



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
EDGBASTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Edgbaston High School for Girls

Full Name of School	Edgbaston High School for Girls		
DfE Number	330/6003		
Registered Charity Number	504011		
Address	Edgbaston High School for Girls Westbourne Road Edgbaston Birmingham West Midlands B15 3TS England		
Telephone Number	0121 4545831		
Fax Number	0121 4542363		
Email Address	enquiries@edgbastonhigh.co.uk		
Headmistress	Dr Ruth Weeks		
Chair of Governors	Mr Jeremy Payne		
Age Range	2½ to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	899		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 315
	3-5 (EYFS):	93	11-18: 491
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 899		
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Sally Hartley		
EYFS Gender	Girls		
Inspection Dates	10 Nov 2015 to 13 Nov 2015		

PREFACE

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

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI integrated inspection was in October 2009.

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

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

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **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 the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Richard Mannix	Reporting Inspector
Mr Jonathan Brough	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Daphne Cawthorne	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Ms Rowan Edbrooke	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mrs Catherine Hill	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, HMC school)
Mrs Barbara Knight	Team Inspector (Head of Middle School, IAPS school)
Mrs Caroline Pellereau	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, GSA school)
Mr John Tolputt	Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Willis	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, GSA school)
Mr Richard Balding	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	12

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Edgbaston High School for Girls is Birmingham's oldest independent school for girls. It was founded in 1876 with Quaker and Unitarian roots and was originally located on the Hagley Road. In 1964 it moved to its current site on Westbourne Road, a suburb of Edgbaston. It is a non-denominational day school admitting pupils of all faiths or none. The school consists of a prep school, for pupils aged two to eleven years, which includes a pre-prep department (Westbourne) providing an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for children aged two and a half to five years, and senior school for pupils aged eleven to eighteen years.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide its pupils with a modern education, based on traditional values within a happy, caring community in which every pupil is valued as an individual. The school seeks to stimulate and challenge pupils, so they not only meet but exceed expectations, whilst developing self-discipline, self-confidence, independent thinking and a passion for learning. The school is constituted as a charitable trust, with a governing council which has oversight of all sections of the school.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has undertaken a number of changes including: a new sixth-form common room; an enhanced library and a new school façade and Reception area; and a major project, due for completion in March 2016, to refurbish and extend the prep school, whilst providing the prep school with a new art room and extended library facilities.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 899 pupils on the roll, with 491 attending the senior school including 111 in the sixth form. Four hundred and eight pupils attend the prep school, including ninety-three children in the EYFS. The majority of pupils come from Edgbaston and the surrounding suburbs and come from diverse backgrounds, but most are from business or professional families.
- 1.5 The average ability of pupils is above the national average, with pupils in the sixth form being slightly above the national average. The school has no pupil with an educational health and care (EHC) plan or a statement of special educational needs, but has identified 49 pupils as having some form of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive special educational provision. Three pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), none of whom receives specialist 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 quality of pupils' achievement and learning is excellent. In the EYFS, children of all abilities and needs are active learners and make excellent progress in relation to their starting points. In the prep and senior departments pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding, supported by a broad and balanced curriculum, leading to pupils' excellent progress. Pupils with SEND and EAL have appropriate access to the curriculum and achieve and progress well in relation to their peers. In all year groups, the best teaching strongly encourages challenging, independent and open-ended learning and this is particularly well-developed in the senior school. Effective use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) and it is an integral part of the learning process, particularly in the senior school. Achievement in a wide variety of sporting, performance and creative extra-curricular activities is excellent, and often outstanding.
- 2.2 Pupils in all year groups have an excellent standard of personal development and this is strongly supported by excellent pastoral care. Pupils' personal qualities are developed fully in accordance with the aims of the school, to allow each pupil to achieve their true potential whilst encouraging a sense of personal responsibility. Pupils show a well-developed sense of right and wrong and a deep social awareness. There is a strong sense of a harmonious and culturally embracing community across all sections of the school. Pupils create and appreciate artistic works with many examples of outstanding quality and reflective thought in the work seen. Relationships amongst pupils and between teacher and pupil are a real strength of the school, ensuring an excellent level of communication which supports and encourages every pupil. The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is excellent and regulatory requirements, including those related to safeguarding and child protection, are rigorously checked to ensure a safe and protective environment.
- 2.3 The governing council know the school well across all year groups, and effectively contribute to the support and monitoring of its work. The council places a strong emphasis on its safeguarding responsibilities and all staff receive appropriate and regular training in matters of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. A limited number of policies and some documentation required amending prior to the start of the inspection, all were fully compliant at the start of the inspection visit. Excellent and highly effective leadership and management, supported by frequent reflective and informed analysis, ensure that policies have been implemented and the safeguarding of pupils is secure. Committed and compassionate leadership at all levels successfully conveys a clear educational vision and direction, enabling the school to achieve its ambitious aims fully. The school has successfully responded to recommendations made in the previous inspection. Communication with parents and arrangements for reporting pupils' progress are strong. An overwhelming majority of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated positive views of the school, including how well it was managed and led.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. Ensure greater and more informed oversight of policies and the single register of appointments by the governing council.

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 In the EYFS, substantial progress is made in children's learning in relation to their starting points, including in reading and writing, which was often of a standard well above their chronological ages. By the end of Nursery, confident and articulate children who have learned to relate to each other and adults are ready for the transition to the next stage of their learning. They can recognise colours and the letters of their name. Reception children mostly exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In creative writing, most can write simple sentences in response to a story or picture. Children understand and use correct comparative terms when measuring length, capacity and weight and are adept at forming number bonds to twenty. Their considerable creative, imaginative and fine motor skills are seen as they work independently, completing practical tasks. The children are active learners, showing excellent levels of critical thinking and independent learning and greatly enjoy the process of learning through active exploration and investigation. This enables the children to achieve at a high level in relation to their capabilities, including those with SEND. At the time of the inspection there were no children with EAL in the setting.
- 3.3 Throughout the school, pupils are well educated in successful fulfilment of the school's aim to enable pupils to reach their personal best. Pupils demonstrate high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills across their subjects and in activities. They are articulate and resilient learners who can write fluently, accurately and at length and they are attentive listeners. They are highly numerate, and use their mathematical skills effectively across the curriculum. Pupils are confident users of ICT throughout the school. The recent introduction of tablet computers in the senior school has further strengthened pupils' use of ICT in their learning. Since the previous inspection, the school has taken steps to encourage the pupils' independent learning and the success of this in the senior school is apparent in pupils' work.
- 3.4 Throughout the school exceptional artwork, music, drama and creative writing all demonstrate pupils' high standards of creativity. Their creative work is highly imaginative, with many examples of fine artwork displayed around the school. Pupils' achievement in sporting extra-curricular activities is excellent and sometimes outstanding, with numerous team successes and individual national representation in netball, tennis, hockey, badminton, fencing and gymnastics.
- 3.5 In the prep school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available from standardised tests, lesson observations, scrutiny of samples of work and interviews with pupils it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses national data for the years 2011 to 14, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in both A-level and GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. GCSE results in 2013 were well above the national average for girls in maintained schools. Results in IGCSE mathematics have been above worldwide and UK

averages. SEND and EAL pupils throughout the school achieve well in relation to their abilities.

- 3.7 Pupils in the prep school make excellent progress as they move up the school. The level of attainment at GCSE and A-Level and the standardised measures of progress that are available, and inspection evidence, indicate that pupils in the senior school make progress that is excellent in relation to pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.8 Pupils with SEND and EAL are well supported and make good progress in line with their peers. Able, gifted and talented pupils are highly successful in a wide range of activities, including Mathematics Olympiad and UK Maths Challenge and in national and county representation in a wide variety of sports. The high quality and depth of pupils' written work, and their excellent contribution to class discussions, was frequently in evidence across all year groups. This was demonstrated in a wide variety of extension tasks, including the extended project qualification (EPQ). Pupils are successful at gaining places to universities with highly competitive entry requirements, with a large majority obtaining places at the universities of their first choice.
- 3.9 The pupils' achievement in activities is excellent and in many cases outstanding. The recent production of *Les Misérables* included singing of a high quality. Participation by pupils of all abilities in sporting, cultural, academic, creative and other activities is widespread and enthusiastic, and pupils speak warmly of the opportunities open to them to develop their talents and interests. Pupils participate keenly in physical activities, many pupils playing at a high level in a variety of sports. Individuals also compete at county, national and international level. Music is a very important part of school life, with musicians achieving extremely high standards in an extensive range of ensembles, individual examinations and large-scale performance opportunities.
- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes towards their work are excellent throughout the school. In lessons they settle to work quickly, behave well, and co-operate harmoniously with each other. Pupils have a strong desire to succeed to the best of their abilities. Pupils have well-developed and effective skills for learning and participate actively, ask questions and contribute freely to discussions, commenting constructively and kindly on each other's work.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The high standard of provision is fully in line with the aims of the school. Both the prep and senior departments provide a broad and balanced core curriculum. Opportunities for cross-curricular work are identified in departmental handbooks and the importance of traditional British values is embedded across the year groups.
- 3.13 In the EYFS, the well-planned educational programmes enable all children to reach and sometimes exceed, the expected levels of development. Children effectively start with a focus on the three prime areas of communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development. Literacy, numeracy, understanding the world and expressive art and design are then added, together with ballet, physical education (PE), games and swimming. The curriculum is further enhanced by trips and visitors to the setting. Careful observations, assessment and efficient electronic tracking indicate if extra help is required, to ensure that the needs of all children are well met.

- 3.14 The prep and senior schools have a broad and effective curriculum which provides good coverage of the requisite area of learning, and matches pupils' needs and abilities. In the prep school, the core curriculum is well-supported by; specialist teaching in science, music, PE and French; a personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship programme, and excellent ICT and science facilities. In the senior school a wide range of choice is available for GCSE and A-level, resulting in a personalised curriculum. Both combined and separate sciences are available at GCSE, along with a range of languages and a spread of both humanities and creative subjects. Pupils up to the sixth form, greatly benefit from an excellent PSHE study programme, which covers British values and includes positive and impartial careers support. A robust procedure ensures curriculum provision is continuously reviewed. Since the previous inspection, greater flexibility of choice in the language provision for the younger years in the senior school is now available, and IGCSE has been introduced for mathematics and English.
- 3.15 ICT suites and the library create opportunities for pupils to undertake independent study to enhance their experience of learning. During interviews, pupils were overwhelmingly positive about the recently introduced tablet computer scheme for Year 9 and above.
- 3.16 Pupils with SEND are effectively identified and receive helpful additional support teaching, appropriate to their individual needs, ensuring that they are able to benefit from the curriculum fully. SEND records are well kept and shared effectively with staff as required. Good use is made of individual education plans in the teaching, and subject teachers readily give additional one-to-one support when required. Throughout the school the more able, gifted and talented pupils benefit from extension exercises in the teaching. This provision was less consistently available in some of the teaching in the prep school.
- 3.17 All pupils benefit from a highly successful and broad extra-curricular programme which complements and enriches the core curriculum fully. Many of these are successfully pupil-led. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of both pupils and parents felt the school offered a good range of activities. Clubs such as Chinese calligraphy, politics and cheerleading exist alongside music and sport. Prep pupils benefit from a beginner's Mandarin class and many continue this as a club in the senior school with the aim of taking GCSE in Year 10. There are activities for pupils of all abilities and participation rates are high. Pupils in the senior school participate enthusiastically and successfully in the Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) award scheme. The sixth-form enrichment programme gives pupils a valuable opportunity to develop interests that complement and extend the curricular experience they receive.
- 3.18 Pupils benefit greatly from the extensive links the school fosters with the local community as well as with other communities and cultures, thus enriching the curriculum. The school allotment venture, for example, has proved hugely rewarding for the pupils and provides an excellent link with the local community. Charity ventures by both groups and individuals are greatly encouraged and enthusiastically undertaken by pupils.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.19 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.20 In the EYFS, members of staff know each child well and share their high expectations with the children, who respond enthusiastically. Information from observations and tracking is used constructively to check each child's progress and to help plan the next steps to promote learning. In all sections of the setting, high-quality teaching by knowledgeable staff ensure the children develop excellent learning, physical and personal skills.
- 3.21 The close relationship between teachers and pupils is an outstanding strength across the school. A large majority of the teaching observed during the inspection was excellent and almost all of the remaining teaching was good. Teaching very successfully supports the school's aims to enhance academic growth, to develop a passion for learning and to encourage self-discipline, confidence and independent thinking. Teachers know their pupils and their capabilities exceptionally well. They make effective use of this knowledge in planning carefully tailored teaching which takes pupils' needs into account, enabling pupils to participate confidently and make excellent progress.
- 3.22 Assessment through marking is thorough and constructive. Pupils are encouraged to respond to feedback and, in many subjects, to give considered analysis of their work and suggest their own next steps. The systems for managing assessment data have been further strengthened since the previous inspection, allowing each pupil's progress to be carefully monitored and effective support to be provided when required.
- 3.23 The teaching of thinking skills and reflection time, newly introduced in the prep school, successfully encourage pupils to think independently and not always to expect one right answer and teachers and teaching assistants work together highly effectively to provide pupils with unobtrusive assistance. Across the school, teaching is stimulating and is often characterised by an infectious enthusiasm to share knowledge. Teachers have high expectations and harness pupils' strong desire to succeed extremely effectively. They make good use of a rich variety of tasks to capture pupils' imaginations. Teachers draw on their subject expertise to explain concepts clearly and to structure tasks in a way that facilitates learning. Lessons are well paced and the teaching strikes a careful balance between covering ground briskly, giving pupils time to build up understanding and to reflect when needed.
- 3.24 Teaching makes excellent use of the high-quality resources available and ICT is effectively used to enhance the teaching whenever appropriate. A carefully considered strategy to introduce tablet computers in the senior school is currently being effectively implemented and teachers are exploiting pupils' ready access to such tools to excellent effect. Classrooms are welcoming and frequently feature high-quality, thoughtful wall displays which encourage reflection on ideas encountered during the teaching.
- 3.25 The teaching provides all pupils with frequent opportunities to explore topics independently, for example in open-ended homework tasks. This approach was particularly strong in the senior school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils indicated they felt homework did not help them to learn. Inspection evidence from the teaching, and work seen, did not support this view. Since the

previous inspection, tasks to stretch and challenge more able pupils have become a routine feature of work set in the senior school, although this remains under development in the prep school. Across the school, pupils with SEND were well supported in the lessons observed and the teaching provides plentiful individual assistance and pupil mentors are used effectively.

- 3.26 In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of pupils felt that they are making good progress with their work, their teachers help them to learn and they are encouraged to work independently. The findings of the inspection team strongly endorse these views.
- 3.27 The classroom ethos powerfully promotes tolerance and respect. Teachers' innate acceptance of diversity is mirrored by that of pupils. From an early age, teaching encourages pupils to listen thoughtfully to others' views. In the teaching that involves discussion of political views, points are put forward in a balanced way and pupils are considered in their responses.

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 begin to make friends, embrace the concept of sharing, willingly take turns and develop their ability to concentrate. The children clearly respect and tolerate each other and differences between them are accepted as they work and play together. Children learn to make choices, such as which activities to join or what food to eat at lunch as part of their developing independence, and they are consequently well prepared for transition within the setting and beyond.
- 4.3 Fundamental British values are strongly developed throughout the school, including the EYFS. The diversity of the school community is understood and greatly appreciated by pupils. Pupils' respect for beliefs other than their own is carefully fostered through assemblies, displays and visits, as well as in PSHE teaching, and pupils are keen to celebrate customs and occasions that are important to them. All pupils reflect on what it is to be British. Remembrance Day was marked movingly throughout the school, while a striking and thoughtful exhibition commemorates the First World War, with pupil-made ceramic poppies among the many items on display.
- 4.4 The spiritual development of pupils is excellent. Pupils show a highly developed spiritual awareness and show strong self-confidence and self-esteem. In this respect, pupils benefit greatly from a newly introduced mindfulness and reflection approach throughout the school, with a range of lessons, assemblies and homework assignments now including a time to reflect.
- 4.5 The moral development of pupils is excellent. Pupils show a very well-developed sense of right and wrong. They are extremely polite, courteous, considerate and empathise well with others, both peers and adults. Pupils engage very effectively with topical issues, with Year 11 pupils thoughtfully considering the effects of deforestation, and form time in the senior school regularly giving pupils the opportunity to discuss and debate a wide range of ethical matters. Across the school, pupils understand and respect civil and criminal rule of English law.
- 4.6 Pupils have a strong sense of social responsibility and readily contribute to the life of the school and they show deep social awareness. There are many opportunities for pupils of different ages to work together and this leads to positive relationships throughout the school. Concern for others extends beyond the school and pupils are enormously enthusiastic about raising money for international, national and local charities. In addition to many personal initiatives, senior school rag week is a focus for fund-raising, while in the prep school pupils vote for two charities of the year. In the prep school, pupils are happy to take on responsibility and in the senior school, pupils make a strong contribution to the smooth running of the school.
- 4.7 Pupils in all years develop a high level of cultural awareness. Pupils are respectful of others' faith and heritage, and value the achievements of those from backgrounds different to their own. Pupils create and appreciate artistic works in many forms and types of media. Senior school pupils made an effective and thoughtful contribution to a whole school assembly, which took place during the inspection week.

- 4.8 Pupils have a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England, and appreciate the importance of the democratic process fully, with many of the key positions of responsibility within the school elected by peers. A mock general election was enthusiastically supported by pupils in the senior school, as was an age-appropriate version in the prep school.
- 4.9 The harmonious multi-cultural and multi-faith community shares experiences to the benefit of all and on leaving the school, pupils have an excellent standard of personal development and are well equipped for life in a diverse world.

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

- 4.10 The quality of pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, children feel safe and behave very well in the setting. They positively relate to each other and to visitors, indicating their strong trust and confidence in the care they receive. Members of staff know each child exceptionally well and the form teacher, acting as a child's key person, provides the first point of contact with parents or carers. Healthy lifestyles are constructively promoted, including exercise, personal hygiene and healthy eating.
- 4.12 Highly effective support and guidance is provided to pupils in line with the school's aims to make pastoral care an integral part of every aspect of school life so that every pupil has the opportunity to grow in stature and confidence. High levels of self-esteem are fostered and pupils in all age groups feel happy and relaxed in school.
- 4.13 A strong rapport based around genuine mutual respect, both between teacher and pupil and within the pupil body itself, facilitates positive, supportive relationships, characterised by excellent communication, co-operation, and concern for others. The sixth-form liaison programme provides effective senior school role models, and older pupils in the prep school happily take on the responsibility of helping supervise playground activities.
- 4.14 The pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through assemblies and their lessons, including in science, food technology and PSHE classes. This is positively reinforced by a wide variety of healthy meals served at lunch time. Enthusiastic participation in a vibrant sporting programme ensures that pupils appropriately engage in exercise.
- 4.15 Pupils' behaviour is excellent and breaches of the pupil code of conduct, such as bullying, are rare. Evidence from the scrutiny of documentation and pupil interviews indicate that these breaches of pupil conduct are dealt with fairly and effectively with age-appropriate sanctions. In the questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of parents agreed that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. Cyber-bullying is discussed effectively in PSHE teaching, tutorial periods and through talks with pupils and parents.
- 4.16 A democratically elected school council operates successfully throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to make suggestions for future school developments, with many receiving a favourable response to concerns raised, for example, with changes to the school uniform and the food menus. In the questionnaires, a small minority of pupils expressed concern about the teachers' fairness in their use of rewards and sanctions. Inspectors scrutinised records and discussed systems with

pupils. The inspection judgement is that staff follow the school's policies and procedures appropriately.

- 4.17 The school has an appropriate plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, which is reviewed on a regular basis, with action taken as necessary.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.19 All matters of welfare, health and safety are dealt with rigorously and ensure that the school is a secure and safe place for its pupils. In the EYFS, there are strong and effective measures to ensure the well-being and safeguarding of the children, and these measures are enhanced by thorough attention to welfare, health and safety. Prompt and regular attendance is rigorously promoted as is seen by the daily registers which are filled in correctly.
- 4.20 The safeguarding arrangements, including child protection, show high regard for the official regulations and attention to detail in monitoring their implementation. All staff are appropriately and regularly trained in child protection procedures. In all year groups, including the EYFS, the school follows a rigorous policy to prevent radicalisation and extremism.
- 4.21 There are highly effective systems for all aspects of health and safety, including a wide range of detailed policies and risk assessments which are appropriately reviewed. All necessary measures are diligently undertaken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire and other hazard drills are held appropriately and comprehensively reviewed, with action requirements rigorously followed up. All staff receive first aid training. The provision and care for pupils who are ill or injured is excellent. Pupils confidently seek help when needed and communication with parents is appropriately undertaken.
- 4.22 Pupils throughout the school know whom to turn to if they have concerns. 'How to keep safe' and e-safety advice are important parts of the PSHE and parent information programmes. Pupils with SEND and other difficulties are effectively identified and well supported in their needs.
- 4.23 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained, and correctly 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 The governing body, or governing council, is successful in ensuring that the aims of the school are fulfilled. Throughout the school, careful financial planning and astute investment in staff, accommodation and resources, enable the council to discharge its responsibilities fully and provide an excellent education for pupils in its care. Members of the council, including the chairs of the 'Old Girls' association and the parents' association, have a rich source of professional expertise to enable effective support for the school's continued successful development. Several ambitious building projects, including a refurbishment and extension of the prep school, due for completion in the March 2016, have demonstrated the governors' success in identifying, planning and providing for capital development projects to meet the school's present and future needs.
- 5.3 In the EYFS, a designated governor makes regular contact with the setting and this, together with the wide range of excellent resources, indicates the considerable support for the EYFS provided by the governors. Across the school, the governing council's insight into the workings of the school is excellent. This effective insight is achieved through clearly defined individual responsibility, through close contact with the school's senior leadership team and through many first-hand visits and contact with the school.
- 5.4 Careful monitoring of educational standards and resources takes place and the council places a strong emphasis on discharging its safeguarding responsibilities. Prior to the inspection, a limited number of policies and the single central register required amending to reflect current regulations. All were fully compliant at the start of the inspection visit. The annual review of the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school is robustly undertaken by the whole council and all necessary staff recruitment checks have been carried out in the appropriate manner.

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

- 5.5 Leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, are excellent.
- 5.6 In the EYFS, strong measures for safeguarding the children are enhanced by regular update training for all members of staff. The educational programmes are effectively monitored and the setting provides a safe and stimulating environment with a vision for the future. It is a well-run setting with a vision for the future, an ability to self-evaluate and use effective measures to ensure an enjoyment of learning for the successful development of all children. Equality for all and British values are embedded in the planning of children's learning. Members of staff appreciate the opportunities provided for professional development and the regular appraisal and their supervision which provide extra support. Improvements to increase effectiveness of independent learning and better use of the outdoor space satisfy the recommendations of the previous inspection.

- 5.7 Committed and compassionate leadership at all levels ensures the school achieves its ambitious aims to provide the highest quality of education for pupils at every stage of their development. This is reflected in the excellent standards of academic and extra-curricular achievement and quality of pupils' personal development. The outstanding leadership team share a common sense of purpose and convey a clear educational vision and direction. Leadership and management throughout the school are particularly successful in promoting the well-being of pupils. Since the previous inspection, the reflective and self-critical approach shown by management, has helped the school grow and develop very effectively.
- 5.8 In the prep school, leadership is not consistent in ensuring ideas are effectively communicated to middle management. In the senior school, leadership is characterised by assiduous efficiency and attention to detail in every area of planning, policy-making and monitoring. Across the school, policies are rigorously implemented and careful attention is paid to all aspects of safeguarding and the school is a safe and caring community, in which pupils feel well looked after. A very large majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed confidence in the leadership and management of the school and appreciated the positive and timely manner in which the school handles their concerns and questions.
- 5.9 The school leadership team, in the prep and senior schools understand the school well, and frequent, reflective analysis of the school's needs draws on the regularly sought views of staff, pupils and parents in working to ensure best provision. Strategic planning is founded on wide consultation, rigorous evaluation and an excellent analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Development and action plans at departmental and whole-school level are clear and comprehensive with realistic targets, time-scales and success criteria.
- 5.10 The revised leadership roles since the previous inspection have ensured that responsibility is clearly defined, and all aspects of school life are suitably led and directed. Heads of department manage their responsibilities well and play a strong role in monitoring the quality of curricular provision in their departments. They appreciate their autonomy and know their initiatives will be encouraged. Since the previous inspection, management oversight of the work of heads of department in the senior school and monitoring of policies at departmental level is much more rigorous and effective.
- 5.11 Staff are encouraged to be involved in whole-school planning and development and their views are actively sought. The teaching and learning group, and a staff working party reviewing staff appraisals, are excellent examples of this involvement. The open-door policy and collaborative approach of the senior leadership team are greatly respected and appreciated by both teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 5.12 The strong commitment of leadership and management to understand and respond to the needs of individual pupils is a striking feature of the school and through an excellent approach to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, support for the well-being of pupils is highly effective. The leadership and management team is successful in providing an enjoyable, stimulating and supportive environment in which each pupil can develop values and interests that afford them the best opportunity to achieve their full potential.
- 5.13 The school appoints staff of high quality, both teaching and non-teaching, and an active commitment to staff development is reflected in a generous budget for staff

training; an excellent annual appraisal process; strong sharing of good practice and well-planned induction programmes for teachers new to the school. Staff development is well managed and contributes effectively to the training and motivation of the high quality staff.

- 5.14 The approach of the leadership and management ensures that the non-teaching staff are respected and thoroughly integrated into the school community and are aware of their important contribution to its success. Both the financial resources and the estate are well managed and the excellent facilities, and availability of resources, significantly enrich the experience pupils receive.
- 5.15 The school's relationship with the parents is excellent and the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that parents were extremely positive about the information made available to them. They expressed a high level of satisfaction in the care, happiness and education of their children. In the EYFS, the strong relationship built up with parents before entry continues as the children make progress through the setting and parents are engaged fully in their child's learning, ensuring that each child receives appropriate support, and suitable intervention, when required. Throughout the school, the SEND department operates a very effective open-door policy for parents whose children have specific needs and SEND out-reach coordinators conduct home visits for the new Year 7 pupils, who are in need of extra support, before they join the school.
- 5.16 The school handles parental concerns with great care, in accordance with published procedures, and the complaints procedure is appropriately clear. The required information is provided for parents of current and prospective pupils and can be obtained from the school's website or the school office. Parents appreciated the ease with which staff can be contacted.
- 5.17 Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children, and in the life of the school, in accordance with the aim of the school to foster a strong sense of community. The parents' association enhances this sense of community, through representation on the governing council and through events such as hosting a new parents' reception evening. Parent information evenings highlight current educational issues such as e-safety, learning styles and 'resilience and mental health'. There is a high level of parental support for concerts, assemblies and sports matches.
- 5.18 Parents regularly receive, and have the opportunity to respond to, informative reports. These contain details of effort, attitude and progress and in the older year groups targets are set for improvement. Excellent communication regarding pupils' progress is further supported by regular parents' meetings throughout the year. The effective website and parent portal are kept up to date with all the relevant information. Communication to parents is strengthened through weekly newsletters and opportunities to meet socially each monthly with senior leaders.

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