



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**THE DIXIE GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

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## The Dixie Grammar School

Full Name of School	<b>The Dixie Grammar School</b>
DfE Number	<b>855/6004</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>514407</b>
Address	<b>The Dixie Grammar School Station Road Market Bosworth Nuneaton Leicestershire CV13 0LE England</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01455 292244</b>
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Email Address	<b>info@dixie.org.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Richard Lynn</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Paul Smith</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>448</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (225 boys; 223 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 44    5-10: 106 10-18: 298</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Anne Laird</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>13 October 2015 to 16 October 2015</b>

## 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](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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 standard inspection was in March 2010.

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 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 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 Christopher Sanderson	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Annabelle Hancock	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Richard Hyde	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mr James Kazi	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Jeffrey Shaw	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Dr Stephen Wilkinson	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mrs Ros Ford	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

# CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(a) Main findings</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>(b) Action points</b>	<b>3</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
<b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(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
<b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>9</b>
(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
<b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

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

- 1.1 The Dixie Grammar School is a co-educational school, which accepts pupils from the ages of 3 to 18, situated in the village of Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. Records of the school can be traced back to 1320, and it gained its current name when it was re-founded in 1601. As a local authority school, it closed in 1969, but was reopened by the Leicestershire Independent Educational Trust in 1987. A junior school and Nursery was added in 1990 and moved to its own site about four miles away in 2001. The school is an educational charity, the trustees being a single governing body, overseeing both senior and junior schools.
- 1.2 The school aims to educate its pupils to the highest standards to become full, confident and active members of the global society of the 21st century. It seeks to enable its pupils to achieve mental, spiritual, moral and physical well-being by striving for excellence in academic work, assemblies, service, and cultural, sporting and intellectual extra-curricular activities. The school aims to help pupils develop responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, diligence, honesty and good manners. It seeks for its staff to develop pupils' respect for others, commitment to the community and knowledge and understanding of other cultures and societies and cultivate their confidence and self-respect, independent learning and teamwork.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection there were 448 pupils on roll, 150 in the junior school and 298 in the senior school, Years 6 to 13, including 58 in the sixth form, with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Of the 44 children in the EYFS, 24 attend on a part-time basis. Pupils transfer from the junior to the senior school after Year 5. Most come from within a 15 mile radius of the school and are largely from professional or business backgrounds, a small proportion being of minority ethnic origin. The ability profile of the junior and senior schools is above the national average. Around two-thirds of pupils have ability that is at least above average, with a further quarter having ability that is in line with the national average. Almost all pupils in the Junior School progress to the senior school, where there is also an entry point into Year 6 and Year 7 from other schools. Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom five receive support for their English. The school has identified 64 pupils as requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care (EHC) plan attend the school. The headteacher has been in post since September 2014.
- 1.4 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, including those with SEND and EAL, show excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skills, and excel in a variety of extra-curricular areas. They are motivated and enthusiastic learners, who show overwhelmingly positive attitudes. The broad curriculum covers all the required areas and is strengthened by specialist teaching at all levels, an international perspective and a smooth transition for pupils between different sections of the school. Excellent teaching strongly supports the aims of the school and draws on both strong relationships and the fostering of excellent behaviour. However, it does not consistently challenge the most able nor, to a lesser extent, always meet the needs of the less able, and a high quality of marking is not consistently achieved in all age groups.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. They demonstrate a high level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Children in the EYFS are happy to come to school and learn well together. Pupils have a strong appreciation for the world around them. They show a well-tuned sense of right and wrong, co-operate well and willingly take on positions of responsibility. They are well-prepared for the next stage of their education. Excellent pastoral care ensures that pupils enjoy a positive environment in which they understand that bullying is unacceptable and achieve high standards of conduct. The school is highly effective in seeking and responding to pupils' views. Excellent welfare, health and safety procedures enable pupils to live and work in safe surroundings, carefully safeguarded. Risk assessment is thorough and the school has a high quality of provision for pupils who are ill, injured or have particular medical conditions.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to their roles and keep themselves carefully informed about the work of the school, ensuring that they provide well-focused oversight and challenge, and enable the school to meet its aims. Dedicated leadership and management have ensured that the school has made significant progress since the previous inspection, and has been successful in meeting its recommendations. Leadership ensures that staff are well-qualified, duly vetted on appointment and well-supported. However, in the EYFS, regular coaching of staff through supervision meetings is still in the early stages of development and not yet formalised. The school has excellent links with parents, who are particularly appreciative of its work. Parents are confident that any concerns are handled promptly, they receive detailed information about their children's work and progress, and are readily able to be involved in the life of the school.

## **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 consistency in high quality marking throughout the school.
2. Ensure that teaching in the classroom consistently meets the needs of the ability range of all the pupils, particularly the most able.
3. In the EYFS, introduce a more formal arrangement for staff supervision meetings to support staff in their practice.

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

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

- 3.1 Pupils' learning and achievement are excellent.
- 3.2 The pupils' whole-hearted and successful contribution to a rich variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities demonstrates that the school meets its aim to educate pupils to strive for the highest standards.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS achieve extremely well. They are motivated and enthusiastic learners who respond strongly to the staff's high expectations of them. Children in Nursery recognise their own names in writing and Reception children have strong word recognition skills. They make excellent progress relative to their ability and needs, the majority reaching and often exceeding the expected levels of attainment at the end of Reception. Those with SEND or EAL are very well supported. Children communicate effectively with each other and their teachers. The youngest children have started to identify the initial sounds in words and are able to retell stories using the appropriate vocabulary. They perform creatively in music and dance. In Reception, children recognise sounds, blend simple words and use correct letter formation when writing. They are able to measure objects using non-standard units and play independently, selecting their own materials to use.
- 3.4 Throughout the school, pupils speak fluently and confidently, using a wide range of vocabulary. They apply well-developed mathematical skills across a range of subjects. Pupils write extremely well and show excellent creativity in many subjects. They are familiar with information and communication technology (ICT) and use it effectively to further their learning. The youngest pupils enjoy touch-typing lessons, and make good use of notebook computers. The improvement in achievement of junior school pupils in their ICT skills demonstrates that the school has successfully addressed the recommendation from the previous inspection to improve the use of ICT in the junior school.
- 3.5 At best, pupils show excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skill. They excel in a variety of extra-curricular areas and individuals reach excellent standards in both music and sport. Many pupils elect for and achieve high standards in Mandarin, offered both within the curriculum and as an activity. During the inspection, pupils showed that they acquire physical skill proficiently over time, and their ability, both in teams and as individuals, is reflected in successful participation in school, county and regional sporting events, including fencing and swimming. Pupils have gained places in county and national music ensembles. The broad range of, and high standards in, graded instrumental and drama results and pupils' success in a national art competition indicate that they achieve highly in the performing and creative arts. In the sixth form, in both their academic studies and in extra-curricular pursuits, such as debating and the medical society, pupils demonstrate excellent skills in independent working, reasoning and investigation. In 2015 almost all leavers gained places in a wide range of universities and courses.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014 for GCSE and A-level results, which are the most recent three years for which data are currently available. Results in GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and show improvement from 2012. Results in IGCSE have been higher than worldwide norms, and those in IGCSE biology, chemistry, physics and English language were also higher than UK norms for schools that enter pupils

for IGCSE. Results in GSCE in 2015 indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with previous years. Results at A level for the years 2012 to 2014 have been similar to those in maintained schools. Results at A level in 2015 are stronger than in the previous three years, particularly in respect of the proportion of pupils gaining grades A\* to B. The level of attainment in public examinations, together with the evidence gained from lesson observations, interviews and work scrutiny, indicates that pupils make progress overall that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities.

- 3.7 Pupils' attainment in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests. On the evidence available, including the broad and challenging curriculum, interviews, lesson observation and scrutiny of pupils' work, it is judged to be excellent in relation to age-related expectations and pupils make rapid progress. Throughout the school, pupils develop an extensive range of physical skills and compete in inter-school and inter-house sports activities.
- 3.8 Pupils with SEND and EAL progress well in most lessons, as a result of teaching that takes into account their needs and makes specific provision for them. At best, the needs of the more able are also met, through imaginative teaching or special provision for enrichment. However, practice does not consistently support the progress of the most able in all subjects and age groups.
- 3.9 Pupils show overwhelmingly positive attitudes to learning. In conversations with inspectors, they spoke of their enjoyment of lessons and their appreciation for being pushed to succeed. They are particularly conscious of the excellent relationships they enjoy with their teachers, and show great pride in the achievements of their fellow pupils.

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

- 3.10 The curriculum and extra-curricular provision are excellent.
- 3.11 A broad and balanced range of timetabled academic study and extra-curricular pursuits strongly support the school's aims.
- 3.12 The education programmes in the EYFS cover the seven areas of learning thoroughly and provide stimulating, enriching and challenging experiences, which are highly effective in promoting the children's language, communication, personal, social and emotional development, appropriate to their age. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities enables children to solve problems, create their own play and to explore their ideas, both indoors and outdoors, ensuring that all children reach expected levels of achievement. Children are helped to develop excellent speaking and listening skills. Detailed planning, which often reflects the particular interests of the children, supported by careful assessment, ensure that the particular needs of each child are very well met. The curriculum is further enhanced by the use of specialist staff for music, French and physical education (PE), including swimming.
- 3.13 The excellent junior school curriculum is strongly supplemented by specialist teaching in Mandarin, music and PE, and with guest speakers to the school. All pupils learn a stringed instrument in Year 3 and their participation in choirs and recorder ensembles, allows enthusiastic pupils to make informed choices about their preferred instruments. Pupils enjoy art and are able to be highly exploratory in a variety of media. A broad range of sports offers competitive skills training and junior school pupils enjoy an excellent choice of extra-curricular activities.

- 3.14 Pupils are well prepared to move from the junior to senior school so that their transfer is smoothly achieved. Similarly, in the senior school preparation for transfer to the next stage of education is carefully managed. Parents appreciate strongly the smooth transition between the different sections of the school. In the senior school, a broad range of GCSE and IGCSE subjects amply meet pupils' abilities and aspirations, including French, German and Mandarin, both English language and literature, combined and separate sciences, and further subjects, such as computing, home economics and physical education. Business studies, introduced at A level, expands the pupils' options further. Independent research and extension for the most able are evident within debates and societies, but are not consistently developed within subject lessons. Good, practical higher education and careers advice is shared through registration periods and augmented through discussions and presentations. A pupil-led medical society supports university applications and allows pupils to show initiative and leadership.
- 3.15 Throughout the school, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is provided through discrete lessons and pupils confidently discuss their personal development in registration periods. Dedicated ICT lessons address matters of e-safety. In both the junior and senior schools the pupils' skills in ICT develop across the curriculum and the ICT facilities enable better learning. However, in the senior school, ICT facilities remain underdeveloped and are used less well across the curriculum. A recommendation from the previous inspection is, therefore, not yet fully addressed. The school has set out plans for significant further investment in ICT in 2016.
- 3.16 Pupils with SEND and EAL are identified carefully and are helpfully supported within lessons. Those with on-going medical conditions are particularly well supported, with the help of external agencies, as appropriate, ensuring that all pupils can access the curriculum. A broad range of support and challenge is provided outside the classroom for more able pupils. However, in lessons, work is not always closely tailored to their needs, though with some exceptions, such as the extension work provided in music.
- 3.17 The curriculum provides pupils with an extensive international perspective and strongly promotes knowledge, understanding, respect and tolerance of other cultures and societies. Overseas trips are provided within the curriculum, such as a music study course in Hungary, and exchanges for pupils studying French, German and Mandarin. The prestigious 'Confucius Classroom' award, for excellence in the Mandarin language, recognises high levels of participation and further reinforces the school's dedication to global perspectives. World Challenge visits to Zambia and scientific trips to the Smithsonian museums in Washington DC enrich pupils' experiences of society and civilisation. In both curricular and extra-curricular activities, staff are careful to ensure a balanced presentation of opposing views in the coverage of political issues.
- 3.18 The regular promotion of a broad range of extra-curricular activities ensures widespread participation and senior management shares successfully with pupils their significant expectations for their involvement. Choirs, drama and ceramics enable pupils to develop their creative expression. Pupils enhance their usual areas of study with academic societies, such as the philosophy society, where they animatedly discuss knowledge issues.
- 3.19 Residential trips, including geography field trips, which develop academic skills, leadership and teamwork, strongly promote the pupils' personal and social

development. Older pupils benefit from personal challenge through the school's resident army cadet force, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

- 3.20 Benefiting from the school's historical location, pupils become involved in local historical events, such as the re-interment of King Richard III. Organising fundraising for the benefit of global and local charities encourages a keen sense of responsibility and involvement.

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

- 3.21 The quality of teaching is excellent.

- 3.22 It is highly effective in supporting the aims of the school to educate students to the highest standards to become full, confident and active members of the community, preparing them for the global society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses and in interviews, the overwhelming majority of the pupils indicated that teachers help them to learn and that they are happy with their progress. Inspection evidence fully supports these views.

- 3.23 Staff in the EYFS have a keen understanding of the requirements and how young children learn, and they tailor the activities skilfully to suit each child. Staff monitor carefully children's engagement with activities and know when to intervene to guide them in exploring and trying out new activities, appropriate to their stage of development. Good use is made of detailed observations to identify the progress and the next steps in the children's learning, which is effectively adapted to what arouses children's curiosity and interests. Children have free-flow access to the well-resourced outside area. Good use of the extensive school grounds enables them to extend their learning beyond the classroom. A good range of high quality resources is suitably labelled and readily accessible to the children.

- 3.24 From Year 1, extremely well-planned lessons, suitable for the ages and abilities of the pupils, result in lessons which engage and enthuse pupils, helping them to make at least expected, and sometimes rapid, progress, particularly in the junior school. Teaching is highly supportive of the pupils as individuals and shows excellent subject knowledge. Teachers give generously of their time out of class to help pupils learn. Pupils are highly appreciative of this. They benefit regularly from additional time with teachers, for example in individual support and booster lessons outside the timetable. In most lessons, expectations are high, the pace is brisk and a variety of teaching methods is used. Progress is slower in the small minority of lessons where the pace is slower and instances of individual challenge and initiative are reduced.

- 3.25 Teaching establishes strong relationships so that learning becomes a co-operative venture and this strongly fosters excellent pupil behaviour. Marking is regular and often detailed, but lacks consistency in quality throughout the whole school. The best examples offer positive, directed comments with analysis of weaknesses and strategies to improve. Pupils say that they know they are progressing because teachers discuss their work with them. They are appreciative of the targets set and the oral feedback received. Of those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority felt that their homework did not help them to learn. In discussions with inspectors, however, pupils stated that they understood that their homework helped them to make progress with their learning and that it reinforced work completed in class. Through work scrutiny, inspectors judged that the quantity and relevance of homework set is appropriate for all age groups. The

use of data from assessments is effective throughout the school, to monitor pupils' progress, set targets and inform lesson planning.

- 3.26 Throughout the school, teaching demonstrates a strong awareness of pupils' individual needs and excellent support is provided for pupils with SEND and those with EAL, who also benefit from additional support lessons. The school also fully meets the provision set out in EHC plans and the statements for pupils with special educational needs. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has focused on creating greater challenge within lessons for the more able. In the majority of the lessons observed, particularly in the junior school, these pupils are now challenged well by lesson content and, where appropriate, through structured groups, which enable more able pupils to work together. However, the provision of challenge for the more able is not yet consistent in all subjects and age groups across the school. The use of ICT across the curriculum has also improved since the previous inspection, but is not yet consistent.
- 3.27 Throughout the curriculum, and particularly through PSHCE and assemblies, teaching strongly promotes tolerance and respect, engendering positive relationships which underpin the pupils' learning. Teaching is carefully non-partisan in the coverage of political issues.

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

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school effectively meets its aim to help pupils develop responsibility, integrity, self-discipline, diligence, honesty and good manners and show respect for others.
- 4.3 The children's personal development in the EYFS is excellent. They are happy and thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They learn well together and from each other through gentle reminders about sharing and helping one another. They select their own activities and suggest which topics and activities they would like to include. Each child learns to take responsibility through taking turns to carry out simple tasks. Their behaviour is exemplary. They learn to understand and respect each other's differences through visits from parents and senior school pupils of other faiths and cultures, and also through themed cultural days, such as French day and Chinese New Year. Through class rules, which promote respect, tolerance and kindness, and through celebrations, for example harvest festival, bonfire night and Remembrance Day, they begin to gain an understanding of fundamental British values. The younger children interact extensively with children in Reception, mixing together for outdoor activities and for the extended day sessions. Children in Reception join willingly with older pupils, including their Year 5 buddies at playtimes, lunch and assemblies, preparing them well for the next stage in their education.
- 4.4 Throughout the school, pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Pupils are confident, articulate and have a well-developed sense of awareness and appreciation of others. Pupils have a strong appreciation for the world around them, reinforced by excellent use of the natural world to support their learning. Their spiritual development is further enhanced through the celebration of major religious festivals and the opportunity for reflection on the non-material world when involved in services in the local church. In Year 1 they engaged in a discussion of what heaven might be like and senior school pupils were transfixed by a fellow pupil's creative skill, performing a Rachmaninov prelude during assembly.
- 4.5 Pupils display excellent moral development. They show a well-tuned sense of right and wrong. They are extremely courteous and considerate, and respect the school rules, accepting the consequences of their actions. Pupils are keen to earn merits towards their house totals for their behaviour and good work. Visits from the police and discussions on rights and responsibilities as part of the PSHCE programme help pupils develop respect for the rule of the civil and criminal law of England. Senior school pupils develop excellent understanding of moral and ethical issues through debate and discussions on subjects such as slavery.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. They demonstrate a strong commitment to the community, work well together and have a keen awareness of the need to combat discrimination. Through sports teams, a well-developed house system and the school councils, pupils develop a strong sense of teamwork and take up positions of responsibility. They gain a strong sense of their social obligations to those who are less fortunate than themselves through charity fundraising and organising charitable activities. Monies raised support a large number of local charities, strengthening pupils' local links. Pupils also contribute strongly to the wider society, for example, through visits to entertain senior citizens. Through running a mock general election, visits from the emergency services and public

servants, and from the PSHCE programme, in particular the unit about the National Health Service, pupils develop a strong level of political and economic awareness and acquire a good knowledge of the roles and importance of public institutions in England. A well-established link with a school in China and participation in the World Challenge programme provides a global dimension to the pupils' strong sense of social justice.

- 4.7 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. They develop excellent understanding of cultures and societies different from their own and gain a detailed knowledge and understanding of world faiths through the religious education and PSHCE curriculum. In the Junior school, pupils celebrate events such as Diwali and Chinese New Year and they benefit from parents sharing their language, customs and celebrations. Pupils understand fundamental British values and show mutual respect and tolerance towards those with different faiths and beliefs. Work in history and involvement in the recent Richard III commemoration give them a clear understanding of the development of British culture. Theatre trips and school involvement in concerts and productions enable pupils to experience cultural performances at first hand.
- 4.8 Pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely positive about their school and all it had to offer them. By the time they leave the school, the pupils' personal and emotional development is excellent and they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 The school successfully achieves its aims for pupils to become full, confident and active members of society. Relationships are particularly strong between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves, and sustain a clear sense of community. Staff know pupils extremely well, and help them adeptly to take advantage of the school's many and varied opportunities.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, key adults know the children well and are excellent role models, supporting them effectively so that they feel safe and secure. Clear guidelines about expected standards of behaviour result in a really happy and busy atmosphere, where children benefit fully from all that is provided. Children are helped to understand and manage risk, such as how to move round the school grounds safely. A healthy lifestyle is strongly promoted by the provision of freshly prepared lunches and snacks and by access to the outside areas and sports hall for exercise.
- 4.12 Throughout the school, its positive ethos ensures that pupils readily recognise that bullying and harassment of any kind are unacceptable. Effective strategies to promote good behaviour are well understood by staff and pupils. They take due account of any related difficulty or disability. Pupils maintain high standards of behaviour and do not consider bullying to be an issue. Scrutiny of records and interviews with pupils and staff show that the school undertakes its responsibilities to prevent bullying seriously. Should it occur, pupils feel confident that it would be dealt with swiftly and fairly. Throughout both junior and senior schools, in and out of class, staff promote an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and confident. Excellent internet safety procedures and measures to guard against cyber-bullying guide and protect pupils in and out of school.

- 4.13 In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils felt that teachers are not always fair in the way they give rewards and sanctions. However, in their interviews and discussions with inspectors, pupils did not feel that this was a concern. The junior school's thorough guidance on, and records of, concerns and sanctions, shared with all staff, enable a consistent and coherent approach. Weekly pastoral meetings in the senior school monitor consistency and study emerging trends. In both sections of the school, consistency is further ensured through ready lines of communication to the senior team.
- 4.14 The school is highly effective in seeking the views of pupils. Although in the pre-inspection questionnaire pupils indicated concern about this, inspection evidence demonstrates that the views of the pupils are carefully sought and considered. Through student councils and pupil surveys, the school establishes a clear picture of pupils' views. Examples of this are the support for a pupil-led medical society and the PE department's expansion of boys' hockey provision as a result of pupil request.
- 4.15 Academic and catering staff, on both sites, effectively encourage pupils to be healthy through developing healthy eating habits, although the school does not consistently provide guidance regarding healthy snacks brought into school. Since the previous inspection, extensive improvements in sports provision and greater use of an extended junior school playground have enabled pupils to participate further in regular exercise. The school has an appropriate plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 In the EYFS, staff take a thorough approach to risk assessments. Daily checks ensure that any hazards or faulty equipment are repaired or removed without delay. Careful registration and the tracking of absence ensure high levels of attendance and that children are duly accounted for. Children look after their personal hygiene with great confidence and are suitably supported by adults when additional help is needed. Children are very well supervised, ensuring that they remain safe.
- 4.18 Throughout the school, measures to safeguard pupils are exemplary, supported by clear procedures. All staff and designated safeguarding lead persons (DSLs) are appropriately trained and demonstrate a strong coherent approach to safeguarding. Excellent relationships are maintained with the local safeguarding children board. Any concerns are reported promptly and in line with procedures.
- 4.19 The school has successfully implemented measures to fulfil its responsibilities associated with the new 'Prevent' strategy, in respect of radicalisation and extremism, and staff are aware of their role within this. New staff benefit from a thorough induction process, which includes information on safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures. Staff have access to appropriate safeguarding documentation and are aware of procedures. Checks on the appointment of new staff are completed meticulously.
- 4.20 The school has thorough measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards, including detailed risk assessments. The testing and maintenance of fire safety equipment is rigorous, making use of external contractors, as appropriate. Fire drills are undertaken regularly on both sites, with appropriate records maintained. Strategies for the health and safety of the site, and of staff and pupils, are overseen

effectively by a health and safety committee, which also oversees the organisation of educational visits and risk assessment procedures, ensuring high standards and a high level of health and safety awareness.

- 4.21 The school makes excellent provision for pupils who are ill, injured or with SEND. Information regarding medical conditions is gathered carefully and staff are trained thoroughly to support pupils' medical needs. First aid treatment and the administration of medicines are carefully recorded and reviewed centrally for any emerging trends.
- 4.22 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored in line with requirements.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors bring a wide range of expertise and experience to their roles and provide perceptive oversight of the school, ensuring rigorous and successful focus on the pursuit of the school's aims. This is strongly facilitated by the appropriate governors' committees, to which governors are appointed to reflect the particular skills they bring to the school. The scrutiny undertaken by the committees, which report to the full board, enables governors to gain a detailed understanding of the work of the school and undertake efficiently their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment.
- 5.3 The governing body is well informed about the EYFS. A governor visits the setting on a regular basis and briefs the board carefully about the school's vision for the setting.
- 5.4 New governors follow a thorough induction programme and the governing body demonstrates a strong commitment to undertaking relevant training. This ensures that, together with its reports from the headteachers, visits to the school, attendance at school events, links with the parents' association and the scrutiny of pupils' work, governors gain a perceptive insight into the working of the school. They monitor and evaluate carefully the work of the school and undertake regular reviews of school policies, according to a published schedule. A recent scrutiny of pupils' work provided the education committee with a clear picture of areas for improvement, consistent with the inspection team's own conclusions.
- 5.5 Regular meetings and communication between the leaderships of the governors and the school, and the assigning of governors to specific areas of school life, such as the junior school and safeguarding, provide strong support and challenge and a clear drive for growth, improvement and the promotion of pupils' well-being. Governors are highly effective in discharging their safeguarding and other statutory responsibilities. They have responded promptly to new requirements in relation to the 'Prevent' duty; a governor has undertaken relevant training and reported to the education committee, enabling governors to ensure staff training and the appropriate updating of procedures in school. Governors undertake a thorough annual review of safeguarding, which is discussed and approved by both the education committee and the full board.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management for the whole school including links with parents and guardians is excellent.
- 5.7 Throughout the school and at all levels of responsibility, leadership and management are highly successful in realising the school's aims, apparent in the high level of satisfaction shown by both parents and pupils in questionnaire responses and interviews. The most positive response in the return from parents was to the statement, 'The school is well led and managed', to which all parents agreed.

- 5.8 In the EYFS, thorough, recently reviewed policies and regular monitoring ensure regulatory requirements are met and effectively implemented. Careful appointment checks ensure that only suitably qualified adults, who update their training regularly, work with children. Staff in the EYFS share a clear vision for the continued development of the setting. A strong emphasis on self-evaluation ensures that areas for development are quickly identified and action is taken to improve. Staff are well qualified and their performance is regularly monitored through formal appraisal, so that areas for professional development are identified and addressed. The system for staff to receive regular coaching through supervision meetings, to improve personal effectiveness, is still in the early stages of development and not yet formalised. Strong partnerships with parents and good links with external agencies contribute to the comprehensive understanding that adults have of each child. All staff in the EYFS understand the importance of diversity and promoting fundamental British values.
- 5.9 Following recommendations from the previous inspection, improvements have been made in the EYFS to the outdoor provision, which has added greatly to the children's experiences. A more detailed system for short term planning, with greater emphasis on child-initiated play and challenge for the more able has been introduced. Integration and communication between Nursery and Reception are greatly improved, and the setting demonstrates continuing capacity for improvement.
- 5.10 Throughout the school, since the previous inspection, the appointment of new leadership has prompted a comprehensive process of high quality strategic development planning and a review of the appraisal system, which has involved all members of staff and the board of governors. All staff are part of carefully devised departmental and pastoral structures. This participation provides staff with a strong sense of ownership of school development. Leaders, therefore, are able to give clear direction through this shared vision to ensure that pupils achieve the highest possible academic standards and excellent personal development. Staff appointed to the school are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils and supportive of the school's aims. After a careful induction process, they join a cohesive team, which both works extremely well together and provides excellent role models for the pupils, who wholeheartedly appreciate them.
- 5.11 Policies are regularly reviewed, and ratified by governors. Particular attention is given to safeguarding pupils; the four DSLs rigorously check current statutory processes in order to keep the pupils safe. Members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and the school has an excellent relationship with the local safeguarding agencies. Leadership ensures that the suitability of staff and volunteers, supply staff and governors is checked thoroughly and details are recorded clearly and accurately on the central register.
- 5.12 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the junior and senior schools' management work closely together to ensure the close monitoring of both teaching and learning. Close liaison within and between the schools and regular departmental reviews ensure academic continuity. Throughout the school, pupils' work is scrutinised carefully, a process which involves a governor and provides an agenda for further improvement.
- 5.13 Leadership and management throughout the school are characterised by the commitment and dedication of the senior leadership team, who are assiduously dedicated to achieving the school's aim of producing well-rounded pupils with an

understanding of the world around them, proud to be themselves and confident without being arrogant.

- 5.14 The quality of links with parents, based on genuine care for and knowledge of the pupils and their families, is excellent. That parents are happy with the provision for their children is endorsed by the almost wholly positive response to the parental pre-inspection questionnaire.
- 5.15 The EYFS has excellent links with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and in conversation with inspectors, parents in the EYFS are overwhelmingly positive about the setting and the support their children are given. They particularly value the daily notes they receive about what their child has done at school and the accessibility of all staff in the EYFS. They appreciate the opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, including contributing to assessment and being able to volunteer to help on school outings. The end of year reports and regular parents' evenings keep parents very well informed about the progress their children make against the early learning goals.
- 5.16 Throughout the school, staff maintain excellent relationships with parents, who are confident that concerns are handled quickly and carefully. In the junior school an open-door policy operates and parents know concerns will be resolved speedily. The facility to make contact as soon as they have a concern is now also available at the senior school and parents strongly approve of this. Complaints are infrequent and are dealt with promptly and carefully logged in accordance with the complaints procedure.
- 5.17 Parents and guardians are kept well informed about their children's academic and personal progress in comprehensive regular reports and parents' meetings. They know about activities at the school through magazines, as well as the informative website. The most effective and valued method of communication is the recently introduced electronic smartphone application, which provides immediate two-way communication between school and home. The active parents' association underpins the community feel of the school in support of the pupils; it hosts social events, which are supported by school staff and occasionally governors. Many are involved in supporting the work of the school, for example by giving talks to sixth formers about careers. Current parents are encouraged to attend school open days with their children and in the junior school open afternoons enable pupils to show their school to their parents and grandparents. The association gives good support to new parents.
- 5.18 Parents and prospective parents are provided with all the required information by the school. In discussion with inspectors, parents were keen to applaud positive changes made by the new leadership, such as stopping parking in the senior school playground to give more space for recreation. They like the fact that the two sites are increasingly being considered as one school; the introduction of a highly successful joint sports day was cited as an example. Parents are delighted with the way the school deals with each pupil as an individual.

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