



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**KING'S COLLEGE SCHOOL CAMBRIDGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## King's College School

Full Name of School	<b>King's College School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>873/6000</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>1139422</b>		
Address	<b>King's College School West Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB3 9DN</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01223 365814</b>		
Email Address	<b>office@kcs.cambs.sch.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Nicholas Robinson</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Professor Robert Foley</b>		
Age Range	<b>4 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>416</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (241 boys; 175 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>285</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>35</b>	11-18: <b>96</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>387</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>29</b>	
	Full:	<b>23</b>	Weekly: <b>6</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Melanie Harries</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection Dates	<b>18 to 21 Nov 2014</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2010, and the boarding provision was inspected by Ofsted in May 2011.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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 pupils aged under three), 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 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**

Mrs Jane Chesterfield	Reporting Inspector
Mr Chris Davies	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Howard Edwards	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Elizabeth Hill	Team Inspector (Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Jenny Jones	Team Inspector (Former head, IAPS school)
Mrs Anne Longton	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Tessa Richardson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 King's College School is a day and boarding school for girls and boys situated near the centre of Cambridge. The school is a part of King's College, Cambridge and is a registered charity. The majority of the school's governors, including the chair, are fellows of the college. The school was founded in 1441 by Henry VI to educate the choristers who sing the services in the college chapel. The school moved to its current site in 1878 and is fully co-educational. It continues to educate the college chapel's choristers.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a broad, balanced and well-rounded education for pupils; to challenge pupils to fulfil their abilities; to encourage and promote academic, musical and sporting excellence; to give pupils opportunities to be involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities, and to build a firm foundation providing the skills upon which pupils go forward to their senior schools.
- 1.3 The school educates girls and boys aged from four to thirteen years, offering Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in its Reception classes. Boys have the opportunity to board from the age of eight; there are no girl boarders. Since the previous inspection, there have been improvements to the junior school classrooms, the pre-prep playground, the dining room and kitchen. New music rooms, a day surgery, workshops and offices have been created. New premises for the sports department have been constructed, including new squash courts.
- 1.4 Currently there are 416 pupils on roll, of whom 35 are in the EYFS. The school has exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. Twenty-nine boys board, on a weekly or flexible basis. Results of standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the pupils is above the national average. Pupils come from mainly professional, academic or business backgrounds, and a small proportion is from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.5 Twenty-four pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), but none requires support for this. Seventy-eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and 50 receive specialist support from the school. One pupil currently has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 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 King's College School is very successful in meeting its aims of offering pupils a broad, balanced and well-rounded education, and building a firm foundation providing the skills with which pupils can go forward to their senior schools. The achievement of pupils of all abilities is excellent. They attain standards which are well above national expectations and make good progress through the school, developing excellent attitudes to learning. Their extra-curricular achievement is excellent, especially in all aspects of music, thanks to the excellent wide and varied range of activities on offer. Pupils benefit from excellent teaching and an excellent curriculum, which inspire and motivate them to learn. Teachers bring enthusiasm, expertise and energy to the classroom, and are skilled in matching work to pupils' needs, supporting and challenging them to achieve as well as they can. Children make an excellent start in the EYFS, though they do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn independently.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent and they leave the school as mature and sensible individuals. They have a strong spiritual awareness, fostered especially by the school's musical tradition, and a keen sense of right and wrong, though occasionally a few need reminding of the need to be thoughtful in their dealings with one another. Pupils have well-developed social skills, and are confident and self-assured. They have a good understanding of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves through their links with schools overseas, and the oldest pupils enjoy good opportunities to take on responsibility. Pupils below Year 8 say they would welcome more such opportunities and would also like more opportunities to express their views on school life in a formal context. Inspectors agree. Pastoral care is excellent, and the school takes any instances of misbehaviour seriously and investigates them thoroughly. Excellent attention is given to pupils' welfare, health and safety throughout the school. The quality of boarding is excellent, and boarders and their parents are very appreciative of the experiences offered. The school ensures that choristers are very well supported in their busy schedule.
- 2.3 Governance of the school is excellent. Governors ensure that the school fully complies with all relevant regulations, and offer well-informed support and challenge to senior staff. Leadership and management at all levels of the school are excellent. Leaders are never complacent, and are constantly looking at ways to improve and develop the school to improve provision and outcomes for pupils. Parents are very happy with the school and what it offers their children. Almost all feel that their children are well looked after, and feel happy and safe at school.



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

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

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Offer pupils across the school greater opportunities to take on responsibility and to make their views on school life heard in a formal way.
  2. Build on opportunities for developing independent learning, investigation and problem solving in the EYFS.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is very successful in meeting its aims of challenging pupils to fulfil their abilities and promoting academic, musical and sporting excellence. Most of the children in the EYFS are working in line with the expected range of achievement, with many exceeding expectations. Children in the Reception class make excellent progress relative to their starting points. They learn to read and use numbers extremely well, and can listen for sustained periods of time. They enjoy investigating and exploring when they are given the opportunity to do so. Reception children enjoy responding to stories in French and to music; they perform confidently in front of an audience and have fun using percussion instruments.
- 3.3 Throughout the rest of the school, pupils are highly articulate and express their ideas clearly. They listen attentively so that they understand their teachers' instructions and explanations without difficulty. Pupils read widely and with enjoyment, and know how to write appropriately in different situations. They are able to write at length in subjects other than English, such as history, geography and religious studies, using their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation accurately. They are able to think logically, for example when applying their linguistic skills from Latin to deducing information in Greek. Their mathematical skills are evident in their work across the curriculum, such as geography and science. Pupils enjoy thinking and working independently and show great creativity, especially in their music and also in their work in art and in design technology.
- 3.4 Pupils do not take national tests and so their attainment cannot be measured in relation to national averages. However, on the evidence available from their books, lesson observations, interviews with pupils and school data, it is judged to be well above national age-related expectations. Almost all pupils in Year 8 gain places at their first choice of senior school each year, with a high proportion being granted scholarships, particularly for academic achievement or music.
- 3.5 Pupils make good progress across the school from generally high starting points. Those with SEND or EAL also make good progress from their various starting points, and their achievement is excellent. This is because their needs are extremely well met, both in their one-to-one withdrawal sessions in the learning support centre, and in class across the curriculum. More able pupils achieve extremely well because much is expected of them and they are very effectively challenged in lessons.
- 3.6 Outside the classroom, pupils' achievement in the wide range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Most pupils are skilled musicians, singing with accomplishment or playing music to a high standard. The school's choristers have an international reputation for excellence. Pupils also achieve increasingly highly in sport, particularly hockey, and drama productions are very well received. More than 100 pupils learn chess, where pupils as young as six play competently against one another.
- 3.7 Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning throughout the school. They brim with enthusiasm and are eager to discuss their tasks, to the extent that sometimes younger pupils have to be reminded to work quietly. Older pupils have successfully

acquired the habits of mature and focused learners. They apply themselves assiduously, concentrate hard, and persevere with their tasks. Pupils of all ages are proud of their books and take care to present written work in a neat and tidy way. They move on to their next schools with study skills which give them an excellent foundation for future success.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.9 The school meets its aim to provide a well-rounded education for its pupils that meets their needs. The broad curriculum covers not only the required areas of learning, but is greatly enhanced by the addition of foreign languages, classics including Greek, music, sports, drama and ICT, supported by some excellent facilities. The school's curriculum management team works effectively to ensure that the curriculum is well balanced, with continuity between the different sections, and is clearly matched to the needs and talents of the pupils. Effective specialist teaching starts in the EYFS and is extended as pupils move up through the school, enriching the curriculum and providing increasing challenge. In the EYFS, the educational programmes provide interesting experiences that meet the needs of the children. A suitable mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity is provided, and opportunities for outdoor activities are carefully planned.
- 3.10 Significant developments have been made in information and communication technology (ICT) since the previous inspection and there is some excellent use of this beginning to be made in other curriculum areas, such as design technology, although it has yet to be embedded fully in all subjects. Pupils respond positively to the stimulating curriculum, for example, in a Year 6 geography lesson on Boscastle, where pupils enthusiastically participated to explain why an employee had lost her job in the town.
- 3.11 Classrooms and other specialist rooms are well resourced and presented, giving a warm, welcoming and secure feel; these enhance the learning experience for pupils. The library is well-stocked and inviting, providing an excellent environment in which to study and promoting independent learning. Library staff provide excellent academic and pastoral support to pupils.
- 3.12 The provision for creative curricular areas, such as music, art and drama, and for other areas such as sport, is excellent, giving a wide range of opportunities for pupils outside the classroom. A broad range of well-planned day and residential visits related to curricular themes enriches the curriculum and provides excellent opportunities for pupils. These include a residential trip to France for Year 8 pupils and a visit to Rome linked in with history topics. The choristers have toured and sung in Australia and more recently Germany. Day trips to places of historical interest, such as Ely Cathedral for art, provide pupils with excellent opportunities to extend their knowledge. Children in the EYFS benefit from going on outings and hearing visiting authors and other speakers.
- 3.13 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities available to pupils of all ages; these make a strong contribution to their personal development. Clubs cater for a wide range of interests. Additional expertise is brought into the school, for example, chess and rugby coaches, to enhance the quality of activities. With 38 peripatetic music teachers available, there is a wealth of diverse and rich musical provision, and pupils who wish to form their

own musical groups are fully supported. Pupils participate in a number of competitions, including independent schools' sports tournaments and mathematics challenges with success. In a national mathematics competition, for example, 21 pupils achieved a gold award.

- 3.14 Pupils benefit from strong links with communities outside of the school, both locally such as at the local care home and further afield with a twin school in Sri Lanka. Fundraising events are numerous including cake sales, the poppy appeal and a sports activity for disabled and able-bodied people.
- 3.15 Excellent provision is made for those pupils with SEND, who are identified and known to all teaching staff through individual education plans (IEPs) and information on the data management system. No special provision is currently needed for those with EAL as they are fluent in English. Some pupils with SEND receive one-to-one help in the classrooms and others are very well supported by the class teachers. More able pupils are extended effectively in many lessons through the high expectations of their teachers, who provide extension work.

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

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and makes a significant impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers know their pupils well and they are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subjects they teach. Teaching is carefully planned and based on an understanding of pupils' needs. The teachers provide interesting and varied topics which include tasks and activities that are appropriate for all abilities. This supports the aims of the school to provide children with academic excellence for all.
- 3.18 In the EYFS, adults are highly conscientious and have a secure knowledge and understanding of how to promote the learning and development of young children. Provision for literacy and numeracy is excellent, and in the best sessions, rich and imaginative experiences are provided to encourage the children to investigate and question. However, there are not always enough opportunities for children to tackle investigation and problem-solving independently. Assessment of children is rigorous and ensures that their achievement and progress are tracked and used to plan some challenging activities. There is a good range of resources, which are used well.
- 3.19 Throughout the school, the excellent teaching is characterised by thorough preparation, brisk pace, good use of resources, and challenging work. Teaching is particularly effective when the lessons build on pupils' previous learning and employ a range of teaching strategies. A Year 6 geography lesson, for example, utilised a range of methodology to convey the key concepts of flooding. Pupils respond eagerly to questions that challenge them and are keen to ask questions of their teachers. In many lessons the pupils gain from working collaboratively in small groups, as demonstrated very well in the fitness session in girls' games.
- 3.20 Teachers make good use of resources and where ICT is incorporated in lessons, teaching is enhanced. This was particularly evident in a Year 5 study skills class where pupils used an online translation tool on tablet computers to translate words and phrases in a range of different languages.
- 3.21 Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. In a Year 4 drama lesson the pupils responded to the infectious and enthusiastic approach of the teacher as

they confidently created and performed a group rap in unison. The pupils' responses in the pupil interviews and to the pre-inspection questionnaire were supportive of the teaching they receive. Pupils are keen to articulate that their teachers help them to learn and willingly give individual support.

- 3.22 Teachers understand and meet the pupils' individual needs well. The inspection found that teaching demonstrates high expectations of pupils and provides excellent support for pupils with SEND. Setting classes on the basis of prior attainment is used to accommodate different ability groups and the provision of support or extension work is effective, as seen in a Year 1 literacy lesson and a Year 3 history activity about life in the 1950s. The support centre is highly effective, offering learning support to individual or small groups. The SEND policy has been reviewed and is very clear and precise, following the code of practice for SEND. Detailed pupil profiles are accessible to staff. More able pupils are well catered for, with teaching provision providing breadth and extension within lessons and offering many opportunities outside the classroom to develop their skills and knowledge further.
- 3.23 Work is marked regularly and there are many excellent examples of marking which supports pupils' learning. The most successful marking provides written feedback which is both positive and constructive and sets targets for improvement to direct the learner. The newly adopted strategy for 'two stars and a wish' is making an impact across the school. Year 7 pupils said that it helped them to know their strengths and identify targets for improvement. However, there is still some inconsistency between departments and marking is less useful when it gives pupils insufficient information to help them improve. The recently implemented marking and feedback policy is relatively new and is not yet fully embedded.

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

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 In the EYFS, children are happy, confident and enthusiastic. Relationships between children are very positive, and they learn to co-operate, respect and tolerate one another. They settle quickly from a range of Nursery settings and are well prepared for their move to Year 1.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The high quality of pupils' personal development strongly reflects the school's commitment to providing a well-rounded education within a caring and family-based community. The pupils' self-confidence and sense of spirituality is developed extremely well both within and outside the curriculum, for example, in assemblies and through services of thanksgiving in King's College Chapel. Awe and wonder are also experienced in high quality singing and instrumental performances. In an assembly, a moving moment occurred when pupils were invited to link hands while meditating and reflecting on thoughtful words spoken by the chaplain about caring for one another. In lessons, pupils appreciate strong relationships with staff who are committed to helping them to develop as an individual.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral understanding is excellent. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and show respect, warmth and care for each other across the age range. A few sometimes find it hard to comply with aspects of the 'King's Way', the school's code of conduct, at all times. During personal, social and health education, and in other lessons, pupils are given opportunities to explore, understand and develop values and principles relating to everyday life. The staff are proactive in seeking ways to help pupils become responsible citizens who understand the over-arching place of the civil and criminal law in England. Pupils enthusiastically enjoy fundraising for a number of different local and international charities, including an orphanage in Uganda. They have also developed links with a charity which has involved pupils in Years 5 to 8 in learning new ways of playing sport in which disabled and able bodied can enjoy sport together.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is excellent. They interact effectively with each other in class discussions, in pairs and in small groups. When an opportunity arises for taking on responsibility, they accept it with pride, for example being a member of school council, or in Year 8 being a house captain or acting as a buddy for the younger children. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils below Year 8 say they would welcome more opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and leadership, and a minority seeks to have their views on school life heard in a more formal way. Inspection findings agree: such opportunities are not always plentiful for pupils below Year 8. Pupils earn merits for academic work and for being good citizens, and they speak with excitement about how their house is performing. Pupils have a growing awareness of English public institutions and services, politics and economic issues and they understand what it means to be part of a community. The school actively promotes an even-handed teaching of British values, for example in work done within PSHE, which pupils fully accept. As a result, the pupils understand the importance of democracy, the rule of law, and the concept of individual liberty. In their relationships, they demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance with those from backgrounds different from their own.

- 4.6 The cultural awareness of pupils is excellent and contributes significantly to the school fulfilling its aim to offer a well-rounded education. Through lessons, assemblies, visitors to the school, trips to explore the local rich culture and heritage and trips further afield, pupils develop a strong understanding of cultural diversity, and learn to respect the achievements of those from backgrounds different from their own, including those that come from their links with a school in Sri Lanka, which are firmly embedded into school life across the age range. At the same time, pupils develop an understanding of the Western cultural tradition. In a joint project with partner schools, Year 8 pupils have developed links with the residents of a local care home in their respective countries, interviewing elderly residents to find out how life has changed over the years. Pupils' cultural development is significantly extended through a breadth of clubs, an inspirational curriculum and extra-curricular provision for music, plus a wide range of excellent sporting, artistic and dramatic experiences.
- 4.7 By the time they move to the next stage of their education at the age of 13, the personal development of pupils is excellent, providing them with a firm foundation on which to build.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school successfully embraces its desire through the mission statement to provide a caring family based community in which each child is respected and valued. This is achieved in a relaxed atmosphere in which relationships are warm and friendly. The staff know the pupils well; they provide focused support to help them make the most of all aspects of school life which is appreciated by pupils. In discussions and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, they indicated that the teachers and the school listener are always willing to make time to help them or solve a problem. Staff in the EYFS are skilled and sensitive in supporting children, and children's safety is a priority, with rigorous procedures for a safe handover at the beginning and end of the day.
- 4.10 Very rigorous procedures are in place to ensure that concerns are dealt with promptly and good records are kept which help to ensure continuity of pastoral care as pupils move upwards through the school. Heads of year work effectively to offer support in inventive ways, for example, through the 'KitKat' club which helps pupils to develop confidence, social skills and self-esteem. In the EYFS, class teachers are the key person for each child, providing individual support. Adults offer consistent and clear guidance for children on what is acceptable behaviour, giving positive praise, reward and responsibilities which promote self-esteem. Assemblies promote good social skills and celebrate success.
- 4.11 Clear and effective policies and procedures relating to every aspect of pastoral care for pupils are in place. The ethos of the school promotes positive behaviour and measures to guard against harassment and bullying are wide ranging and work well. Inspectors found that where conflict arises, it is swiftly dealt with in accordance with the school's clear policies and procedures. Pupils enjoy school life and speak enthusiastically about earning merits. Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy habits with healthy eating and plenty of exercise through physical education lessons and clubs. Pupils appreciate the healthy, appetising lunches which are eaten together in a relaxed, friendly, social environment in the dining room. Children in the EYFS are helped to gain an understanding of why it is important to have a healthy

diet. They were observed eating a range of healthy foods and engaged in physical activity.

- 4.12 The pastoral care of pupils with SEND and for those pupils who are able, gifted or talented throughout the school is excellent. Staff sensitively and carefully nurture those with specific needs and undergo relevant training where necessary to ensure the best provision for the child. A suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND is in place.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Senior staff lead a strong welfare team to ensure that policies meet all requirements, staff are well informed, implementation is effective and the overall welfare of pupils enjoys a high profile throughout the school. They maintain an overview of all regulations applicable to the school, to ensure consistency in all areas and timely updating where requirements change.
- 4.15 The school has rigorous arrangements for dealing with safeguarding issues. All staff have received training in child protection from the child protection officer, and the school's procedures are monitored annually by the local authority's team. A trained, nominated governor maintains an oversight of safeguarding. Staff training in child protection is carried out regularly, and appropriate senior staff have undertaken training in safer recruitment, ensuring that arrangements for the appointment of staff are scrupulously followed.
- 4.16 Health and safety are given a high priority. Arrangements are managed by the health and safety committee, on which all parts of the school have appropriate representation, and are overseen by the governing body. The school has comprehensive arrangements for reducing the risk from fire and accidents. It holds regular fire practices and the related equipment is checked at appropriate intervals. There are detailed risk assessments for areas of the school and for school activities.
- 4.17 Registered nurses look after any pupils who are ill or injured both during the day and overnight. A good number of staff, including members of the EYFS, has appropriate first aid or paediatric first aid training. The school ensures that pupils who cycle to school have cycle proficiency training.
- 4.18 Arrangements to ensure that pupils are appropriately supervised whilst on site are effective, and the choristers are carefully supervised on and off site. The school gives close attention to any pupils who have particular medical or learning support needs. The admission and attendance registers are completed and backed up according to regulations.



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

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The excellent outcomes achieved for boarders are strengthened by the sensitive but practical approach adopted by the boarding staff team, which has a positive impact on the development of the boarders' integrity and independence. The boarding environment encourages them to flourish and achieve their potential. The needs of boarders for both choristers and non-choristers are equally met. Boarders report that they are able to make constructive suggestions to contribute towards decisions that influence the running of the boarding provision.
- 4.21 Currently there is no specific responsibility system for the boarders but the needs of the boarding community are addressed where appropriate. Year 8 boarders, for example, help younger boarders settle into their new boarding routine by sharing the dormitory during this transition period. Pupil interviews and observations demonstrate that the boarders develop strong relationships across the boarding community, irrespective of age or role. Boarders' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent, and takes appropriate account of their needs. For example, boarders who are new to the school are introduced to the routines by firstly visiting and staying for a night in the term before they are due to start plus flexi-boarding options. Probationer choristers only board during the week to allow them to adapt to the demands of the role over a period of two years.
- 4.23 Boarders have a choice of adults to provide personal support for them. Duty rotas ensure that boarding staff are sufficient in number and experience and that a matron is involved in the boarding evening routines. The school listener is available to be visited confidentially on a weekly basis; she raises the boarders' awareness of her role through assemblies and is regularly involved in school activities. In the boarding house, appropriate outside contact numbers are displayed should the boarders want further advice.
- 4.24 The medical needs of the boarders are met by a visiting doctor once weekly or a surgery appointment, where necessary; other specialist services may be arranged. Two trained nurses are on duty during weekdays, with the matron overseeing the care of ill boarders and sick bay occupants. The sick bay area is adequate and allows for isolation of a boarder.
- 4.25 Appropriate policies, accurate documentation, pupil care plans and efficient systems further ensure the safe care of boarders. Medication is only administered by the nurse or matron on duty and an efficient stock control system is in place. The nursing team respect the rights and confidentiality of the boarders.
- 4.26 The boarding house is secure and well-maintained. The safety of the boarders is paramount to the staff who ensure compliance with health and safety requirements. Fire logs are accurately maintained and drills held, including during boarding time.
- 4.27 The provision of catering for the boarders is excellent; some pupils described the food as 'amazing'. The food observed during the inspection was nutritious and plentiful, served in a light and spacious dining room. Staff and boarders mix informally at the communal tables. A duty member of staff oversees each mealtime and a member of the catering staff monitors the boarders' choices and appetites.

- Effective liaison between the nursing and catering staff ensures the needs of children with specific dietary requirements are identified and met. Drinking water is freely available and snacks are provided at specific times.
- 4.28 The laundry system involves the boarders collecting their clean linen daily and storing it tidily in their dormitory. Valuable items are safely stored by the boarding staff and a money bank system for individual pupils, to access when necessary.
- 4.29 Staff have a clear awareness of the varying demands on a boarder's time and are able to recognise if these are too onerous. Effective liaison with other members of the school community means that boarders' daily routines can be amended as necessary. A small minority of boarders responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that they would value a better balance of activities and free time. Inspectors found that boarders benefit from a suitable choice of areas to spend their break or after school free time, including an adventure area, an outdoor table-tennis, and large grassy areas. Quiet time may be spent in their dorm space, the library or outside. Leisure outings are arranged as free time allows. The boarders are also involved in whole school events, such as 'King's got Talent!'
- 4.30 The boarders' awareness of current events is raised by the use of television screens displaying current events and school messages in communal places, accessing magazines and newspapers in the library and through tutor time.
- 4.31 The boarding accommodation is spacious, bright and homely. Boarders may personalise their own bed area. A choice of a television common room or games room is provided. Dormitory accommodation is decided on an annual basis, and older boarders are responsible for changing their own bed linen.
- 4.32 Boarders may contact their parents via e-mail on a school computer that is suitably protected or use their personal mobile phone in a communal area, and parents are encouraged to visit mid-week or join the boarders at the weekend for a meal. The duty boarding staff can be contacted on the duty phone.
- 4.33 The arrangements for the boarders' welfare and safeguarding are excellent, supported by appropriate policies, staff awareness and commitment. The 'King's Way' is actively promoted to all boarders to encourage positive behaviour. Effective liaison between boarding, pastoral and teaching staff assists in providing support to pupils where necessary. Pupil interviews did not identify any concerns amongst boarders around bullying issues, and a recent assembly raising their awareness of this issue was held. A safe, effective signing-in process for visitors contributes to the safety of the boarders.
- 4.34 The effectiveness of the leadership and management in the boarding provision is excellent, evident in the smooth running of the house systems, the committed staff and the happy boarders. Clear boarding principles and practice in the boarding provision are underpinned by all staff. Recommendations from the previous Ofsted inspection, concerning welfare plans and bullying records have been fully addressed, and there is a constant focus on improvement. Parents are positive about the school's boarding arrangements.
- 4.35 Staff receive appropriate induction and access to continued professional development, in relation to their previous experience. Duty rotas are arranged so there is always a senior member of staff covering, supported by a matron at all times. Gap year students are also involved, which adds to a varied age range of

staff for boarders to relate to. Boarding council meetings are held at regular intervals and staff attempt to meet the reasonable requests made by the boarders.

## **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 governing body has an excellent oversight of all elements of the school's work through its three committees. The legal and general purposes committee works closely with the school's compliance officer to ensure that the school complies with all relevant regulations, including those for boarding and the EYFS. The academic and pastoral committee maintains an overview of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement throughout the school, and ensures that the full governing body carries out the required annual review of safeguarding and child protection in a thorough manner. The governing body meets all its statutory duties.
- 5.3 Governors fully discharge their responsibilities for the school's educational standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. The estates and finance committee husbands and spends funds judiciously, and plans sensibly for the future. The construction of new music facilities has had a very positive impact on opportunities and outcomes for pupils in this area, for example, while future plans for a sports hall are intended to have a similar impact on provision for physical education.
- 5.4 The governing body is kept well informed by the school and is fully involved in school development planning and review. Governors have a broad range of experience and expertise, and participate in relevant training, including safeguarding and safer recruitment. They provide the school with a suitable balance of support and challenge in its work.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management staff work effectively and in accordance with the aims of the school, to fulfil their delegated responsibilities. The senior management team, in which all parts of the school are represented, provides a strong lead and their vision is effectively implemented in all areas of management.
- 5.7 Staff in all parts of the school receive appropriate and regular training in matters of safeguarding and in welfare, health and safety. The central register of appointments is completed accurately. The requirements for continuing professional development are identified by a well-developed system of appraisal for all teaching staff, which includes lesson observations, discussions and scrutiny of pupils' work. Staff receive a programme of training, retraining and professional development, which is tailored to the school's needs and includes a programme of peer observation. There are appropriate supervision arrangements for EYFS staff. The bursar directs the appraisal scheme for support staff.
- 5.8 Development planning throughout the school is detailed, and plans for key areas including community, academic issues, pastoral work and ICT, along with criteria for

self-evaluation, provide clear priorities for improvement. All staff receive minutes of senior management discussions, ensuring that teachers have a strong awareness of the needs of the school overall and of the individual needs of pupils. This open approach enables staff to participate in decision-making and, as a result of this sense of involvement, staff are supportive of the aims of the school. Questionnaires are sent to parents every two years. The school has successfully addressed all of the recommendations from the previous inspection.

- 5.9 Standards of teaching and learning are carefully monitored by the senior management team and their process of evaluation and monitoring contributes to the continual drive for further improvement. This clear educational direction encourages the pupils towards excellent achievements, both within and beyond the classroom. Approaches to ensure that progress is equally secure across all subjects are not yet standardised. Additional recently issued guidelines, such as those on marking and feedback, are designed to help individual subject department heads gain greater consistency in the way they manage the progress of the pupils in their departments. Systems for identifying pupils with SEND, EAL or who are able, gifted and talented are well established and the needs of these pupils are well served.
- 5.10 Pastoral team leaders support pupils' personal development and welfare. Their plans are well implemented by staff and contribute successfully to the smooth running of daily school life. The administrative and other support staff provide high quality assistance. Communication within the school works extremely effectively. Staff are deployed effectively, with teaching assistants, where available, providing valuable support to meet the needs of pupils. Senior bursarial and compliance staff lead the support staff with great efficiency, ensuring that the welfare, health and safety needs of the pupils are very well met.
- 5.11 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents, and those who met with inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the school's provision for their children. In the pre-inspection questionnaire returns, parents, including those of boarders and pupils, were very positive about how happy and safe their child feels at school. They were pleased with the progress of their child and with the range of activities available, and how well their child is looked after.
- 5.12 Close communication between the school and parents is well fostered. Parents feel warmly welcomed when their child joins the school, and information given to prospective parents is comprehensive, helping to promote children's smooth transition into the school. Effective sharing of information for current parents continues through booklets, newsletters, information meetings, the website, emails and thoughtful telephone calls regarding pupils' welfare. The annual publication 'Fleur de Lys' offers a colourful and interesting insight into the busy academic year across the school.
- 5.13 Parents have very good opportunities to become actively involved in school life, and they are invited to accompany outings and watch performances. Parents feel there is an expectation that they should support their children with homework, and that the staff enable them to do so effectively. There is a strong parent-teacher association which supports the work of the school. A range of social events and activities for families is organised, including some exciting family challenges in design and technology.
- 5.14 Parents receive clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress. Since the previous inspection, reporting on pupils' achievements has been made

clearer and includes the 'next steps' for pupils' learning throughout the school. Staff in the EYFS have promoted partnership with parents through questionnaires, reading record booklets and comments for inclusion on reports. Parents of children in the EYFS are well informed about their children's progress and engaged with their learning on a day-to-day basis. Staff have established highly effective partnerships with parents and other providers to meet children's needs and promote their well-being.

- 5.15 The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims and published procedures, and concerns are handled with care. Most parents are happy with the standard of pupils' behaviour and the way in which the school deals with any misbehaviour. Parents feel that their children are happy, well behaved and well supervised. They acknowledge that the school deals appropriately with any issues and liaises well with parents. They are supportive of the school's staff, finding them approachable and welcoming.
- 5.16 A small minority of parents felt that the school did not handle instances of bullying well. Inspectors examined records, policies and procedures for this, and found that the school had addressed past problems appropriately, and has systems in place to handle any further incidents promptly and effectively. The school has a suitable complaints policy, which it follows closely in practice. This means that when concerns are raised, the school takes these seriously and responds with due care.

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