



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
QUEEN ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Queen Elizabeth's Hospital

The junior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Queen Elizabeth's Hospital
DfE Number	801/6014
Registered Charity Number	1104871
Address	Queen Elizabeth's Hospital Berkeley Place Clifton Bristol BS8 1JX
Telephone Number	0117 9303040
Fax Number	0117 9210417
Email Address	headmaster@qehbristol.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Stephen Holliday
Chairman of Governors	Mr Nicholas Tyrrell
Age Range	11 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	577
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Inspection Dates	02 Dec 2014 to 05 Dec 2014

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 November 2008.

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. 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.

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 with the chairman of governors and other governors' representatives, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr George Fisher	Reporting Inspector
Mr Magnus Bashaarat	Team Inspector (Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Mr Michael Evans	Team Inspector (Senior Master, HMC school)
Mr David Forster	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Geoff Hill	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Miss Theresa Homewood	Team Inspector (Senior Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Adam Pettit	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	9
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	11
(a) The quality of governance	11
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	11

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Queen Elizabeth's Hospital (QEH) was founded in 1586 by John Carr, a Bristol merchant, and the school's charter was granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1590 when QEH opened and was specifically charged with 'the education of poor children and orphans'. The Queen became Patron of the school in 1984. It is a day school for boys between the ages of 11 and 18, boarding having ceased in 2008. The school is located on Brandon Hill in the Clifton area of Bristol. The buildings, several aspects of which are listed, date from 1847. Adjoining the main school is the junior school for boys between the ages of seven and eleven.
- 1.2 The school's principal aim is to help each pupil to develop his academic potential by providing a wide range of activities. Furthermore, QEH aims to be a friendly and supportive community with Christian values where pupils learn to respect one another and themselves. Governance is provided through a main board and various sub-committees, including finance and general purposes, development and strategy, and health and safety.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, a new assessment system has been introduced for Years 7 to 11 and the timings of the school day have been changed to facilitate study of a greater number of subjects at GCSE. Football is now the major sport in the second term.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, the school had 577 boys, including 148 in the sixth form. Of the 87 boys in Year 7, around one half come from the junior school. Small numbers also join the school at Years 9 and 12. The school's ability profile is above the national average. Pupils come predominantly from professional backgrounds. About one pupil in ten is of ethnic minority origin, mainly from Asian, Afro-Caribbean or Chinese backgrounds.
- 1.5 There are 38 pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is provided in part through specialist learning support, mainly to help with dyslexia. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. There are 32 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). All are fluent in English so that none requires additional language support.
- 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 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. Academic achievement is excellent; pupils perform strongly in all subjects, and make good progress to GCSE and rapid progress to A level. Pupils with SEND and EAL, and the more able, also make good progress, so that all pupils maximise their potential. Pupils have highly mature attitudes to study; they settle to work quickly and eagerly, and are well organised. Achievement outside the classroom is also excellent, notably in sport, music, drama and outdoor pursuits. Curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent; all pupils receive challenging and enriching experiences. The curriculum is modified suitably for those with SEND, and enhanced for the more able. Teaching is excellent and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' overall attainment. In the most successful teaching, there is a fast pace, pupils are fully engaged, and a variety of activities are incorporated into lessons. When teaching is less successful, pupils receive insufficient challenge and make less progress. Teaching provides helpful advice on what pupils need to do to improve their written work, and makes appropriate use of interactive whiteboards, meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils develop a strong spiritual awareness and a keen sense of right and wrong. They are friendly, polite and enthusiastic about their experiences at school. Relationships between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils, are characterised by humour, warmth and mutual respect. Pupils respect other faiths and cultures. Responses by pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely positive, with the overwhelming majority saying that they are making good progress, that they feel well supported and that they enjoy being at the school. The pastoral care provided is excellent and good behaviour and healthy living are actively fostered. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good overall. Safeguarding arrangements are sound, but the safeguarding policy required updating to ensure compliance with current guidance, and governors' understanding of their role was incomplete. Measures to promote health and safety are good but some systems are inadequately monitored.
- 2.3 Governance is good and is characterised by the commitment of governors to the school and its distinctive ethos. Governance provides a thorough oversight of the educational provision. Careful financial management enables the school to plan confidently for the future. The sub-committees are highly effective and ensure a sensible balance of support and challenge for the school's management team. Procedures for the recruitment of staff are meticulous. Leadership and management are excellent; senior leadership is clear about the way in which it wants the school to develop, and this vision is shared with, and embraced by, all staff. Excellent academic and pastoral management ensures that pupils feel supported both educationally and personally. Since the previous inspection the quality of the reports to parents has improved, so meeting the recommendation. Links with parents remain excellent.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Keep the safeguarding policy up-to-date and ensure that all governors understand their roles with regard to it.
2. Co-ordinate the monitoring of teaching and learning, and the provision of staff training to ensure that less effective teaching is identified and improved.
3. Monitor all aspects of the school's operation to ensure that routine matters of health and safety are addressed promptly.

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' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills, in line with the school's aims. Pupils are articulate, listen well, both in English and in other languages, and read fluently. High standards of literacy are evident and pupils demonstrate logical thinking across a wide range of subjects. They show high standards of creativity, especially within art, music, drama, creative writing in English, and through film-making. Application of mathematical skills is excellent, and evident across the curriculum, for example within geography and physics. Technological skills are developed to a good level, principally through information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology through to GCSE level. Excellent levels of skill in physical activities are demonstrated in physical education (PE) and throughout the games programme.
- 3.3 Pupils achieve at high levels outside the classroom. They enjoy notable successes in academic competitions, gain gold awards in national competitions in mathematics, and have won the regional final of a geographical quiz. They achieve well in instrumental examinations, and pupils have gained places at specialist music schools. A team qualified for a national chess final. Pupils are successful in debating and public-speaking competitions. Pupils enjoy notable success in team sports. The senior rugby team has qualified for the semi-final of a national competition; all football teams have won their leagues, and, in tennis, a team reached the UK finals for their age group. The school has had notable success in outdoor pursuits, including within the Ten Tors challenge, and also in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), where 15 pupils gained the gold award in 2014.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses national data from the years 2011 to 2013, the most recent three years for which comparable statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been well above the national average for boys in maintained schools, and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools. Results at IGCSE are higher than worldwide norms. Results at A Level have been well above the national average for boys in maintained schools, and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools. In 2014, the performances at GCSE and at A level were at similar levels. Virtually all pupils are successful in gaining places at their chosen universities, many of them at highly selective ones.
- 3.5 The level of attainment at GCSE, together with other inspection evidence, including lesson observations and work scrutiny, indicates that pupils make progress that is consistently good, in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Standardised data, supported by the pupils' responses in interviews, indicates that progress to A level is rapid. Pupils with SEND, and those with EAL, make progress which enables them to achieve at the level of their peers. The achievement and progress of the more able are good in relation to their ability. This is evident through their examination results, their responses in interviews, and through their written work, including within the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).
- 3.6 Pupils show an excellent attitude to their work, and apply themselves with great commitment and perseverance. They settle to tasks quickly, and work effectively, both individually and in groups. Pupils are enthusiastic, attentive and very inquisitive, often asking searching questions and making interesting links; for

example sixth-form pupils compared the British and American voting systems with much insight. The pupils' work is generally well organized and presented. Pupils are able to work independently and take initiative when given the opportunity.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The curriculum meets fully the school's stated aims of engendering an appetite for learning, and providing an education which is characterised by opportunity and breadth. The curriculum is strongly academic, and meets the intellectual needs of able pupils, providing effective coverage of all areas of learning. The curriculum enables pupils to develop high levels of literacy, numeracy and reasoning skills, and promotes the development of verbal communication skills with great success.
- 3.9 Recent changes to the structure of the school day enable an increased range of subject choices at all ages. They allow pupils to study additional numbers of subjects to GCSE level. The curriculum is enriched by a stimulating and extensive range of school visits, both within the UK and abroad, such as geography field trips to Morocco and Iceland, and a history trip to the battlefields of France and Belgium.
- 3.10 The curriculum is modified suitably to cater for individual needs; for example, it makes allowance for some pupils with SEND to study one modern foreign language (MFL) rather than two in Years 7 to 9, thus providing time for specialist, additional support. Pupils with EAL are encouraged to study their mother tongue outside the curriculum. Provision for more able pupils is excellent. The school has a clearly identified and well-run programme of enrichment. All pupils follow a 'future problem solving' course in Year 7 and, in Years 8 to 10, more able pupils have an academic mentoring programme, including opportunities for extended study in their chosen subjects. This enables pupils to enhance their critical and creative thinking. Within the sixth form, enrichment is available for pupils through studying the EPQ, where the independent research is excellent preparation for university study. However, the limitations of the current facilities prevent design and technology from being offered at A level.
- 3.11 An excellent programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) within Years 7 to 11 supports the school's aim of providing a supportive pastoral framework for its pupils. It provides opportunities for pupils to develop personal skills, such as time management, to understand a range of life-choice issues, such as alcohol and drug misuse, and to discuss topics which include personal finance, privilege and wealth. The course is regularly revised and updated to reflect current news items and legislation. A range of academic clubs, which are run during lunch-times, such as Italian and philosophy, successfully promote and encourage scholarship and the further pursuit of knowledge.
- 3.12 The excellent extra-curricular programme remains a particular strength of the school. This extensive programme, which includes sport, music, drama and outdoor pursuits, adds an extra dimension to the learning experience of the pupils. The rugby tradition is particularly rich and successful. Football has recently become the major sport in the second term, and this has brought more opportunity and variety to the extra-curricular programme. There is an extensive range of non-sporting activities, designed to help the pupils achieve success in many different areas. Debating and public-speaking are particular strengths of the school, and debating workshops, in partnership with local girls' schools, enable pupils to enhance further

their knowledge and skills. Further links with the community are developed through DoFE, and, further afield, through well-established connections with schools in Cordoba and Tuscany.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 Teaching fully supports the aims of the school, with the most successful making a significant contribution to the pupils' progress and achievement. Teaching benefits from a strong rapport between teachers and pupils. This creates a sensitive and supportive relationship and an atmosphere of trust in which pupils enjoy their learning and are happy to ask questions and suggest ideas.
- 3.15 The most successful teaching is well structured, varied and uses a stimulating and interesting range of well-chosen tasks and activities. It is characterised by excellent subject knowledge and awareness of the strengths, weaknesses and needs of individual pupils. Such teaching is characterised by a brisk, challenging pace which involves skilful questioning to deepen the pupils' understanding. The use of high order, open-ended questions often prompts thoughtful and sophisticated responses. However, in a very small amount of teaching there is a lack of pace and variety and pupils are not enabled to fulfil their potential or to make sufficient progress. Since the previous inspection, lesson lengths have been reduced and, occasionally, some teaching has not adjusted fully to the new timings.
- 3.16 Pupils with SEND are clearly identified, and, in the most successful teaching, their needs are met by the use of carefully designed resources, for example the provision of a writing frame to help with note making. The more able are challenged through extension tasks and carefully targeted questions, and outstanding examples of such provision were seen in sixth-form teaching. Teaching generally has high expectations of pupils of all ages and abilities; dependency on teachers is not encouraged, and pupils often take responsibility for their own learning. The close monitoring of pupils, coupled with firm classroom management and frequent praise and encouragement, ensure good behaviour and a purposeful atmosphere, wherein pupils contribute happily to the success of the lesson. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils commented favourably on the quality of the teaching which they receive and the progress which they make with their work.
- 3.17 Teaching makes use of a wide range of methods, including highly effective collaborative work, use of role play and well-organised practical work. Some teaching benefits from effective and innovative use of information and communication technology, including the use of interactive whiteboards, notably within modern foreign languages. Overall, progress has been made in this area and the recommendation of the previous inspection is met.
- 3.18 Resources to support teaching are of a good standard. The attractive, amply-stocked and well-run library is well used by some departments. Classrooms are inconsistent in the quality of decor and resources. The best are in good order, having excellent displays of work which act as a strong stimulus for learning. Others are less conducive to effective learning. Some departments, including psychology, produce high-quality hand-outs which lead to very effective learning.
- 3.19 Teachers frequently give additional help to pupils within lunch-time subject clinics. This both supports the achievement of those who are finding the work difficult, and also offers extra challenge to the more able. Teachers have an excellent awareness

of examination requirements which allows an effective focus on examination techniques, something which pupils both enjoy and appreciate. The provision set out for pupils with statements of educational need is met in full.

- 3.20 Since the previous inspection, the school has taken steps to improve the quality of teachers' marking and the feedback to pupils and this recommendation has been fully met. The best marking is highly encouraging and supportive, and identifies clear targets for improvement through evaluative comments and detailed annotation. Pupils value the prompt and detailed feedback which they receive.

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 pupils' spiritual development is excellent. It is encouraged through the Christian foundation of the school, and its aim that the school should engender an appreciation of Christian values, whilst welcoming and respecting members of other faiths and those of none. Pupils are encouraged to develop their own personality and become self-confident young people with a clear sense of what they believe in. Their appreciation of other faiths and beliefs is well supported in assemblies and within the curriculum. Through music and drama performances and art displays, pupils are able to express a mature understanding of a world beyond the physical and to become increasingly self-aware.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, fostered by regular discussions in lessons, tutor periods and during PSHE sessions. They demonstrate a real concern for those less fortunate than themselves through a strong commitment to the school's programme of charitable and voluntary work, in service to the community. Pupils raise funds for local, national and international charities. Various methods are used to raise money including regular 'mufti' days and cake sales. In the sixth form those pupils who do not wish to participate in games volunteer to work in the community by helping at primary and special schools, care homes and the disabled riding centre; some choose to continue this work at the weekend.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils relate extremely well to each other, across all ages, cultures and religions. They are also very respectful towards visitors to the school and members of staff. The school strongly encourages interaction between all groups and pupils pursue this naturally and openly. They display high levels of courtesy, maturity and consideration for each other, and this is strikingly evident in the way in which they manage themselves around a restricted site. Pupils are proud of their school and of each other's achievements, as well as their own. Pupils eagerly take on positions of responsibility. In the sixth form, Year 13 pupils are trained to be peer supporters for Year 7 pupils and peer mentors for Years 8 and 9; their work in these roles is greatly valued by the younger pupils. Pupils are made aware of social, political and economic matters through the comprehensive PSHE programme and through structured discussions within form tutor periods.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. It is promoted in many curricular areas, including art, music and drama. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss wide-ranging cultural issues, for example in religion and philosophy, psychology and ethics. Pupils thus gain an appreciation of, and respect for, the Western cultural tradition as well as a tolerance and understanding of other cultures. Pupils also have the opportunity to extend further their cultural awareness by participating in visits to various countries.
- 4.6 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent by the time they leave and is a great strength of the school. Pupils are well-rounded individuals who are self-assured, articulate and confident in social situations.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The school fully meets its aim to be a friendly, supportive community with a high standard of care. The pastoral committee, including counselling and nursing staff, creates a coherent system of support and guidance; it regularly reviews all aspects of the pastoral provision. A sense of community enables all pupils to feel included and looked after, including those with SEND.
- 4.9 Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. Peer and support mentor programmes combine with the house and prefect systems to provide excellent opportunities for links between year groups. In interviews, and within the pre-inspection questionnaire, pupils consistently stated that theirs is a very happy school and they praised the quality of the support which they receive.
- 4.10 Healthy eating is taught within PSHE. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils commented adversely about the quality of food. This was not supported in pupil interviews, although some commented that they would like larger portions. Inspection evidence showed that school lunches are nutritious, with a range of choices. Breakfast is also available. Regular exercise is encouraged, and pupils seize the many informal opportunities for recreation in the yard.
- 4.11 Good behaviour is promoted effectively; an ethos of high expectations ensures that the overall standard of behaviour is excellent. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils reported that rewards and sanctions are not applied fairly. Inspection evidence, including a study of school documentation and interviews with pupils, shows that rewards and sanctions are awarded consistently, and in line with school policy. The school has suitable measures to guard against bullying. Pupils report that bullying is rare but that it is quickly dealt with when it arises.
- 4.12 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that they feel their views are not listened to. Inspection evidence showed that the school is effective in seeking the views of pupils. For example, the school has recently established year group councils and has responded to requests from pupils to enable an additional option subject to be studied at GCSE level, and for PE lessons to be taught as double periods.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.15 The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all staff have a clear knowledge of their responsibilities for safeguarding. This is underpinned by good record keeping, regular training updates and the maintenance of strong links with local agencies. New staff receive a high quality of safeguarding induction training. The safeguarding policy did not meet current guidance at the start of the inspection; this was subsequently rectified. All staff have read the most recent statutory guidance and it is implemented appropriately. Recruitment arrangements for new staff are very thorough and the necessary pre-appointment checks are recorded meticulously.
- 4.16 Within health and safety, risk assessments for visits and activities are very thorough. A health and safety advisor supports the work of staff, ensuring that documentation

is reviewed regularly. However, some routine matters relating to health and safety have been overlooked at times in various aspects of the school's operation. There is a suitable health and safety policy, and a school committee, representative of the key areas within the school and chaired by a governor, meets termly. The fire policy clearly defines emergency procedures; fire drills are regularly carried out, logged appropriately and any issues arising are promptly addressed. Staff have regular training in fire awareness and there is a responsible person with the necessary training and experience to oversee the procedures. Fire and electrical equipment is systematically tested and any deficiencies are quickly remedied.

- 4.17 The medical centre provides excellent care for sick or injured pupils and for those with specific conditions. Medical records are comprehensive and accidents are appropriately logged, with any trends being reported regularly to the health and safety committee. Medicines are stored correctly and there are effective channels of communication between the medical centre and school staff.
- 4.18 Admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance is highly supportive of the aims and the distinctive ethos of the school. It benefits from, and draws strongly upon, a range of relevant professional backgrounds, including within education, finance and surveying, to make well-informed contributions to the development of the school. It discharges fully its responsibility for academic standards, financial planning and investment in staff and resources. Several governors have a previous connection with the school and this serves to strengthen further the links between the governing body, the school and the parent body.
- 5.3 Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors review the safeguarding policy and procedures annually, but this review has not been sufficiently rigorous in ensuring that the policy is amended when statutory guidance changes. By the end of the inspection, suitable steps had been taken to ensure that the policy meets requirements, and that governors' specific responsibilities within the policy are fully understood. All governors have safeguarding training and there is a very thorough induction programme for new governors. The responsibilities of governance within welfare, health and safety are met, largely through the work of the health and safety committee.
- 5.4 Educational matters are considered principally through the finance and general purposes committee; a number of other sub-committees enable a strong focus on the various areas of governance. Excellent communication and thorough documentation enable all governors to be fully informed, including through regular presentations by school staff. Furthermore, governors monitor the work of the school through scrutiny and review of policy which is generally effective, and by following up on reports from the school. The professional approach of governors is a significant contributor to the ultimate success of the school. Governors have a high profile within the school, more so than at the time of the previous inspection. They attend school functions regularly, are known by staff, and use their expertise to both support and challenge the work of the school.

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 Leadership and management are highly effective and successful in fulfilling the aims of the school. Senior leadership, which provides strong and well-articulated educational direction for middle managers, is resolute in identifying areas for development and strengthening them with a deft sensitivity which inspires trust. Management and leadership teams at all levels are committed to implementing a clear vision for the school and work unflinchingly to achieve this, for example in meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection.
- 5.7 Senior leaders know the school exceedingly well. Through regular lesson observations, thorough and critical examination analysis and an openness to pupils'

and parents' views, they evaluate performance and set targets for improvement. The detailed school development plan, which informs departmental planning, clearly identifies targets, success criteria and responsibilities. It is evaluated thoroughly by governors and senior leadership.

- 5.8 Academic middle management appreciates the detailed analysis of performance and guidance which it receives from senior leadership. In the most successful areas of the school, academic middle management is dynamic and responsive; it is never less than effective. Overall, heads of department play a significant role in maintaining high standards, and they take seriously their role in evaluating and developing the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils become sophisticated, articulate and accomplished learners who achieve well relative to their ability.
- 5.9 The school has a well-established and clearly documented performance review scheme for teaching staff. The opportunity to meet with senior staff as part of this process is appreciated by teachers as this allows them to discuss their professional development and to receive acknowledgement for their contribution. However, staff training, which is informed by the outcomes of the performance review, has not been effective in ensuring that all teaching keeps pace with the culture of excellence observed in much teaching.
- 5.10 The school's management of appointment checks for staff is rigorous and careful, with regular monitoring of the record-keeping systems. Induction procedures for newly appointed staff are well documented and adhered to thoroughly, thereby ensuring swift and effective integration. The school is successful in recruiting a high quality of staff at all levels. All staff, including new appointments, are trained in safeguarding matters and there are regular updates which highlight aspects of particular relevance within a role.
- 5.11 Pastoral leadership and management are excellent and ensure the achievement of the school's aims. The pastoral committee exercises close oversight of the effectiveness of the school's pastoral care and provision. School leaders and managers are very attentive to their roles in promoting pupils' safeguarding and welfare. However, management is not sufficiently rigorous in the routine monitoring of some day-to-day issues within health and safety and in keeping the safeguarding policy up-to-date. Overall, pupils learn in a safe, supportive and welcoming environment in which they flourish as individuals, conscious of their advantages and intensely proud of their school.
- 5.12 Support staff all play their part in ensuring that the school is a happy and secure environment. They work well within their teams to contribute to the school's reputation and success. Financial resources are very well managed so that there is adequate resourcing of all areas within the school. Accommodation is imaginatively husbanded, including the maintenance of its distinctive, historical features, so enabling the school to meet the needs of all of its pupils. The school realistically identifies the constraints, particularly within the curriculum, that its current buildings impose. Its planning to address these is well focused and strategic, with the result that planning permission has been secured for a new building to allow the expansion of its academic facilities.
- 5.13 Links with parents are excellent. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed overwhelming approval for all aspects of the work of the school. In particular, parents feel very strongly that their children are making

good progress, are provided with an appropriate range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities and that they are well supported. Parents are actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They provide work experience placements, help with pupils' university preparations through practice interviews, and give careers talks.

- 5.14 Parents are given many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They are welcomed to many events such as the carol service, concerts and drama productions. There is also a strong and active parents' association, the 'Friends', which organises social events throughout the year, including a bonfire-night activity and summer ball, as well as a sale of second-hand school uniforms.
- 5.15 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all of the required information about the school. The school website provides comprehensive information, including details of school policies and a clear overview of all aspects of school life and day-to-day routines. The prospectus and accompanying documentation also provide very helpful information. For current parents, there is a weekly, electronic newsletter, with quick links which enable the reader to navigate easily around the document. The school also produces a newsletter every term and an annual school magazine. Parents are alerted to last-minute issues through the parent portal.
- 5.16 Parents are well informed about the progress of their children through the annual production of two written reports and three assessment grade sheets. Additionally, there is a parents' evening once a year. Since the previous inspection, reports have been improved to provide more information and advice on what each pupil needs to do to make progress, so meeting the recommendation. Parents feel free to contact teachers at any time, with the use of email being actively encouraged. Parents praise the quality of the communication with the school.
- 5.17 The school is meticulous in seeking to address any concerns of parents, and it operates a very effective 'open door' approach so that matters can be resolved at an early stage. Any complaints are handled in line with appropriate published procedures, and suitable records are kept.

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