



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

OSWESTRY SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Oswestry School
DfE Number	893/6011
Registered Charity Number	1079822
Address	Oswestry School Upper Brook Street Oswestry Shropshire SY11 2TL
Telephone Number	01691 655711
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Email Address	headmaster@oswestryschool.org.uk
Head	Mr Julian Noad
Chair of Governors	Mr Peter Wilcox-Jones
Age Range	4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	403
Gender of Pupils	Boys and Girls (240 boys; 163 girls)
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS): 11 5-11: 92 11-18: 300
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 277
Number of Boarders	Total: 126 Full: 112 Weekly: 14
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Karen Lentink
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls
Inspection Dates	26 Jan 2016 to 29 Jan 2016

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in February 2012 and the previous ISI interim inspection was in May 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Bill Burn	Reporting Inspector
Ms Angela Drew	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mrs Lynne Horner	Team Inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)
Mr Anton Kok	Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Kerry Lord	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Stephen Bailey	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr James Davies	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Head, HMC school)
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Oswestry School is a co-educational school for pupils aged four to eighteen. It was founded in 1407 as a non-denominational school. It now has a broadly Anglican ethos but, in the spirit of the original foundation, welcomes pupils of all faiths and of none. It is situated in the small market town of Oswestry in Shropshire. The junior school, Bellan House, stands in its own grounds, a short walk from the main school site. The school has a board of 14 governors.
- 1.2 The school seeks to educate the whole child, with an emphasis on pupils' intellectual, spiritual and physical development. Its aim is for pupils to enjoy their education and to learn in a happy environment, in accordance with its motto for learning to be not for school but for life.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, a new head has been appointed, in September 2014. The science laboratories have been rehoused and refitted. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has obtained an exemption from the statutory framework.
- 1.4 The school educates 403 pupils in total, 103 in the junior school, for those aged 4 to 11, which includes the EYFS, and 300 in the senior school, for pupils aged 11 to 18. Most pupils live close to the school and are day pupils. There are 126 boarders in the senior school, who come from a wide variety of countries. The ability range of the pupils is slightly above the national average for maintained schools in the junior school and Years 7 to 11, and in Years 12 and 13 is slightly below the average for all pupils in sixth-form education.
- 1.5 There are 98 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 73 receive specialist support. There are 95 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), of whom 83 receive specialist tuition. Five pupils have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used for the junior school and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used for the senior school and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
First form	Year 7
Second form	Year 8
Third form	Year 9
Fourth form	Year 10
Fifth form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of academic and other achievements is good. Children in the EYFS make good progress. Pupils benefit from an academic curriculum that covers all the required areas of learning. In addition, it is appropriate and sufficiently flexible to accommodate a wide range of needs and abilities. Pupils gain admission to a range of British universities, including those with highly demanding entry requirements. The programme of extra-curricular activities is excellent and supports pupils in acquiring skills and self-confidence. Pupils have a very positive attitude to all they do, which enhances their learning. Teaching is good. It benefits from effective planning, management of time and good use of resources. Pupils comment on the ready availability of teachers to help them outside lesson times; the school is effective in promoting their progress, including different groups of pupils, through advice, support and tuition beyond the classroom. Assessment data is not currently used effectively to track pupils' progress against national norms, to inform lesson planning and aid pupils' progress. The school has recognised the need to develop a school-wide assessment policy to supersede the diverse provision in individual departments. The marking of pupils' work is excellent and makes a significant contribution to their progress.
- 2.2 Pupils are energetic, articulate and responsible throughout the school. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. This enhances the pupils' personal development. In the senior school, where a third of pupils come from a wide range of countries, tolerance and mutual respect are firmly established, and this has a profound influence on the school as a whole. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They understand democracy, the rule of law and the nature of personal freedoms. The school makes excellent provision to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Boarders are happy and they thrive, benefiting from excellent care and accommodation.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. The governing body meets its statutory obligations through a system of sub-committees and delegated responsibilities. This ensures that the full committee is informed and able collectively to review policy and practice. Governors' oversight of financial planning and educational direction enables the school to improve facilities to enhance pupils' development. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of parents expressed satisfaction with the school. Leadership and management support the school's aims well. At all levels, leadership and management have a strong and shared understanding of the school's needs. This has resulted in an ambitious and carefully considered range of initiatives, although it is too early to judge the results as yet.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
 - 1. Utilise the whole-school assessment policy to track pupils' attainment, identify their progress accurately and inform planning to meet the needs of all pupils.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Achievement of children in the EYFS is good. The planning of some teaching lacks rigour and this limits children's progress. Children in the EYFS highly enjoy coming to school. They have a wide range of ability and all make steady progress during their year in Reception so that by the time they leave, many of them reach expected levels of learning. Children with SEND are extremely well supported. All children listen attentively and are eager to join in discussions, as when, for example, they were asked which number was one larger or smaller than a given figure up to twenty. Children enjoy their early reading books. They achieve good knowledge of how words sound and use this to begin to write for a purpose, such as recording what they did in the school's wild garden. All children are extremely agile and confident physically, and their fine motor skills are developing well. They are increasingly able to work independently and they show creativity and imagination, for example altering the angle of a ramp occasionally when rolling marbles down it to influence movement. The warm, family atmosphere enables children in Reception to know older pupils and their teachers, so that they move confidently to Year 1.
- 3.3 Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge. They are articulate, and are able to write with fluency and accuracy, often showing both logical and lateral thought. Junior school pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills. They successfully apply skills, knowledge and understanding in different contexts. Older junior school pupils successfully incorporated spellings into correct sentences. Pupils in the junior school achieve at higher levels when asked to undertake more independent, self-directed learning, but this is not demanded of them consistently. Pupils throughout the school are active listeners and can argue cogently, assimilating new knowledge rapidly. They apply mathematical concepts with confidence, for example to interpret data. Pupils show competence in programming skills. Creativity is developed well through art, design technology, drama and music. Pupils show high levels of physical skill across a wide range of sports. In the senior school, inconsistent planning of some lessons limits opportunities for all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- 3.4 Pupils in the senior school often achieve merit and distinction in external music and drama examinations. They are successful in writing competitions, in public speaking examinations and in gaining awards in modern foreign languages. Pupils of all ages enthusiastically engage in a wide range of sports competitions, achieving good successes at regional and national levels. Participation in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme provides opportunities for many pupils to succeed. Half of all pupils achieve the gold award standard by the time they leave the school.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence from lessons and pupils' work it is judged to be good. The following analysis uses data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Pupils' attainment at GCSE is above the national average for maintained schools. Their attainment in the International GCSE varies between subjects and is overall broadly in line with worldwide norms. Attainment at A level is in line with the national average for maintained schools overall. This enables pupils to gain places at a range of British universities, including those with demanding entry requirements.

Results in 2015 confirmed that these levels of attainment had been maintained. The levels of attainment indicate that pupils in the junior and senior schools, including those with SEND or EAL, make progress which is appropriate in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities.

- 3.6 In responses to pre-inspection questionnaires, parents and pupils confirmed satisfaction with the progress made. The more able pupils make good progress in the senior school but this is more variable across different ages in the junior school.
- 3.7 In all parts of the school, pupils show highly positive attitudes to their work and activities. They are focused in their learning and clearly enjoy their studies. Their behaviour is exemplary. They organise their work well and settle to work quickly. They work well independently and in groups, co-operating very well with each other and staff when enabled to do so.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and co-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The educational programmes for children in the EYFS follow most of the areas of learning identified in the Early Years requirements. The school has made effective use of exemption from the requirements for learning and development to follow a mathematics scheme of work which links with that followed throughout the junior school. These programmes provide a rich and varied range of interesting activities, and there is a well-judged balance between adult-led and child-initiated tasks. Children with SEND are supported extremely well but there is less evidence that the more able children are constantly challenged appropriately. Since the previous inspection the accommodation has been altered to allow children to work both indoors and outside. Specialist teaching in a range of subjects shows a firm understanding of the needs of very young children, which enables the teaching to be effective. Children also enjoy the opportunity to belong to several clubs after school.
- 3.10 In the junior school, the introduction of an outdoor learning environment has enhanced opportunities for pupils. The youngest excitedly used a thermometer to enhance their understanding of how ground temperature differs from air temperature. The curriculum offers both Spanish and French, and attaches importance to dance, and speech and drama. The games programme is varied, with team sports supplemented by cross country, martial arts and fencing. Junior school pupils benefit from using the senior school swimming pool, and in Years 5 and 6 from attending the senior school for science, art, drama, computing and games.
- 3.11 The senior school offers a broad curriculum, with a good range of options at A level and GCSE. A weekly lecture series with speakers from nearby universities offers curricular enrichment and intellectual stimulation in the sixth form. At GCSE, pupils study a common core of mathematics, English, a modern foreign language and at least two sciences, with numerous further options. A small number of international pupils follow a suitably tailored programme for one or two years, preparatory to the sixth form. Appropriate national tests are offered to pupils with EAL. At A level, there is an excellent range of creative and practical options, such as textiles and photography, in addition to traditional academic subjects. The school has responded to the recommendation of the previous inspection to review the place of science in the curriculum. It is now more flexible and all pupils study at least two sciences at GCSE. The place of science is further reinforced by the recent rearrangement and refitting of all laboratories in the same building.

- 3.12 The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme ensures that all pupils understand the set of common values that underpin Britain, including respect for democracy, the rule of law and individual freedom. Coverage of political issues includes the balanced presentation of opposing views.
- 3.13 The school has good provision for information and communication technology (ICT), supported by the encouragement for pupils to bring and use their own devices, suitably monitored. In the junior school, ICT skills are taught effectively, embedded in dedicated computing lessons starting in Year 1.
- 3.14 Careers guidance is impartial and provided through the PSHEE syllabus in the lower years of the senior school. Pupils can access suitable tests in Year 11 and careers profiles are available in the sixth form. An annual careers fair involves representatives from local employers, higher education and the armed forces.
- 3.15 Pupils with SEND benefit from an increasingly common approach between junior and senior schools to providing appropriate support. These pupils are enabled to develop excellent skills and confidence in support sessions and classes. In junior school lessons, they are supported well. In the senior school curricular materials and strategies are adapted to the needs of pupils with SEND less consistently. Pupils with EAL benefit from excellent specialist provision.
- 3.16 Pupils benefit from a rich range of extra-curricular activities and express an appreciation of the breadth of opportunity offered. Pupils take part with enthusiasm in a full programme of fixtures in team and individual sports. Clubs range from poultry-keeping to ballet, trampolining and the reptile club. Pupils have access to an excellent range of facilities to support the programme. The development of leadership qualities through a thriving Combined Cadet Force supports the school's aims of developing individuals in knowledge, self-sufficiency and leadership skills, and of offering opportunities for service and responsibility. There are also frequent excellent opportunities for adventurous activities, for example sea kayaking in Mull and ice climbing in Norway.
- 3.17 Pupils are proud of the school's charitable fund raising, most recently for an air ambulance. The school has an enthusiastic community action group that visits the elderly and supports charitable appeals. There is a distinctive emphasis on environmental action, such as maintaining woods and preserving rare flowers. Junior school pupils benefited from a visit by a group of teachers from Abuja in 2015.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.19 In the EYFS, experienced staff know the children extremely well and work as a close-knit team. Activities provided during the inspection excited and intrigued the children, for example when they chose which character to impersonate in the story of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, writing short descriptive labels and acting the story. An activity in mathematics was carefully adapted to the needs of individual children. However, there is a lack of detailed short-term planning that is informed by frequent assessment of the progress of individuals. This results in reduced progress over time. Resources are good and staff use them well to support and extend learning.
- 3.20 Teaching throughout the junior and senior schools is effective in enabling pupils to make progress. This is in accordance with the aims of the school to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning in a happy atmosphere. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues.
- 3.21 Teaching is planned carefully and well. The most effective takes full account of the needs of different groups of pupils but this is not consistently evident. Most teachers know their pupils well and understand their needs. They are frequently willing to make themselves available beyond classroom time so as to support pupils' learning. Pupils comment favourably on this.
- 3.22 The relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. This ensures that behaviour in the classroom is conducive to learning. Teaching uses resources effectively, including ICT. Time is managed well and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. At its best teaching captures and holds the attention of pupils and ensures that they are constantly striving to consolidate and extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. In a few lessons teaching is too leisurely, or lacks the ambition to cover an appropriate amount of material or to make appropriate demands of pupils.
- 3.23 Teaching meets the needs of pupils with SEND most of the time but this is not consistently the case. Strategies have been devised and agreed to help these pupils, and where they are allowed additional time to process new information, or where key points are recapitulated frequently, their progress is enhanced. Similarly the use of glossaries and speaking frames supports the learning of pupils with EAL. In a small amount of teaching, these pupils are hampered by a lack of comprehension.
- 3.24 The most able pupils are stretched and challenged to take risks in their learning and make adventurous connections, especially in A-level classes. This is not routinely the case in lessons leading to GCSE. Teaching makes suitable provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- 3.25 In questionnaire responses, parents overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with the contribution of teaching. A small minority of pupils felt that they are given too much homework. Scrutiny of pupils' exercise books and files did not show that this is the case.
- 3.26 The absence of a rigorous, school-wide scheme to track pupils' attainment means that it is difficult to assess their progress accurately and plan accordingly to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has recognised the need to develop such a policy to supersede the current arrangement of individual departmental policies, which at

present partially meet the recommendation of the previous inspection. The school has adopted a fresh approach to the marking of written work, which is excellent, including plentiful written comment both to praise and to offer advice about how to improve.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The children's personal development in the EYFS is excellent. Children play together harmoniously, share resources amicably and take turns in a mature fashion. They choose activities sensibly and concentrate for considerable periods of time. Children are proud to take small responsibilities, such as being leader. They play regularly with Year 1 pupils at break and welcome pupils from Year 6 at snack time. This helps them to develop self-confidence and an awareness of being part of a larger community. It enables children to move easily and happily to a new class at the start of an academic year. Children share assemblies with older pupils and reflect on and celebrate their own and others' achievements. The setting promotes British values actively.
- 4.3 Both the junior and senior schools fully meet their aims to foster a positive atmosphere of self-respect, developing confident, courteous and responsible citizens. Throughout the school pupils strongly develop self-awareness, self-esteem and self-confidence. When pupils leave the school all have reached an excellent level of personal development.
- 4.4 Pupils show a good spiritual awareness and especially demonstrate a broad understanding and appreciation of other faiths. Chapel plays an integral part in school life. The school has a Christian ethos, although pupils from all faiths are warmly encouraged to participate or are fully supported to maintain their own worship. Pupils expressed a lack of enthusiasm towards chapel services. Inspectors judged that pupils are right to want to explore further opportunities to develop spiritual awareness throughout the school, through the curriculum, services and assemblies.
- 4.5 Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They behave extremely well and show courtesy and consideration to the school community and visitors. Pupils learn to treat each other with equal care, show tolerance and embrace with pride the rich international cultural diversity of the school. They have a clear sense of fairness, and they understand the need to avoid discriminatory behaviour. Pupils understand the rule of law and human rights. Junior school pupils showed empathy and perception when studying a speech by Martin Luther King and understood the civil rights struggle well for their age.
- 4.6 Pupils effectively learn to appreciate shared values such as respect for individual freedom and democracy. This is promoted through voting systems for groups such as the school council and coverage of national elections and referendums. Pupils respect and value their own and other cultures, as well as individuals with different abilities and others with protected characteristics. A rejuvenated weekly programme of PSHEE, enriched by visiting speakers, enables pupils to acquire suitable knowledge of English civil and criminal law and English institutions.
- 4.7 Pupils' excellent behaviour is effectively modelled and reinforced by staff, and pupils understand the importance of rules in a community. They are loyal to the school and have a clear sense of behaviour expectations. Pupils demonstrate and enjoy leadership opportunities in the boarding community and wider school. Pupils' sense of social responsibility is developed through a range of charitable activities. These

often enhance pupils' engagement with the local area, and include harvest contributions to a local food bank and events for regional and national charities. Organised community service plays a central role in the personal development of Year 11 pupils. It enhances their understanding of their role in society and the need to help those less fortunate than themselves.

- 4.8 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They acquire and express a strong appreciation and respect for other cultures and this permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils' cultural appreciation is significantly enriched by international celebration weeks, a map identifying the homelands of boarding pupils and shared experiences in lessons and assemblies. They are aware of the risks of extreme views and are not afraid to discuss their concerns with their peers or staff. Pupils appreciate the achievements and importance of Western culture and traditions through celebrations of harvest, Easter and Christmas festivals and the Remembrance Day service in the town.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Arrangements for the pastoral care of children in the EYFS are excellent. All children have a key person and staff give high priority to fulfilling this role. They develop warm, trusting relationships with the children so that children are happy, learn to take turns and be thoughtfully aware of others, and feel safe and confident to try new experiences. All children are expected to respond, listen and behave in an exemplary manner. Children are taught about healthy eating through the nutritious lunches and snacks that they enjoy. There are plentiful opportunities for exercise, with gym, dance and physical education lessons indoors and play activities outside.
- 4.11 Throughout the school, tutors and house staff offer highly effective support and guidance in accordance with the school's aims. There is a very strong sense of community within the school and almost all pupils say that they feel safe and enjoy being part of the school family.
- 4.12 Warm and supportive relationships are evident amongst pupils, and with all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching. This successfully contributes to making excellent pastoral care a core feature of everyday school life. Older pupils are highly effective in being able to offer help and guidance to younger pupils. Teachers in both sections of the school encourage pupils to make the most of the opportunities available and support them with any concerns they may have. Use of the school intranet enables ready lines of communication and the effective keeping and monitoring of records.
- 4.13 The school promotes a healthy lifestyle. All pupils take part in physical exercise at least once a week and most are also involved with the extensive sport and outdoor education programme. A majority of boarders expressed concerns about the quality of the food in response to the questionnaires. Revised catering arrangements since January 2015 have resulted in a high quality range of nutritious meals, with a good deal of choice. This was confirmed by a review of the menus offered. Healthy eating is also promoted through the PSHEE programme. Good provision is made for pupils with specific dietary requirements.
- 4.14 Effective policies to promote good behaviour are supported by rewards and sanctions procedures that are well understood by the pupils and listed in their

handbook. In response to the questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils felt that teachers do not use the rewards and sanctions system fairly. Inspection of records, and discussions with pupils and teachers, showed that sanctions are applied in line with policy and recorded and monitored effectively.

- 4.15 The school has suitable measures to guard against bullying. Pupils report that the rare incidents of bullying or harassment are dealt with quickly and effectively. Scrutiny of records confirmed this. The school has a culture of respect for individuals and so all pupils are treated fairly and equally. The appointment of bullying ambassadors in each year group and posters in public places show pupils how to prevent online bullying and harassment.
- 4.16 The school's size and family ethos ensure that every pupil's voice can be heard. Pupils are quick to express their views formally, through the school council, boarders' council, international committee, online questionnaires and house suggestion boxes. Minutes are circulated quickly. Requests from these groups have led to new catering arrangements, and boarding activities are now arranged by individual houses rather than as a whole.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.18 The provision in the EYFS for children's welfare is excellent. Staff receive appropriate training and place high emphasis on ensuring that health and safety and the latest safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously, and they are alert to the risks of radicalisation. School attendance is monitored closely and staff are keenly aware of the additional needs of vulnerable children.
- 4.19 The school has a robust and thorough approach to safeguarding and provides suitable training for all members of staff, including in measures to combat extremism. The school offers e-safety workshops for parents. Strong links exist with local agencies. Recruitment procedures are followed and are recorded correctly.
- 4.20 Arrangements for reducing risks from fire are comprehensive, with all appropriate maintenance checks and monitoring implemented. Fire drills are carried out regularly and are suitably logged, with any weaknesses in procedure attended to. Risk assessments in all categories are carefully carried out and logged centrally. Hazardous chemicals are stored and disposed of appropriately. The premises benefit from a proactive maintenance programme, with all testing of portable appliances carried out effectively and any material issues being remedied swiftly. Effective records are held and audit trails followed to ensure that materials and equipment are appropriate. The school assesses suitably the risks arising from its position, including in both junior and senior schools, and keeps this under periodic review.
- 4.21 First-aid provision is very well organised and overseen. Appropriate accommodation is provided. Medical records are kept securely on a central database and backed up regularly. Sick pupils are cared for with sympathy and skill.
- 4.22 Attendance and admission registers are appropriately completed and stored electronically. Registers are regularly backed up as required.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.23 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.24 Outcomes for boarders are excellent and fulfil the aims of the school. Boarders are extremely happy. They are bright, polite and engaging. Whilst boarders may spend different lengths of time at the school they state that they develop significant and lasting friendships. They thrive in a positive atmosphere which enables them to develop confidence and a desire to pursue the highly varied academic and extra-curricular opportunities the school provides. They are supported by the staff to develop intellectual, personal and social skills. Diversity is a strength of the community. The pupils are open and tolerant and have mutual respect for the diverse international groups represented in the school. Boarding houses are organised into 'families' to encourage trust and understanding between boarders of different ages. Boarders report that they are confident they always have someone they trust to turn to if there is a need to express a view or raise a concern. Roles such as head of house and prefects are well regarded. Suitable training enables boarders who fulfil these roles to undertake tasks such as monitoring prep times. They do so in a manner that shows respect and consideration for others. All boarders are immensely proud of their house.
- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. All staff work hard to ensure that all of the houses are clean and safe. All houses have suitable accommodation for sleeping, private study, washing, and making drinks and snacks. A new online reporting system for faults is benefiting the maintenance team, resulting in an improved level of service for the boarders. Boarders have the opportunity to participate in the school's varied selection of after-school activities. At weekends there is a mixture of organised trips and house events. These include city and internal events such as a talent night, a film night and national celebrations, for example Chinese New Year. Boarders have access to television, the internet, and quality newspapers and magazines, and are keen to discuss issues of national and international importance. They have every opportunity to contact parents through electronic means. Parents' complaints are handled promptly and carefully.
- 4.26 Medical care is excellent. Each house has highly effective sick bay provision, and qualified medical staff maintain meticulous records for all medicines dispensed. In addition, each boarding house has a member of staff who has attended training in medication administration. All medication, including controlled drugs, is stored in an appropriate manner. In response to the questionnaire, a few boarders said that they do not believe they are well looked after when ill or injured. Evidence from the medical records and interviews with house staff and boarders showed that the required action is taken when the pupils are ill or need specialist medical attention. The school has a considerable number of staff trained in first aid, including the care of chronic conditions.
- 4.27 The majority of boarders who completed the questionnaire stated that the food is not good and a minority indicated that insufficient snacks are available. Inspectors found that the school provides a consistently high standard of food. At each meal there is sufficient choice of attractively presented, nutritious and varied freshly prepared hot and cold food. The catering department takes great care to satisfy the needs of boarders who have specific dietary or allergy requirements. The lunch break is now sufficiently long to ensure that all pupils have enough time to enjoy their meal. In this way the school has met the recommendation of the previous inspection to review the timing of lunch for the youngest boarders. Each house has

access to well-equipped kitchens, which means that boarders have every opportunity to prepare suitable snacks outside main mealtimes. In response to the suggestions of the boarding council, the distribution of additional foodstuffs is staggered to ensure that the provisions last the week.

- 4.28 Arrangements for safeguarding boarders and ensuring their welfare are excellent. All boarding staff have undertaken appropriate levels of safeguarding training and understand how to respond to safeguarding issues. House staff keep meticulous welfare records for all pupils. All sanctions and rewards are recorded. There is a suitable policy for searching boarders and for physical restraint. This ensures that senior leaders have the opportunity to track sanctions to ensure that they are fair and proportionate. All boarders interviewed understood the system for sanctions and believed that boarding staff are fair when imposing them. Boarders report that there are very few incidents of bullying. Records confirm this. Boarders know that any such event reported to the staff will be dealt with immediately. The pupils know whom to contact in the case of an emergency or at night. The school provides the pupils with information on a range of external agencies to whom they can turn for advice, which includes contact details for the school's independent listener.
- 4.29 Boarders believe that they are safe in their houses and they all understand the need to practise emergency drills. The boarding staff work hard to ensure this. Boarding staff keep up-to-date records of all fire drills that have been completed, including those in boarding time. The school undertakes routine fire assessment of the boarding houses and acts on recommendations made. All houses undertake an annual review, which provides the opportunity to share best practice. Rigorous risk assessments are completed to ensure boarder safety.
- 4.30 The effectiveness of leadership and management of boarding is excellent. The boarding team reviews compliance with regulations each half term. Appropriate systems are in place for boarding staff to evaluate boarding provision and improve outcomes for boarders. A new appraisal system has been instigated for all boarding staff. The housemasters and housemistresses manage a highly motivated team of assistants, matrons and housekeepers. Regular formal and informal meetings ensure the sharing of best practice. Staff are quick to respond to suggestions made at the boarding council, and the evening roll call is used effectively to relate news to the pupils. By reinstating the boarding council, the school has satisfied the second of the two recommendations from the previous boarding inspection. Housemasters, housemistresses and their assistants work closely with their academic colleagues and share information to provide targeted advice for the boarders.
- 4.31 The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their children enjoy boarding, the school keeps their children safe, the experience of boarding helps their children's progress and development, and the staff treat their children as an individual. This reflects the dedicated and professional approach to boarding evident in the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The arrangements for governance ensure that the school continues to nurture its ethos and to value the all-round development of the individual, while also seeking to develop the academic achievement of its pupils. Governors take opportunities to stimulate and challenge the senior managers in the school, and are ambitious for the school's future development.
- 5.3 The designated governor for the junior school visits the EYFS regularly, and effective oversight ensures that the governing body is up to date with the work and needs of the EYFS.
- 5.4 Governors discharge their responsibilities for educational standards. Financial planning ensures that appropriate resources are allocated to support the school's development programme in terms of staffing and buildings. The composition of the governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection, with numerous new appointments and a system of sub-committees that carry out much of the routine work and report back effectively to the full committee. Governors effectively meet their statutory obligations for safeguarding, health and safety in both the junior and senior schools. Identified governors liaise closely with appropriate senior leaders in the school to ensure that policies are compliant and implemented appropriately. The governing body as a whole conducts an annual review of safeguarding.
- 5.5 Governors have effective arrangements for the appraisal of the head, to enable them to monitor the quality of leadership and management.
- 5.6 Governors undergo systematic training to support them in their roles. They are frequent visitors to the school for public events and meetings and, in addition, to the junior school. They visit the EYFS, boarding houses and learning support department, and also observe lessons.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.8 The quality of leadership and management in the EYFS is good. All policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding, are suitable and implemented fully in a stimulating and welcoming environment, where children are happy and feel safe. The leadership has clear vision and an understanding of the strengths of the setting, gained through monitoring, including the need to improve short-term planning through more effective use of assessment. Tracking of children's progress and achievements has begun to be planned in order to challenge children of all abilities more effectively. Significant changes to the layout of the setting have enabled easy access to the outside area, and managers understand the benefits of a covered area for the space. Staff receive regular professional training, which they value highly. They also appreciate the opportunity to have discussion with the leadership about any issues that arise during effective supervision. There has been training in the latest welfare requirements and staff are alert to any changes in children's behaviour or unexplained absences. The setting's partnership with parents and carers is excellent and parents particularly value the warm, family atmosphere and the easy availability of staff. When the need arises, children who need additional help are extremely well supported both in school and by external agencies. The setting actively promotes equality, diversity and British values through assemblies and posters. It has made good progress since the previous inspection.
- 5.9 Leadership and management in the junior and senior schools are effective in ensuring that the school's aims are met. They strongly promote the school's ethos. Safeguarding matters are dealt with scrupulously and the school has created a clear understanding that child protection is the responsibility of every member of the community.
- 5.10 Significant changes to the composition of the leadership and management team, including the new head, have created a new impetus in restating and reshaping policy and its implementation. The ethos of the senior team is more inclusive and collegiate. The addition of assistant heads with responsibility for teaching and learning and for extra-curricular activity has been successful. The creation of a faculty structure to improve on a sense of isolation felt by smaller departments is well placed to ensure that the quality of teaching can be more effectively evaluated. This is an effective step in completing fulfilment of the recommendation of the previous inspection that teachers receive more support. The appraisal scheme has also been strengthened, with the same aim in mind. The impact of these changes cannot yet be fully evaluated. With the governing body's enthusiastic support and participation, a five-year development plan has been instituted. This represents an effective response to the recommendations of the previous inspection. The recommendation regarding the place of science in the curriculum has been fully met. Work is still in progress on the effective use of assessment data. Leadership and management have clearly identified and analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the school and formulated ways of addressing them.
- 5.11 The school is able to make appropriate staff appointments and ensures that all staff are fully trained in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Policies are maintained and kept up to date, and are generally implemented effectively. The school has made a priority of ensuring that international pupils are inducted and

cared for appropriately. Oversight of the extensive adventure education programme is highly skilled, and the school has ample trained staff to achieve the programme's success. There are suitable arrangements for checking the suitability of all staff and governors.

- 5.12 The leadership and management of the school play a central part in embodying the attitudes and values expected of pupils. This encourages excellent behaviour, as well as respect and tolerance towards others and for democracy.
- 5.13 The school maintains strong links with parents, carers and guardians. All parents who responded to the questionnaire are highly satisfied with the quality of care the school gives their children. They appreciate all the school does, especially the supportive family atmosphere that is evident in all age groups. They recognise that virtually all staff know their children and are readily available to give help and advice.
- 5.14 The school has a suitable complaints policy and deals with any concerns or complaints with extreme care. Correspondence is logged, and replied to promptly. Arrangements for any panel hearing are appropriate.
- 5.15 Parents of current and prospective pupils receive detailed information from the school and are welcomed for visits.
- 5.16 The school communicates frequently and regularly with parents through weekly electronic newsletters from the heads of the junior and senior schools. In addition, parents receive printed termly newsletters. Parents find that communication is rapid and effective, either by email or by arranging to meet in person.
- 5.17 Parents say that they have good opportunities to be closely involved in their children's work and progress. They receive detailed and helpful full written reports at the end of each term, and the school also provides a half-termly summary of grades for effort and achievement.
- 5.18 Parents have many ways to become involved in the life of the school. The active parents' association organises social and fund-raising events, such as the summer ball and bonfire night. Parents' expertise is welcome in areas such as ecology, and the school holds information events for parents from time to time.

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