



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St George's School

Full Name of School	St George's School		
DfE Number	868/6006		
Registered Charity Number	11000392		
Address	St George's School Windsor Castle Datchet Road Windsor Berkshire SL4 1QF England		
Telephone Number	01753 865553		
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Email Address	head@stgwindsor.co.uk		
Head	Mr Christopher McDade		
Chair of Governors	Revd Canon Dr Hueston Finlay		
Age Range	3 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	347		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (223 boys; 124 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5-11:	235
	3-5 (EYFS):	11-18:	37
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	331	
Number of Boarders	Total:	16	
	Full:	0	Weekly: 16
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Emma Adriano		
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls		
Inspection Dates	09 to 12 Feb 2016		

PREFACE

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

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

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in November 2014 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in March 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Steven Popper	Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Chippington	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mrs Hannah Phillips	Team Inspector (Deputy Headmistress, IAPS school)
Mrs Sue Sanders	Team Inspector (Head of Department, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St George's School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from three to thirteen years. It provides full-time, weekly and flexible boarding facilities. The school was founded in 1348 and, for many centuries, was based within Windsor Castle to educate boy choristers. The school moved to a nearby building in 1895 and began to admit non-chorister pupils in the same year. In 1996 the school established a pre-prep department and widened its admissions to include girls.
- 1.2 The school is a charitable trust which is administered by a board of governors. The current headmaster took up his post in September 2012, while the current head of pre-prep took up her position in September 2013.
- 1.3 The school seeks to be a caring, happy and stimulating community where ambitious academic success, excellent pastoral care and a rich breadth of opportunities combine to provide a first class education for every pupil. It aims to develop happy, self-confident children who have a love of learning and enquiring minds. It seeks to identify and nurture children's individual skills and talents so that they achieve their potential. The school aims to develop individuals who respect others, understand the value of good manners and courtesy, have a sense of pride in their school, respect their environment and are involved in the wider community. The school sets out to provide high quality education that fully prepares children for the next stage of their learning, as well as to provide opportunities in creative and performing arts, sporting and physical activities and an understanding and awareness of teamwork and sportsmanship.
- 1.4 Most pupils come from professional white British families who live locally, though a number have international backgrounds. At the time of the inspection there were 347 pupils on roll, of which 223 were boys and 124 were girls. There were 75 children on roll in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which, along with Years 1 and 2, forms the pre-prep. The setting is exempt from the Early Years learning and development requirements. There is one boarding house, which includes separate provision for boys and girls, currently used by 16 weekly boarders and several pupils boarding on a flexible basis. The school has identified 25 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive specialist help. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education health and care plan in the school. Twenty pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). Overall, the ability profile of pupils is above the national average, though pupils demonstrate a wide range of abilities.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils' achievement is excellent and the school meets its aim to provide a high quality of education. Pupils, including boarders and children in the EYFS, demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to learning, make rapid progress and attain highly. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to provide pupils with clear explanations, thought-provoking questioning and helpful advice about how to improve their work. The most able pupils receive a substantial level of challenge and highly efficient systems ensure that pupils who have SEND or EAL get the support that they need. The excellent curriculum across the school is well supported by a varied and very well organised programme of extra-curricular activities.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils relate extremely well to each other and to staff and demonstrate loyalty and compassion. They leave the school with outstanding personal skills and convey a substantial awareness of right and wrong. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour or bullying and the school acts constructively to address these. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, and, in the case of boarding provision, excellent. The school has successfully carried out the actions from the previous standard and intermediate boarding inspections to ensure that all required safer recruitment checks are carried out before staff take up their posts, and that such checks are entered correctly into the single central register of appointments. However, some staff who do not have responsibilities towards boarding were unsure of the correct procedures for reporting particular types of safeguarding concerns.
- 2.3 Governance is good. Governors make good use of committees to monitor aspects of the school and have fully met the recommendations from the previous intermediate boarding inspection to formalise structures of governance and review policies in a systematic fashion. However, governors rely on leaders too much to check that safer recruitment arrangements meet requirements, and do not monitor these closely for themselves. Leadership and management are good. Leaders offer strong educational direction and have clear plans to develop the school. Leaders have developed an effective staff appraisal system and have successfully improved achievement and teaching. Leaders investigate parental complaints thoroughly and act effectively to remedy any issues that arise, though they do not always record informal complaints received by the school. The safeguarding and safer recruitment policies needed some attention at the beginning of the inspection, but were swiftly rectified. The school has fully met all the recommendations from the previous standard and intermediate boarding inspections.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that governors monitor the implementation of safeguarding arrangements closely for themselves to make sure that these continue to meet requirements over time.
 2. Ensure that leaders make certain that all staff fully understand the procedures to follow should a safeguarding concern arise.
 3. Ensure that all informal complaints are recorded in line with the school policy.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully meets its aim to provide high-quality education that fully prepares children for the next stage of their learning.
- 3.3 The EYFS setting successfully fulfils its aims to develop happy, self-confident children, to foster a love of learning and develop enquiring minds, and to identify and nurture each child's individual skills and talents. Children are enthusiastic, happy learners who make strong progress in relation to their starting points, abilities and needs. Although the setting is exempt from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS, the early years profile is still undertaken, with a large majority reaching, and several exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Throughout the setting children talk confidently and articulately to the rest of their class; in French lessons they answer simple questions and happily sing French songs. In Nursery they listen well and follow instructions as they confidently enter the water, blow bubbles on the surface and travel across the pool. They are able to recognise simple shapes, and independently and successfully use their tablets as cameras for the first time to find and photograph shapes throughout the school.
- 3.4 Children in Reception remind each other that a sentence needs to start with a capital letter and end with a full stop before they make an excellent independent attempt to write their own Chinese New Year sentences. They use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to help them spell tricky words; they concentrate and persevere as they carefully cut round the jagged edges of their Chinese dragons. They learn their numbers to ten and begin to record addition sums independently.
- 3.5 Children with particular needs, or who have EAL, are given excellent support by adults, thus enabling them to make rapid progress. For example, pupils who started school with no English relatively recently were already able to talk about the cooking they had done in their Chinese restaurant role play.
- 3.6 In other year groups, pupils develop very good knowledge, fluent understanding and excellent skills across the curriculum. Written work demonstrates a very strong ability to use features of language with skill, while their reading demonstrates excellent comprehension. Pupils can voice their ideas and suggestions very confidently and articulately, and their discussions are full of well-reasoned ideas. Books show very good application of mathematical skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. The pupils' musical, dramatic and artistic achievements demonstrate considerable creativity, and their proficiency in games and sports is very high.
- 3.7 Pupils demonstrate considerable success in music, with a very large majority of pupils learning musical instruments and many attain Grade 5 or Grade 6 by the time they leave the school. Many pupils achieve excellent national music examination results. Pupils represent the school at regional and national levels in a range of sports such as football, rugby, netball, swimming and cricket. Pupils also achieve high results in national drama assessments.
- 3.8 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but is judged to be excellent. This is demonstrated by evidence from

standardised tests, scrutiny of pupils' books, lesson observations, interviews with pupils and leavers' destinations. A large majority of school leavers succeed in gaining places at the senior schools of their choice, including schools with demanding academic requirements. Several of last year's school leavers gained major music scholarships.

- 3.9 This level of attainment, as judged, shows that pupils make excellent progress compared to those of similar ability. Pupils progress rapidly because of the well-pitched and challenging teaching that they receive. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress as a result of the very careful monitoring of their needs and the individual provision put in place to meet these. Pupils with EAL also make fast progress through tailored support when appropriate, to develop their vocabulary, comprehension, and other language skills.
- 3.10 In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a very small minority of parents did not think that the most able pupils received appropriate support. However, the inspectors found that teachers provide this group of pupils with high levels of challenge that enables them to progress rapidly. All pupils who responded to the questionnaire considered that they make good progress.
- 3.11 Pupils consistently demonstrate extremely positive attitudes towards learning and take great care over the quality and presentation of their work. They work together extremely well and support each other's progress. Pupils engage with their tasks with great enjoyment and well-organised application. Their entirely positive approach to learning contributes substantially to their excellent achievement.

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

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.13 The curriculum successfully fulfils the school's aim to provide a high-quality education that prepares children for the next stage of their learning. The curriculum does not undermine the key characteristics of Britishness such as democracy and the rule of law.
- 3.14 The EYFS setting follows a suitable curriculum across the seven areas of learning, with a strong emphasis on English, mathematics and science. Children benefit from specialist teaching in swimming, music, physical education (PE) and French. An appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning takes place in the stimulating indoor and outdoor environments, enabling all children, including those with SEND and EAL, to explore, investigate and develop their imaginative skills. Children in Reception enjoy extra-curricular activities, such as ballet and 'scrumys' (first rugby skills).
- 3.15 In other years, the curriculum features a wide range of subjects and covers all the requisite areas of learning very effectively, enabling pupils to develop excellent skills, knowledge and understanding. Latin is introduced at Year 5 and Spanish has recently been introduced as a second modern foreign language from Year 6. All parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their children are offered an appropriate range of subjects and experiences.
- 3.16 A detailed scheme of physical, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), which includes consideration of British values and contains appropriate material for different age groups, contributes effectively to the pupils' personal development. Pupils experience and learn about the democratic process through elections for the

pupil council and submitting applications to become prefects. Different points of view are explored in a balanced and unbiased manner.

- 3.17 Music plays a very important part in the curriculum and many pupils achieve high standards in exams and performances. An inspirational school choir rehearsal was heard during the inspection and the choristers regularly sing to an exceptional standard. Drama and music are brought together in an annual production of a musical. All pupils benefit from playing sport to a high standard.
- 3.18 Facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved with the provision and use of tablet computers for younger year groups. Plans are in place to improve provision yet further with a detailed staff consultation in process. Pupils are able to access computers in the well-resourced library at certain times of day for independent research into a range of different subjects.
- 3.19 The curriculum is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. Provision for those with SEND and EAL is excellent. Learning support is highly organised and support staff are used extremely well to meet individual pupils' needs. The curriculum is tailored to ensure that the most able pupils receive very high levels of challenge.
- 3.20 The school has an excellent and varied extra-curricular programme which is very well organised and includes some 60 activities on offer across the year. The pupils speak of the wide range of opportunities with enthusiasm. There are after school clubs throughout the week which cater for sporting, musical, creative and academic interests. A full programme of sporting fixtures takes place each week.
- 3.21 The curriculum is enhanced by regular visits to places of educational interest including Windsor Castle on the school's doorstep. Expedition days in the autumn and summer terms sees year groups going out to places such as zoos and museums or on team building exercises. There was a recent sports tour to Barcelona. Links with the community are strong with pupils involved in a music outreach programme and various sporting competitions which the school holds in its grounds for local schools. The 'Supers' choir have sung concerts in London and various charities are supported by the school each year.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.22 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.23 The quality of teaching enables the school to fully meet its aims. It is non-partisan in nature and does not undermine British values. Teaching nurtures children's individual skills and talents and contributes strongly to their excellent achievement.
- 3.24 Teaching in the EYFS is of a very high standard and, in Nursery, often inspirational. Pupils were enthralled by the poor African featherless vulture their teacher had found, and used their critical thinking skills to experiment together to find which materials were waterproof so they could make him a coat. Staff have a very clear understanding of how young children learn and work as a conscientious team, they know their children and their particular needs very well. Staff have developed excellent planning and assessment procedures which demonstrate very high expectations and meet the needs of children, including the most able and those with SEND and EAL. High quality and imaginative resources are used throughout the curriculum to further children's learning.

- 3.25 In other years, teaching is very well planned to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, including the most able. Teachers track and assess pupils' learning and progress extremely thoroughly. They use this information to provide constructive and encouraging feedback during lessons. This promotes the pupils' confidence and engagement and enables them to securely develop their knowledge, skill and understanding. Teachers' marking ensures that pupils of all abilities have a clear understanding of their strengths and areas for development across subject areas. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that marking was helpful and gave them very good advice about how to improve their work, particularly through the school's use of 'even better ifs'.
- 3.26 Teaching is characterised by the effective application of a wide range of methods to enthuse pupils and meet their learning needs. Teachers make very effective use of time and resources to promote and deepen learning. They use their excellent subject knowledge to provide clear explanations and ask challenging questions that develop pupils' understanding and make them think carefully. Teachers' passion for their subjects enthuses and motivates pupils and ensures they make extremely good progress.
- 3.27 Teachers' secure knowledge of their pupils' needs is a crucial factor in fostering both interest and independence. Pupils speak of the fun which they have in lessons and they rise to the high expectations which staff promote. The atmosphere in lessons is extremely positive and the respect between teachers and their pupils creates a safe and caring environment where all are willing to contribute their ideas, and collaboratively extend their learning. Teachers make excellent use of questioning in their teaching which promotes discussion and challenge.
- 3.28 Pupils with SEND and EAL receive excellent support. Teachers tailor activities to meet their individual needs and promote their confidence and learning extremely well. The learning support department monitors children's progress carefully and works closely with teaching staff to implement excellent strategies to support individual children throughout the school day.
- 3.29 In questionnaire responses a very small minority of parents did not think that the most able pupils received appropriate support. Inspectors found that these pupils are provided with very high levels of challenge through well-pitched activities and tasks. As a result, the most able pupils achieve highly and make rapid progress.

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 school successfully fulfils its aim to create a friendly, supportive environment which encourages mutual trust and respect. It takes active steps to promote both the personal development of the pupils and the characteristics of Britishness.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children are happy and confident, with high self-esteem, and make a very positive contribution. They listen to one another, and respect and celebrate each other's achievements, for example when children explain how they have 'earned' money at home by being kind or helpful, to reach the target for the guide dog puppy they are sponsoring. They play co-operatively, with all EYFS classes enjoying free-flow play as one cohesive unit. Children learn to take turns, solve problems, make choices and decisions. They are kind friends to one another and learn strategies to manage those tricky moments when they disagree. They develop an awareness of diversity when celebrating Diwali and Chinese New Year. They learn to respect each other's differences; children with EAL told an appreciative class about their special New Year song and then sang it in their home language. British values are promoted, for example in assemblies, displays and times when children contribute their ideas and begin to show respect for the world they live in. They have many opportunities to be independent; self-registering, looking after their belongings, tidying away and getting out of the swimming pool and showering independently before going to change. Transition into school and between classrooms is managed seamlessly by adults.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent throughout the school. Pupils cultivate strong spiritual values which are informed by the school's teaching about religious perspectives and views and their links with St George's Chapel. Pupils develop reflectiveness and an appreciation of non-material aspects of life through themes such as 'respect' and 'forgiveness' which are explored during assemblies. Pupils' spirituality is demonstrated in their creation of thoughtful prayers read aloud during lunchtime that show empathy with those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils reflect sensitively on different faiths and discuss everyday examples of that faith's philosophy. They exhibit very high levels of self-confidence and self-awareness.
- 4.5 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils accept responsibility for their behaviour, demonstrate a substantial awareness of what is right and wrong and have a strong understanding of the importance of rules, including the laws of England, to create a safe and fair environment. Pupils have well-developed ethical values, demonstrated through their exemplary behaviour and consistent courtesy to each other, staff and to visitors. Older pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of moral themes such as human rights, which are taught through PSHEE. Pupils consistently apply the prevailing culture of mutual respect and consideration.
- 4.6 The pupils' social development is excellent. They demonstrate a deep sense of social responsibility, making significant contributions to the wider community through meaningful fundraising events. Older pupils enjoy mentoring their younger peers, who are very appreciative of such support. Pupils benefit from the competitive house system which nurtures strong feelings of loyalty, tolerance and team spirit. Pupils develop a good understanding and appreciation of democracy through the

election of pupils to the pupil council. They demonstrate the ability to listen to each other well and respect other people's points of view. Older pupils are proud of their roles as prefects and carry them out with high levels of competence. Excellent relationships between pupils and pupils and staff are noticeable around the school, with all frequently showing compassion, empathy and trust. Pupils' strong self-esteem is fostered through the school's celebrations of effort and achievement.

- 4.7 The cultural education of the pupils is excellent. They show a keen interest in, and respect for, other cultures and religions, such as Buddhism and Sikhism. An impromptu assembly following recent events in Paris helped pupils to better understand the diverse nature of their society and their knowledge and appreciation of Islam was developed further through a visit to a Mosque. Pupils demonstrate respect for those who are different from themselves, and understand the importance of combatting discrimination.
- 4.8 A broad knowledge of English public institutions and services is acquired through school assemblies, the PSHEE programme and trips, as well as visits to the school by the police, the fire service and a Justice of the Peace. Pupils support a wide variety of local and national charities, including those relating to cancer support and homelessness.
- 4.9 Pupils leave the school with excellent personal skills that equip them very well to succeed in the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 The school fully meets its aim to be a caring, happy and stimulating community which offers excellent pastoral care. The school's pastoral committee monitors pupils' well-being extremely well and ensures that pupils receive excellent support to meet their pastoral needs.
- 4.12 In the EYFS, children's individual needs are at the heart of the setting. The welcoming environment and generous staff-to-children ratios enable key persons to form strong, caring relationships with children and their families. Behaviour is exemplary because staff have very high standards and ensure that children understand and practise their 'kindness code', for example by not leaving somebody out in their police station role play. Lunchtimes have a family feel where good manners are encouraged and children begin to learn which foods keep them healthy. Children understand the importance of good hygiene and wash their hands independently and thoroughly before snack and lunchtimes.
- 4.13 In other years, relationships between pupils and staff, and between the pupils themselves, are of the highest quality. In discussions and their questionnaire responses, pupils said that their teachers listened to them and could be turned to if there was a problem.
- 4.14 The school's programme of games and sports gives pupils very good opportunities for exercise. They learn about the importance of healthy eating through the PSHEE scheme of work.
- 4.15 The school has appropriate arrangements to promote good behaviour and to guard against bullying or harassment. A very small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school did not deal well with bullying. The

inspectors found no evidence to support this view. The school keeps thorough records of the very small number of incidents of poor behaviour or bullying that occur, and of the school's actions in response to these. Leaders carefully monitor the well-being of any pupils who have suffered negative behaviour and check the effectiveness of actions taken to support them. Records show that the school has acted constructively to address the very few cases of poor behaviour and bullying that have occurred. The school teaches pupils how to resolve conflicts and avoid the dangers of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. In their questionnaire responses, a very high proportion of pupils expressed confidence in the way the school deals with bullying. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors were very clear about who they could go to should any worries arise. They said that they felt safe at school and that their teachers encouraged them to talk and share any problems with them. A few pupils said in questionnaire responses that teachers were not consistent in the way that they awarded sanctions. However, pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that the school awarded rewards and sanctions fairly. Inspectors found that the school made effective use of rewards and appropriate sanctions to promote good behaviour. The school gives pupils ample opportunities to express their views, whether through pupil council meetings or teaching activities and discussions. Senior leaders attend pupil council meetings and respond positively to pupils' points of view. For example, leaders changed dining room arrangements at lunchtime in response to pupils' suggestions. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that staff 'took them seriously' and listened to them well.

- 4.16 After amendment at the start of the inspection, the school has a suitable plan to further improve educational access for pupils with SEND. The learning support department assess this group of pupils' pastoral needs very carefully and ensure that these are met.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.18 The children's welfare is promoted strongly in the EYFS. Safeguarding is rigorous and children feel safe and happy in their setting. Staff have been well trained in paediatric first aid and child protection, and are aware of how to guard children against the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. They understand procedures to be followed in the event of a concern. Risk assessments are thorough and undertaken regularly for indoor and outdoor activities and for any visits off-site. Regular attendance is promoted.
- 4.19 The school meets its aim to provide a caring and happy environment. Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training starting as they join the school. While practical safeguarding arrangements at the day-to-day level have proper regard to official guidance, the school's safeguarding and safer recruitment policies needed some attention at the start of the inspection to reflect the most recent requirements. All new staff receive safeguarding training as soon as they join the school, and leaders ensure that this training is refreshed and updated at the appropriate level at regular intervals.
- 4.20 Leaders have implemented the required actions from the standard inspection of 2011 and the intermediate boarding inspection in 2014 and now ensure that all required safer recruitment checks on staff are carried out systematically before they are appointed.

- 4.21 The school reduces the risk from fire and other potential hazards through its careful precautions. Fire detection equipment is maintained and checked properly. The school conducts regular fire drills and records any actions it needs to consider as a result. Staff carry out risk assessments to help ensure the safety of the premises, activities, resources, events and transport. The risk assessment policy identifies specific staff responsibilities towards assessing and reporting risks. Where risks are identified, steps are taken swiftly to minimise them
- 4.22 Effective arrangements ensure that pupils who have particular needs or become unwell are properly cared for. All teaching staff are trained in first aid, and many pre-prep staff have received paediatric first aid training. Medical facilities meet requirements.
- 4.23 The attendance and admission registers are properly maintained and stored.
- 4.24 The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that they thought their children were safe, happy and well looked after by the school. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said that they felt safe at school.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.25 The overall quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.26 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The school's aims of developing confident, polite and tolerant pupils are achieved. Boarders are self-disciplined, articulate and respectful of those around them. They speak warmly of their boarding experience and show off their house with pride and enthusiasm. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses all those responding said that they enjoyed boarding. Recent changes to routines and activities have been well-received and boarders say they now 'feel more like a family.' There is a strong sense of belonging and an atmosphere of trust. Pupils demonstrate considerable integrity through their very positive behaviour and care and support of each other. Boarders also enjoy highly constructive relationships with staff and have many people to whom they feel able to turn for help when necessary. Boarders who spoke to the inspectors said that they could talk to any of the house staff on any personal matter or to air concerns or opinions. This was mirrored in their questionnaire responses. Pupils also say that a suggestion box for their ideas and the boarders' council are effective.
- 4.27 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders, most of whom are choristers, are encouraged to be fit, healthy, considerate and kind. Their questionnaire responses make clear that they feel safe and that they are very well looked after. Their behaviour is exemplary and they thrive in the nurturing atmosphere. The dormitories are comfortable, spacious and homely. The bathrooms are clean, practical and well-equipped and ensure the boarders' privacy. There is a spacious common room where boarders can relax and socialise, as well as a variety of play areas and activities including crafts, board games, and entertainment equipment. A phone booth and safe access to mobile telephones ensure ease of communication with parents. A comprehensive manual is provided which contains useful information for first-time boarders and contact numbers for help-lines. Boarders benefit from the wide-ranging evening boarding activities. In particular, they enjoy board games, swimming evenings in the school pool and more boisterous games in the gym.
- 4.28 The catering provision is good. The menus are varied and nutritious, and are adapted to take into account individual dietary needs. The kitchen and storage

areas are clean and well-managed. The dining room is attractive, and well-kept. Fruit and drinking water are available at all times, and appropriate snacks provided at intervals outside mealtimes with particular sensitivity to the boarders' needs.

- 4.29 Medical matters are overseen by experienced matrons. The storage and administration of medication is careful and considered. Matron's surgery and the sick bay provide appropriate accommodation for the short term care of sick children. This is sited in the centre of the boarding area with direct access for day pupils. The matrons provide medical cover including first aid whenever the boarders are in residence, including choristers' 'stay on'. Most pupils return home to be cared for by parents when they are ill but the location of sick bay makes it ideal to care for those who need to stay overnight or be looked after in house during the day. Privacy and confidentiality are respected. Record-keeping is careful and thorough. Appropriate care is taken of the boarders' possessions. The laundry provision is done in house. There are systems in place to manage valuables such as mobile phones and pocket money and passports can be stored under lock and key. Personal and stationery supplies can be provided as necessary while boarders are at school.
- 4.30 The choristers' regime necessarily restricts free time and activities. However, the house atmosphere and a variety of activities are carefully managed to enable more social interaction and relaxation for these boarders. The houseparents also represent their interests throughout the school to ensure that the regime does not unacceptably affect the choristers' wellbeing.
- 4.31 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. Rigorous procedures are in place to ensure that the safety of boarders is promoted and managed effectively. All the required safeguarding checks have been completed at the time of appointment and the records appropriately kept. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are known by all boarding staff. The school's anti-bullying and behavioural policies are fully implemented. Bullying is not identified as a concern by boarders and even unkindness is rare. Boarders are confident that their staff would investigate and resolve any such incidents swiftly. Excellent relationships are evident across the community and boarders feel secure and confident that any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. Each individual is known by staff and their whereabouts are carefully monitored while still allowing boarders appropriate freedom and independence to choose how they spend their free time.
- 4.32 School records and pastoral systems are used effectively for the monitoring of pupils' progress academically, socially and emotionally. These and effective communications between staff and parents contribute to the boarders' well-being and happiness. Health and safety, risk assessment and fire safety policies and procedures are effectively implemented. Risk assessments are in place for the boarding areas. Access to the boarding house is properly controlled. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent and is shown in the quality of the relationships within the boarding community and personal development of the boarders. Senior staff and houseparents are all well qualified, appropriately trained and committed to reflection and review in order to enhance boarding. Careful self-evaluation benefits from the involvement of a governor with particular interest in boarding matters. All the house staff have job descriptions, induction, mentoring and regular review, and there is a culture of continuing professional development. The recommendations from the previous intermediate boarding inspection in 2014, concerning the appraisal of boarding staff, the development of boarding and responding to boarders' concerns,

have been fully met. The questionnaire responses of the boarders and their parents are overwhelmingly positive.

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 successfully supports the school's aim to provide high-quality education that prepares children for the next stage of their learning. Governors make good use of committees to monitor school provision and outcomes, focusing on aspects such as boarding, leavers' destinations, school standards, the use of resources and accommodation, financial planning, and the deployment of staff, among others. Governors visit the EYFS and are kept abreast of regulatory requirements and new procedures.
- 5.3 Governors hold regular meetings with school leaders to keep themselves informed about the working of the school. They contribute strongly to the school's strategic plan and expect leaders to explain how well the school is meeting its objectives. The governing body has further formalised its structures and developed a systematic reviewing of policies.
- 5.4 Governors ensure that health and safety provision is good. Safeguarding is considered carefully at every board meeting. The governing body ensures that an annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements is carried out. However, governors rely on the school leadership to check that safer recruitment arrangements meet requirements, and do not monitor these sufficiently closely for themselves. Governors scrutinise the safeguarding and safer recruitment policies regularly, though these required some attention at the beginning of the inspection.

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 good.
- 5.6 The leadership team ensures that the school meets its aim to provide high-quality education that prepares children for the next stage of their learning. The strong and highly positive ethos of the school is put into practice in all parts of the school and encourages pupils to develop positive values, value democracy, and treat others with consideration, courtesy and respect.
- 5.7 Leadership and management are a strength of the welcoming, safe and stimulating EYFS setting. Safeguarding within the setting is rigorous and well implemented. Leaders keep abreast of new requirements and procedures. Staff work together as a very strong and dedicated team; reflection and self-evaluation are at the core of their practice and leaders share a passionate vision for the setting. Educational programmes are very well monitored; key persons feel that the supervision process helps develop their role. There are many opportunities for staff to further their professional training and share new knowledge which contributes positively to their teaching and consequently to children's learning and development. Activities, displays and practice which actively promote equality, diversity and British values are evident throughout the setting. Support from outside agencies, such as speech therapists and the local authority, in partnership with parents, is used when

necessary, to ensure that every child, including the most able and those with SEND and EAL, makes progress in their learning.

- 5.8 In the EYFS parents are delighted with the education and care their children receive. The recommendation of the standard inspection in 2011 to extend opportunities to inform parents of how they can be involved in their children's learning has been fully implemented: parents contribute 'wow' moments to learning journeys and comments to half-termly individual records. In addition, the fathers of children in Reception are invited to a termly breakfast with their children and their teachers. Parents have the opportunity to come in and help and are invited to watch swimming lessons, attend workshops, information and parents' evenings. They receive excellent information about the curriculum and how it is delivered as well as EYFS advice in the bi-weekly newsletters.
- 5.9 The school has successfully met the recommendations of the previous inspection in 2011 to formalise leadership and management structures and ensure that the school development plan links with a strategic plan. The current school development plan relates strongly to the strategic plan initially generated by governors and contains clear actions designed to enable the school to reach its objectives. The development plan is based upon careful self-evaluation and demonstrates the strong educational direction that leaders provide.
- 5.10 The school has strengthened and extended the roles of leaders at all levels. Heads of departments have greater responsibility across the whole school than at the time of the previous inspection. Leaders use the recently introduced appraisal system to monitor all staff and inform the training opportunities that they receive. The changes to the way leadership operates have helped to unify and develop the work of staff.
- 5.11 Much of the school's safeguarding work is very strong. Leaders monitor the well-being of pupils carefully and have good links with other safeguarding agencies. However, several staff were unsure of some of the correct procedures for reporting particular types of concern. In addition, the safeguarding and safer recruitment policies required some attention at the beginning of the inspection, though these were swiftly rectified.
- 5.12 Leaders recruit and retain suitable staff successfully, carrying out safer recruitment checks in line with requirements. Leaders provide all new staff with induction training that includes information about the nature of a choir school, the expectations leaders have of staff, staff roles and responsibilities towards safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.13 The school has an appropriate complaints policy which details how the school will respond to informal and formal complaints. A few parents who responded to the questionnaire thought that the school did not handle parental concerns well. However, the evidence shows that the school investigates concerns very carefully and thoroughly in line with stated procedures and meets all applicable regulatory requirements. Leaders keep a detailed written record of formal complaints and the often extensive actions that they take in response to these, including action to improve practice where appropriate. The school carefully identifies issues that arise as a result of any concerns received and acts to remedy these effectively. However, the school does not ensure that all informal complaints are recorded in line with the school policy.

- 5.14 The school's relationship with parents is very constructive and based on a real depth of knowledge and care of the pupils and their families. Parents feel that staff know their children very well.
- 5.15 A very large majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or spoke to the inspectors were very happy with the education and support provided for their children and with the quality of communication they have with the school. A very small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire had some concerns about information given about their child's progress and about the leadership and management of the school. However, inspectors found leadership to be highly effective. Inspectors found that the school provided parents with clear and thorough information about pupils' progress and attainment, and that leaders had recently re-designed reports to enable parents and pupils to add their own comments and feedback.
- 5.16 Parents are strongly encouraged to keep in contact with the school. Parents who spoke to the inspectors said that they appreciate the school's communication via e-mail, text message and the school portal. They said that the school usually responded to e-mails immediately. The school operates an open-door policy and parents feel that staff are extremely approachable.
- 5.17 The school provides many opportunities for parents to be involved in the work and progress of their children and share in their children's activities and learning experiences. Parents receive termly diaries, detailed parent information booklets at the beginning of each academic year, bi-weekly newsletters, and they are invited to transition meetings, and curriculum and parent evenings. Parents attend drama productions, concerts, chapel and form assemblies, fixtures, and swimming galas. Parental involvement is encouraged through asking parents to help with reading and, where appropriate, to give talks to year groups. The school has forged strong links with senior schools for Year 8 leavers and gives parents the necessary guidance and support to choose the right school for their child.
- 5.18 New parents are extremely pleased with the information they receive prior to their children starting school and the welcome they are given, such as the invitations to chapel evensong and to tea on the headmaster's lawn, where they have the chance to meet other parents.
- 5.19 The parents' group provides further opportunities for the parents to be involved in the life of the school. They organise a variety of events which include the May and Christmas Fayres, and coffee mornings.

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