their surroundings, following their interests, using their imagination and developing their own ideas. Children demonstrate increasing independence as they progress through the setting. They are able to write their names with many letters formed correctly, and can use 100 squares to track numbers as they count backwards from 20.
- 3.3 Throughout the school, pupils are well-educated in accordance with its aims. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were pleased with the progress their daughters make at school. Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, show high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in their academic studies.
- 3.4 Pupils are highly articulate and have excellent speaking and listening skills. They have well-developed reading and writing abilities, using a wide and varied vocabulary. Pupils acquire good mathematical skills and are able to apply them extremely effectively. Their creative skills are excellent. They are competent in physical activity. Pupils apply logical and independent thought in their lessons. On leaving school, nearly all gain a place at their first choice of university, many with highly competitive entry requirements.
- 3.5 The pupils enjoy excellent extra-curricular activities with notable success in both individual and team sports, debating, Maths Olympiads and The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (DofE).
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment in the Junior Department cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. In Years 1 to 5 all pupils, including the more able and those with SEND or EAL, make excellent progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability.
- 3.7 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparable statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. In 2015 high standards were maintained, with around two-thirds of grades at A* or A. Results at A level have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and above the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. In 2015 40% of A-level results were awarded A* or A.
- 3.8 The level of attainment at GCSE, International GCSE and A level, and the nationally standardised progress data, combined with scrutiny of work and pupils' responses in interviews and lessons indicate that pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make rapid progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. Results at A

level show that pupils make good progress in their time in the sixth form. The more able usually achieve at a high level except in the few lessons when they do not have sufficient challenge commensurate to their potential and their development is restricted.

- 3.9 Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the vast majority reported that they are encouraged to work independently. They enjoy their lessons and work well both independently and with their peers. In the sixth form, pupils develop their ideas with confidence and maturity. Sixth form pupils develop their research skills through the Extended Project, producing insightful research and high-quality written work.
- 3.10 This positive approach is also observed outside the classroom through interactions with staff and visitors. Pupils show initiative through the effective organisation of key events and charity work.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is fully in line with the school's aims, with a broad range of subjects and activities which are suitable for all ages and abilities. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of parents were satisfied that their children are provided with a sufficient breadth of subjects and experiences.
- 3.13 In the EYFS, staff are highly successful in adapting educational programmes for all areas of learning according to the needs of individual and groups of children. Children with SEND or EAL and those who are more able are identified early, closely monitored and sensitively supported. Consequently, all children attain a level of development typical for their age, with many exceeding this.
- 3.14 Children benefit from the teaching of music and physical education (PE) by enthusiastic specialist teachers. In addition, ballet is included for children in Reception. Creative cross-curricular themes provide a range of stimulating learning opportunities and experiences. Children's experiences are further enhanced by a wide range of trips and by visitors to the school. Creative use of the various outdoor spaces available, including the woodland area, ensures that children gain daily access to well-planned, purposeful outdoor activities which complement the indoor provision and provide opportunities for larger-scale exploration and play.
- 3.15 Appropriate systems are in place to identify and support those with SEND or EAL. Support during lessons allows pupils to achieve their potential. In the Junior Department, pupils have one-to-one weekly meetings. Those in the Senior School have access to specialist staff through both individual meetings and twice-weekly 'drop in' clinics. The more able are provided with challenging work in most lessons and the opportunity to develop their knowledge through individual research.
- 3.16 In the Junior Department, a broad balance of subjects focuses strongly on English, mathematics, science and religious studies (RS). In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, a new relevant PSHCE programme has been embedded across the Junior Department and the Senior School with weekly lessons for all pupils and an effective monitoring system to track their progress. Pupils also benefit from many creative opportunities and specialist teaching from Senior School staff in subjects such as music, modern foreign languages and PE.

- 3.17 In the Senior School, pupils in Years 6 to 9 pursue subjects embracing individual sciences, humanities, and a range of expressive and creative arts. Modern foreign languages on offer include Italian, Spanish and French. At GCSE, pupils generally select nine or ten subjects from a wide range of options which includes philosophy and ethics, and either dual or triple science.
- 3.18 In the sixth form, pupils are able to select from subjects initially offered at GCSE plus an excellent range of new options including photography, psychology, economics, geology and sociology. This range of provision is supported by further opportunities for sixth form pupils to broaden their learning and prepare for life after school, such as through the sixth form enrichment programme and research for the Extended Project Qualification.
- 3.19 The curriculum is supplemented by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, trips and visits. Pupils benefit from the school's strong links with the community, through volunteering in local junior schools and care homes, and supporting charitable institutions. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities includes sporting sessions, a gospel choir led by a visiting specialist and a student-led dance club. Other intellectual, sporting, outdoor education and cultural opportunities abound at the school and are extremely popular.
- 3.20 A comprehensive careers programme begins in Year 6 and continues through to university application in Years 12 and 13. This includes speakers, visits and events, and useful advice is available to all pupils, parents and staff.
- 3.21 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the curricular-transition arrangements from the Junior Department to the Senior School have been strengthened and co-ordination of the curriculum between senior and junior staff now occurs regularly.
- 3.22 The school has ensured that a balanced presentation of opposing views is provided for pupils in the coverage of political issues in both curricular and extra-curricular activities, most notably in the recent visits by high-profile politicians from across the political spectrum.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.23 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.24 Teaching in the EYFS is consistently of a high quality. Staff have high expectations of the children, and well-considered planning provides an excellent balance of stimulating and enjoyable activities to engage and motivate them. The arrangements for observation and assessment are very effective, enabling staff to be responsive to children's needs and interests. Targets and next steps in learning are regularly reviewed to ensure ongoing and rapid progress. Staff are well-qualified and experienced, and have extensive knowledge and a secure understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children and of what they can achieve. They have skilfully created stimulating learning environments that provide plenty of opportunity for active learning. An excellent range of easily accessible, age-appropriate resources enables children to develop their skills effectively.
- 3.25 From Year 1, teaching is effective in promoting the pupils' progress. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils; lessons are well-planned and well taught at a pace that enables all pupils to make progress. The work set in a high proportion of

lessons observed was appropriate in terms of volume and challenge. A small minority of pupils felt that too much homework is assigned, and inspection evidence concluded that a significant amount is set. Teaching benefits strongly from constructive and co-operative relationships with pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and the pupils are appreciative of the time that teachers provide for them in order to attain their individual goals, both in and out of lessons.

- 3.26 Most teachers demonstrate profound subject knowledge and pupils benefit from a range of teaching styles. Motivated teachers encourage inquisitive learners to develop a strong understanding of their subject. Pupils are encouraged by teachers to take responsibility for their own learning through peer assessment and collaborative teaching methods. Most teaching actively promotes reflection and critical thinking levels. Teaching is enhanced by pupils' work on display.
- 3.27 Support for pupils with SEND or EAL is strong. Subject teachers accept their responsibility for meeting individual needs and much good practice exists in supporting these pupils in lessons across the curriculum.
- 3.28 More able pupils are encouraged to be active and reflective, and to take responsibility for their own learning. They show an aptitude for higher-order thinking and a thirst for knowledge, which was not sufficiently provided for in a few lessons observed. Good management of time in lessons and use of carefully chosen resources supports active learning. Computer suites, interactive whiteboards, data logging and tablets are used as teaching aids and enrich pupils' learning experience. Teaching promotes tolerance, equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity.
- 3.29 The school has recently introduced a thorough reporting, tracking and assessment system. This produces data for use in both the Junior Department and the Senior School, and enables effective pupil assessment which helps tailor lesson plans to meet the pupils' needs, including those with SEND or EAL. Marking at its best is both informative and supportive to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development. Departments have adopted their own marking criteria which are familiar to pupils. The use of constructive oral feedback on both classwork and homework was observed in many lessons.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 In the EYFS, high priority is afforded to children's personal, social and emotional development. They are self-assured, engage happily in their learning, follow classroom routines with ease, and enjoy being issued responsibilities. Attending junior school assemblies provides children the opportunity to celebrate their own achievements as well as those of older pupils. Children are encouraged to recognise the needs of others in the world who are less fortunate than they are.
- 4.3 Staff encourage children to take turns, and as a result they play harmoniously with each other and understand the need to share. Fundamental British values are actively promoted through stimulating displays and the curriculum. Children are aware of the differences between themselves and others and show respect for one another. Children throughout the EYFS are provided plenty of opportunity to make choices and decisions in their learning and play.
- 4.4 Staff work closely with parents and children to ensure that smooth transitions take place at each point of transfer. This includes a home visit before a child joins the school. A systematic approach introduces children to their new environments and teachers, and a thorough handover of information and records ensures that children make each move with confidence.
- 4.5 From Year 1 onwards, the community fulfils the school's aims to develop the pupils' personal values of respect, acceptance, understanding and determination, and is supported by the PSHCE programme. Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They have high levels of self-esteem and demonstrate their self-confidence through participation in assemblies, debating, music and drama productions. Pupils respect the beliefs and values of others, and are open in discussing matters of faith, developing a deeper knowledge themselves.
- 4.6 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those residing or working in the locality through community service as part of DofE. Pupils show a keen sense of fairness, distinguishing easily between right and wrong, and understand and respect the civil and criminal laws of England. Their understanding of the need for rules and boundaries is grounded on a sense of mutual and collaborative responsibility.
- 4.7 Pupils show respect for others and understand the importance of identifying and combating discrimination. They are active in contributing to aspects of school life, demonstrating a willingness to make a difference through the school council, which is run by pupils. They participate in the democratic process of electing representatives in each year group who gather weekly at separate school council meetings, both in the Senior School and in the Junior Department, to consider suggestions for school improvements and charitable activities.
- 4.8 The social development of pupils at all stages is excellent. They have a keen awareness of, and value for, themselves as part of the community, and readily accept responsibility for themselves and for others. The pupils are very supportive of each other and appreciate the opportunities to meet and know girls in different

year groups and other parts of the school through sixth form mentoring, the houses or extra-curricular activities. Their natural inclination is to be thoughtful, kind and considerate to others. The pupils' involvement in many activities, both at lunchtime and after school, demonstrates their ability to work supportively with each other. They benefit from the promotion of academic, sporting and cultural competition through the house system in both parts of the school.

- 4.9 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils acquire a strong appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures in subjects such as RS, PSHCE and modern foreign languages. This is enhanced by trips to the wide range of multi-cultural places of worship that are located nearby. The pupils have a good understanding of the public institutions and services of England. Pupils' involvement in supporting charities promotes a wider awareness about life and culture at home and overseas.
- 4.10 In the Junior Department, regular monitoring of pupils by their class teachers ensures that they have an excellent grounding in their personal development. This continues as they pass through the Senior School to ensure that pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.11 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.12 In the EYFS, children of all ages form appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments with their key person and other staff. Dedicated and caring adults ensure that all children are happy, confident and feel safe in school. The learning and care provided ensure that all children's needs are well met. Children are able to say which adults they would speak to if they were hurt, sad or worried, and know that they will help them. Due to their overall sense of well-being, children of all ages have the confidence to talk and interact happily and freely with each other and adults as they work and play. Behaviour is managed very well and is often exemplary. High standards of courtesy are consistently and effectively promoted. Children are extremely polite and well mannered.
- 4.13 Adults support children to develop an understanding of the importance of eating healthily. Those in Reception are able to express why vegetables are an essential part of their diet and why it is important to drink water. They have many opportunities to be physically active during adult-led sessions and daily outdoor play, understanding the key role that such activities hold in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children learn about hygiene through daily routines, such as washing their hands before eating.
- 4.14 In the Junior Department and Senior School, efficiently implemented well-organised pastoral systems and structures ensure that pupils receive excellent support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. They feel well-supported by their teachers both academically and pastorally. Pupils interviewed reinforced this view. Pupils speak warmly of the peer-mentoring scheme which has been introduced to support new girls settling in at the school. Regular meetings of the pastoral team ensure consistency and high standards of care. Information about pupils is shared as appropriate with all staff, and concerns are responded to quickly.
- 4.15 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour, guarding against harassment and bullying, and dealing constructively with poor behaviour. Standards of behaviour are excellent. Pupils know who to turn to should an incident arise and

expressed confidence that they would be treated fairly and with consideration. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very small minority of pupils and parents felt the school does not deal appropriately with incidents of bullying. Inspection evidence shows that the rare occurrences of such are dealt with fairly and constructively, with accurate records kept and monitored appropriately. The pupils interviewed also supported this view. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils expressed concerns of a disparity in the awarding of rewards and sanctions. Disciplinary records demonstrated that staff implement the school's policy and procedures fairly. Of those pupils interviewed by the inspection team, all agreed that procedures in these areas were fair and reasonable.

4.16 The school effectively seeks the pupils' opinions through the junior and senior school councils. A small minority of pupils in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses suggested that their views are neither sought nor responded to. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The councils meet regularly and elected representatives make proposals for consideration. Changes are implemented such as the provision of a toaster for the sixth form common room.

4.17 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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 takes its responsibilities towards pupils' welfare extremely seriously. The overwhelming majority of parents reported that their children are happy and feel safe at the school. The policy and procedures for safeguarding are appropriately implemented and monitored effectively. All staff receive regular training in child protection and understand who to contact if they have concerns. Designated senior staff have developed strong relationships with local agencies and have appropriate updated training. Documents examined indicate that any concerns about pupils' safety are carefully recorded with effective action plans monitored by the leadership team. Detailed child-protection records are maintained. Staff and pupils have all received specific training to raise awareness of the dangers of radicalism and extremism, and secure procedures are in place to vet visiting outside speakers. Recruitment procedures are meticulous.

4.20 Thorough risk assessments result in robust procedures for the prompt identification, reporting and rectifying of potential hazards, ensuring that a safe environment is maintained. The arrangements for dropping children off in the morning and collecting them at the end of the day are very carefully organised. Any absence or repeated late arrival is followed up promptly to ensure that children are safe and are not missing school unnecessarily.

4.21 Arrangements across the school for pupils' health and safety are rigorous. Health and safety measures are carefully monitored through the schools' health and safety committee with oversight from the governing body. Appropriate measures are in place to reduce risks from fire and other hazards. Accidents and incidents are carefully recorded and patterns are analysed to ensure that high safety standards are maintained. Potentially hazardous substances are safely stored. Detailed risk assessments are carried out for trips and all areas of the school. Effective measures are in place to counter cyberbullying, through school monitoring, the PSHCE programme and the school's 'ICT Acceptable Use Policy'. Healthy eating habits and

the benefits of exercise are promoted effectively through PSHCE. In interviews, pupils expressed appreciation of their opportunities for physical exercise. Many spoke enthusiastically about the quality of the food available at lunchtime, though some in the Senior School prefer to have a packed lunch. The school works in partnership with parents to promote the well-being of pupils by holding parent information evenings on subjects such as mental health, internet safety and well-being.

- 4.22 Excellent facilities are in place for pupils who are ill or injured, with full-time medical support. Medicines are securely stored. The first-aid policy is suitable and sufficient staff are fully qualified, including those with paediatric qualifications. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored, and prompt and regular attendance is promoted.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance provides effective oversight of the workings of the school so that it is highly successful in meeting its aims. Some governors have particular expertise in the EYFS, and visit the setting regularly to provide appropriate support and challenge to ensure that all the safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Governors have a clear vision for the future, ensuring that the achievement and personal development of the pupils is central to their commitment to school improvement. Through their combined expertise and experience, governors most effectively discharge their responsibilities for standards, financial planning, accommodation and learning resources. The recent and continuing development of the school site is a testament to their insight and strong leadership. Governors have recently invested in new key senior staff to ensure that the school continues to move forwards.
- 5.3 Governors know the school well, through regular visits, classroom observations and attendance at school events. The governing body receives detailed reports from senior leaders and presentations from staff on key topics. Regular meetings between the school and governance leadership ensure excellent communications. The governors' contribution to the newly created strategic-development plan and involvement in the annual strategy meeting affords them the opportunity to support the leadership team whilst challenging them to fulfil the school's aims. Appropriate appraisal arrangements are in place for evaluating the work of the school's leadership.
- 5.4 Governors are assiduous in discharging their responsibilities for child protection and welfare, health and safety. They have all received comprehensive induction and safeguarding training, and with the support of an experienced link governor they monitor safeguarding procedures through audits, and an excellent understanding of compliance and a recognition of its importance. They have undertaken a meticulous annual review of the safeguarding policy, which is signed off by the chair of governors.

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 Together, leaders and all EYFS staff evaluate their practice to ensure continuous improvement in order to provide the best possible opportunities and experiences for the children in their care. An honest and accurate self-evaluation forms the basis of the vision for the setting's future. An annual action plan identifies areas for improvement and includes targets in areas such as parental involvement, provision and resources, and professional development for staff. Since the previous inspection, the leadership has worked hard to develop a more formal plan to move the provision forward and fulfil its aims and long-term vision.
- 5.7 Leaders of the EYFS fully understand their responsibilities to monitor the educational programmes and outcomes. Thorough systems for monitoring planning, practice and assessment across the EYFS ensure that they have an excellent overview of the provision and that children are safeguarded in a welcoming, stimulating and safe environment. Leaders are developing a more systematic approach to the analysis of data designed to build on the present arrangement. Further information is gathered through regular meetings where staff have opportunities to discuss the children in their care, as well as their own professional needs. Staff have undertaken all statutory training but fewer opportunities are provided for professional development aimed at improving teaching skills in order to build on the setting's excellent practice. All staff respect the aims and ethos of the school which ensures the recognition of diversity and the active promotion of equality and British values.
- 5.8 The school's energetic and ambitious leadership and management team make a strong contribution to the promotion of the school's aims, ensuring that comprehensive policies are effectively implemented. The cohesiveness of the school community, high standard of pastoral care and excellent personal development of pupils reflect the school's ethos and fulfils its aims. Leadership and management are excellent at all levels. The school's five-year strategic-development plan incorporates appropriate targets and was created after extensive consultation with parents, staff and governors and by thoughtful and perceptive self-evaluation by the senior leadership. A significant number of initiatives have already been put in place to enable the pupils to achieve their academic potential and to develop their individual talents, within a strong pastoral setting.
- 5.9 Educational programmes are effectively monitored. A variety of systems ensure effective self-evaluation, including peer review and annual departmental evaluations. The appointment of academic leadership to monitor teaching and learning is one of several recent initiatives which strengthen educational oversight. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. The newly established teaching and learning committee, which includes middle managers and teaching staff, provides opportunities for collaboration across the school and the sharing of fresh expertise and specialist abilities to better monitor pupils' progress. Senior leaders observe lessons and carry out checks on teaching and policies with heads of department.
- 5.10 The school successfully recruits and retains well-motivated staff. New starters have an effective programme of induction. All staff are trained in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, with the most recent training addressing the Prevent Duty. The thorough annual professional development review enables

staff to set targets and evaluate their own progress. Newly appointed heads of department receive mentoring and support in performing their responsibilities. Some opportunities for in-house training are available, but the majority of external professional development has been focused either on statutory safeguarding or specific national examination courses. Some managers have benefited by attending courses focused on leadership and management.

- 5.11 Arrangements for the safeguarding of children are effective and suitable checks are in place to assess the suitability of staff and governors; these are clearly recorded in the meticulously maintained single central register. The school actively promotes equality and diversity.
- 5.12 The school has developed strong links with parents. In the EYFS, staff work closely with parents to ensure that all children's needs are met. Parents contribute to their children's learning by providing valuable information on entry, and, thereafter, through ongoing verbal or written dialogue with the school. Detailed curriculum letters provide parents with useful information on how they can help their children at home, and they are encouraged to share their children's home achievements by completing tasks related to topics in school. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and next steps in learning through detailed written reports and regular consultation meetings. Highly effective partnerships with parents, in consultation with external agencies, ensure that all children benefit from appropriate interventions and a shared approach to their learning and development.
- 5.13 Across the whole school, the parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires are extremely positive; the vast majority of parents are satisfied with all aspects of the education and care that their children receive, and are highly supportive of the school. They are particularly appreciative of the progress their children make, the range of the curriculum and extra subjects offered, the standard of behaviour, the care pupils receive and the quality and quantity of the information made available to them. Almost all parents would recommend the school to others.
- 5.14 The school has developed constructive relationships with parents. Staff at all levels are readily available to speak to parents, and parents are satisfied that responses to their questions are timely. Parents are kept well-informed of their children's progress. Written reports are thorough, detailed, clear and concise. They include test results, effort and achievement grades, as appropriate for each year group, and highlight areas for development. Reports are individualised and demonstrate how well staff know the pupils. Parents are requested to provide feedback on reports.
- 5.15 Parents appreciate the many opportunities they have to be involved in the work and progress of their children and to contribute to their education, for example by sharing their experiences and expertise through classroom activities and careers presentations. A series of curriculum evenings provides parents with an insight into what their children are learning at school. The school provides a comprehensive programme of information events for parents, who are also welcome to attend certain assemblies, sports fixtures, plays, performances and other special occasions.
- 5.16 A clear and suitable procedure for dealing with parental complaints ensures that any concerns are handled promptly and sensitively, in line with published procedures. Comprehensive information about school policies and other relevant documents are easily accessible through the up-to-date website for parents of both prospective and current pupils. The use of an electronic communication system and contact books

further facilitate the flow of information between school and home. Newsletters showcase pupils' achievements and celebrate the many activities that take place in and out of school.

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