



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MALSIS SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	Malsis School
DfE Number	815/6025
Registered Charity Number	529336
Address	Malsis School Cross Hills North Yorkshire BD20 8DT
Telephone Number	01535 633027
Fax Number	01535 630571
Email Address	admin@malsis.com
Head	Mr Marcus Peel
Chair of Governors	Mr D Anthony Johnson
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	110
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (76 boys; 34 girls;)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 10 11-13: 51 6-10: 49
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 67
Number of Boarders	Total: 43 Full: 34 Part-time: 9
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	15 May 2012 to 18 May 2012

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and/or disabilities).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning corporal punishment.

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 Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

Under Government arrangements, the inspection of boarding became an integrated part of ISI inspections from 1 September 2011. 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in March 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the

school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Paul James

Mr Giles Delaney

Mrs Linda Donowho

Ms Louise Savage

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headteacher, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	9
(d) The quality of boarding	10
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	12

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Malsis is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from three to thirteen, located in extensive parkland in Cross Hills on the outskirts of Skipton. The school was established as a boys' boarding preparatory school for seven to thirteen year olds in 1920. The school became a charitable company directed by its governors in 1956. In the late 1990s a pre-prep was opened for three to seven year olds and the school became co-educational throughout. The Reception class, which constitutes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is housed in a purpose-built facility, adjacent to the main school in which the remainder of the year groups are accommodated.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection there were 110 pupils (76 boys and 34 girls) at the school, of whom ten were in the EYFS. The boarding section housed 34 full boarders, including a number with homes overseas, and a further nine part-time boarders; staying at school for two to four nights each week. Boarding is viewed as a significant element of preparation for senior school. A small number of pupils transfer to local grammar schools at the age of eleven. Pupils come from a wide range of economic backgrounds and the vast majority are of white British origin.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with around two-thirds of pupils having at least above average ability, but there is a wide range of other abilities represented across the school. Fifteen children have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with six receiving specialised support from the school, which also provides extra help for four pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 The school aims to provide a broad education, embracing academic study, sport, the arts, technology, adventure pursuits and much more; to ensure that the pupils receive a balanced preparation for the next stage of their school career and for later life. The school aims to encourage pupils to be purposeful in all that they do; to lead a well-balanced life, to be charming in their dealings with others and to develop a sense of modest style.
- 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 The pupils' achievement throughout the school is excellent. In line with the school's aims, they achieve very well and make excellent progress across an extensive range of subjects and activities, from Latin to bush-craft. By the end of the EYFS, all children achieve high standards in all six areas of learning. The pupils' attitude to learning is outstanding. They are articulate, interact confidently with adults and their peers, and demonstrate independence and initiative. Pupils ask reflective questions to extend their learning and debate with polite assurance. The majority are well organised, co-operative and supportive of one another and achieve excellence in a broad range of skills, within and beyond the classroom. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and boarding is seen as an integral part of that preparation for many. Virtually all pupils gain entry to their first choice of secondary school, with a significant proportion gaining scholarships in a range of subjects or all-rounder awards, which indicates the progress made by most pupils in both academic and non-academic fields.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. In response to the school's aims, they develop with confidence, safe in the knowledge that they will be valued as individuals, by the staff and their peers. Pupils are perceptive, humble and self-aware, which is what the school refers to as the Malsis style. Pupils are open minded, critical and reflective; equally at home in the chapel or in the natural environment of the school grounds and surrounding fells. The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is excellent, as is the quality of the boarding experience. The family atmosphere ensures the well-being of day pupils and boarders alike, who profess that they love the school and are proud to be there. Pupils work together across the age groups, with older pupils assisting younger pupils and ensuring they are all safe. The excellent quality of pastoral care is testament to the commitment of the whole staff team to the welfare and protection of the pupils.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are good. Since the previous inspection the school has been taken through a period of change and challenge. The school's current vision for the future is clear and well founded in self-evaluation although the whole-school development plan lacks detail. In response to questionnaires parents expressed strong support for the school, views which inspection evidence supports. In response to the previous inspection, academic policies, including that for marking, and guidance on supporting pupils with additional needs are in place but these are not yet consistently applied across departments and monitoring is limited in scope. The recently restructured management team has a brief to address these issues. The measures required in the previous Ofsted report, in relation to child protection have been taken highly effectively. Outcomes and provision in the EYFS are excellent but management of the setting is not fully integrated into the whole-school structures.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

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

2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the school development plan is sufficiently detailed and fully reflects the vision of governors and senior leaders.
2. Ensure that monitoring of whole school academic policy and integration of the EYFS into management structures are fully implemented.
3. Achieve consistency in marking in line with the school policy.
4. Ensure that all classroom practice supports pupils with additional needs.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school the overall standard of the pupils' literacy, numeracy, logical thought, creativity and application of ICT is excellent. Pupils display secure knowledge, skills and understanding. More able pupils make very good progress, supported and extended beyond the basic curriculum. In some academic lessons, the achievements and progress of pupils with SEND lack consistency.
- 3.3 The pupils achieve very well across an extensive range of curricular and extra-curricular activities and they make excellent progress in response to the school's aims. Pupils from Year 3 and above are invited to attempt the twenty-six mile Three Peaks Challenge. It is testament to their resilience and eagerness for challenge, that the majority complete this. The pupils' response to challenge is clearly illustrated in the many sporting successes of teams achieving excellent results. Pupils achieve highly through the school's enrichment time (ET) and protected activity time (PAT) mastering a range of skills, including scuba diving, den-building and rug-making. Pupils produce excellent displays, including three-dimensional sculptures that draw upon a range of visual and textural stimuli. They use ICT very creatively; with examples in geography fieldwork and an interesting display of manipulated photographs of themselves. Pupils achieve excellence in a broad range of skills, including excellent musical events and drama productions.
- 3.4 In the EYFS, outcomes for children are excellent. By the end of the stage all children achieve high standards in all six areas of learning. They engage fully and happily with all their learning and work extremely well both in groups and independently. Children enjoy demonstrating and practising their skills. During the inspection, they were proud of their ability to spell a wide range of words phonetically or to teach their parents a number game learnt at school.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average but on the evidence available during the inspection, including the results of standardised tests of attainment taken in Years 4 to 8 it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. The school prepares its pupils well for their move to secondary school. Almost all pupils are successful in gaining entry to their first choice of school with a significant number of scholarships and awards gained for music, drama, ICT, sport and academic subjects in independent schools. The school values its pupils' excellent achievements in a broad range of skills, through the ET and PAT programmes, which encourage pupils to achieve high personal goals irrespective of any additional SEND or EAL needs. As a result these groups make good progress overall, but those with SEND could make better progress within the academic curriculum.
- 3.6 The pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding. They interact eagerly and confidently with adults and their peers and demonstrate a high degree of independence and initiative. This was seen during a lesson for older pupils, in which they demonstrated excellent analytical skills and applied their initiative to discover how people learn. Pupils are particularly adept at asking reflective and insightful questions to extend their own learning, and engage enthusiastically in oral work; debating and discussing with polite assurance. In the EYFS, the children meet challenge with enthusiasm and set about their work with a strong sense of purpose

and perseverance. In a model-making session children selected the materials for a rocket station with great care and modified the design until satisfied with the result.

- 3.7 The pupils' level of organisation is strong. Their work is well presented, they are punctual to lessons, quick to settle, apply themselves well to tasks with minimum fuss and they co-operate and support one another very well.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The school's aim to provide an education that encompasses both academic study and wider pursuits, and one which prepares pupils for the challenges of later life is very well supported by an academic curriculum which extends to include French, Latin and drama. The ICT curriculum is effective in providing pupils with opportunities to develop their work in a variety of ways, including imaginative use of interactive whiteboards that are found in most classrooms, publication of fieldwork and other projects, and independent research. Reading remains a core focus for pupils of all ages and is timetabled daily after lunch. Teachers listen to pupils read regularly and the library club encourages pupils to review and share books with their peers and younger pupils. A 'learning to learn' programme successfully supports pupils to develop their study skills.
- 3.10 The academic curriculum provides a good range of subjects and learning opportunities for all pupils. This is well supported by the ET and PAT programmes of cross-curricular learning. For example during a mountain biking activity pupils discussed how different sized cogs affect speed and the energy expended by the rider. A bush-craft lesson on fire-lighting included elements of human physiology and the oxygen content of expelled air, as well as a discussion about just how much moisture remains in an apparently dry stick. The curriculum is well balanced giving considerable time to learning beyond the classroom, through experience. This is greatly valued by the pupils who spoke very positively in interviews of the options available and the enjoyment they gain. The extended curriculum includes dry stone walling, ghyll-climbing and riding and makes excellent use of the school's grounds, including a golf course and extensive woodlands. This exceptional breadth of opportunity encourages all pupils to challenge themselves, to develop resilience and to take manageable risks; all of which will assist them in later life. This also supports the achievements and progress of pupils with SEND, who may excel beyond the classroom.
- 3.11 All pupils are fully involved in the sporting life of the school representing it in a range of sporting fixtures from hockey to judo, irrespective of ability. The well-balanced curriculum offers opportunities to develop leadership skills in sports and musical activities as well as through adventurous pursuits and team-building exercises. The ET programme includes service activity for senior pupils, such as helping younger children to read from which they gain much benefit.
- 3.12 Children thrive in the inspiring and inclusive environment in the EYFS. The self-contained setting is bright, spacious and welcoming. It fosters independence by giving children spaces to play, build, role play, use their senses and develop friendships as well as by giving them time and space to be still and reflective. Sufficient high-quality resources are managed efficiently and these strongly support most aspects of the curriculum. They are easily accessible to the children to enable them to make free and independent choices throughout the day. Some ICT

resources such as camera and audio equipment are not age appropriate and limit independent exploration. The safe and secure outside areas provide many opportunities to explore and to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The school grounds are used extremely effectively to provide challenge and encourage children to take appropriate risks. Imaginative use includes presenting the summer production of Jack and the Beanstalk from the exciting tree house structure.

- 3.13 In addition to use of a neighbouring outdoor adventure centre, pupils engage with a local primary school and visitors are invited to their many public musical and dramatic performances. The school hosts a number of local events during the weekends, with the boarders especially contributing to the organisation of these with enthusiasm.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The overall quality of teaching is good.
- 3.15 Throughout the school, pupils benefit from much teaching that is well planned, engaging and delivered with enthusiasm by staff with good subject knowledge. The pupils' enjoyment is clear. At all levels, the quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress, and to fulfilling the school's aims. The most successful teaching is characterised by a well-versed and perceptive understanding of the pupils' needs. This is reflected in activities and teaching styles, as well as marking and feedback that are tailored to the needs and ability of individual pupils, and which use appropriate resources. During a literacy lesson for younger pupils, those with SEND were supported well in line with the expectations of their individual education plan and made good progress. However whilst effective information is provided about the pupils' individual needs, disseminated amongst staff and included in daily planning, the support necessary for all pupils, particularly those with SEND, to make excellent progress is not consistently provided by all staff. In the most successful teaching, an imaginative approach to extension activities, including open-ended problem-solving investigations elicits intelligent, perceptive and independent responses from more able pupils. During a mathematics lesson, older pupils were asked to find both the height of a two-storey ceiling and the volume of the school swimming pool by using previously learnt mathematical formulae and did so highly successfully.
- 3.16 Marking is a strength of much of the teaching but not consistent across all subject areas. In mathematics the books of older pupils were marked in their presence; comprehensive comments on areas of strength and those for further development enabled the pupils to make good progress. In some subjects marking, whilst positive and encouraging, does not highlight strengths and weaknesses nor indicate how the pupils may improve. The school is beginning to develop its tracking system, but this has not yet impacted on achievement or progress.
- 3.17 Overall teaching in the EYFS is excellent. Staff are exceptionally skilled in recognising and supporting the unique way in which each child approaches their daily learning experiences and consequently all children make very good progress. Self-evaluation and reflection form the bedrock of the daily planning and organisation of the setting, and staff constantly strive to sustain existing high standards in all areas. Informative learning profiles document the children's progress, giving a real sense of the individual child. Careful observations identify the children's achievements, developmental needs and next steps in learning which are then incorporated into written planning.

- 3.18 Pupils across the school respect their teachers who they say are supportive and approachable. In interview they also said that teachers recognise and are quick to offer support when pupils lack confidence in a subject and are in need of help. The relationships that pupils have with their teachers play a fundamental role in the development of resilience and independence, and the respect they have for others.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The success of the school's aims, particularly that of developing what the school calls the Malsis style, is reflected very well in the pupils' interactions with staff and visitors, but overwhelmingly with each other. Pupils develop with confidence, safe in the knowledge that they will be valued as individuals. Pupils commented that the school encourages them to be themselves and that 'you don't have to try to be like anyone else.' Not only do pupils demonstrate tolerance of each other, but also mutual respect for any and all achievements, which is accepted with modesty and equanimity, ensuring a high level of personal development by the time they leave the school.
- 4.3 Spiritual development is outstanding. The pupils are open-minded, critical and sympathetic. They have opportunities for reflection in Saturday morning chapel services, during which around half of the pupils contribute enthusiastically and with accomplishment through choral music, reflecting a sense of awe. They are equally at one with the natural environment within and beyond the school grounds, clearly appreciating all its facets and forces. Their work in religious studies (RS) illustrates an understanding of the tenets and festivals of many faiths. The close family atmosphere of the school community is valued by all, including overseas boarders and international pupils. Many pupils indicate that their self-esteem has developed greatly.
- 4.4 Pupils throughout the school have a keen moral awareness. They understand the need to maintain high standards of behaviour and have a strongly developed sense of right and wrong. In the EYFS children show an excellent understanding of the standard of behaviour expected and they keep themselves and others safe. During the inspection older pupils illustrated their awareness of the needs of others as they prepared to participate in the Race for Life, for Cancer Research. Many such charitable contributions are initiated each year by pupils.
- 4.5 Pupils are perceptive and self-aware; they develop exceptional social skills. Older pupils make a contribution to their community by reading with younger pupils occasionally, and on a daily basis pupils frequently extend a helping hand to others; literally, on the low ropes obstacle course, and metaphorically in chatting over lunch at house tables. The ET and PAT programmes often involve pupils of different age groups, leading to mutual care and consideration being shown. Older pupils develop some economic and political awareness.
- 4.6 Cultural development is excellent. Pupils display strong awareness of and sensitivity to different cultures. Music is appreciated within an extensive range of traditions. The calendar of performances encompasses internal music and drama performances, including many choral works performed by choirs and ensembles, visits by professional performers and a rock concert. During the inspection a highly accomplished performance of *Annie* was viewed, which reflected qualities of strength and sensitivity beyond the pupils' years. Visits to galleries and a nearby sculpture garden inspire the pupils' own artwork.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 Pastoral care is a particular strength of the school; pupils confirm that they feel extremely safe and happy. The well-structured arrangements are given a high priority within the school's ethos and routines, supporting the pupils' personal development exceptionally well. Pupils are very well known by all staff who help them to thrive individually and as members of the community and there is excellent support and guidance, with personal tutors as the first point of contact.
- 4.9 Relationships between the staff and the pupils, and among the pupils themselves, are excellent, and they show appreciation of, respect and affection for the staff. Respect for one other is evident in all areas including the EYFS, and the pastoral aims of the school are fully realised. The warm family atmosphere is appreciated both by pupils and parents. The pupils state confidently that they can turn to the staff for help in the event of any concern, and strongly agree that bullying is extremely rare. The anti-bullying policy is comprehensive and staff deal with any instances quickly and constructively.
- 4.10 The school has a strong culture of praise, rewarding good behaviour and effort through a variety of methods, including celebrating success in the weekly house meetings. The house system encourages pupils to be responsible and to work as a team; pupils are proud of their houses and of their school. Sanctions are generally applied fairly. Channels of communication are excellent and ensure that the views of pupils are heard. Pupils are most enthusiastic about the work of the school council which provides them with an opportunity to experience the principles of democracy and to discuss their views and ideas with the school management.
- 4.11 Pupils develop a thorough understanding of the importance of choosing a healthy diet and participating in physical exercise. Food is plentiful and nutritious; menus change regularly and the caterers try to meet all individual dietary needs.
- 4.12 The school has a plan covering three years which improves access for pupils with SEND to its provision.

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

- 4.13 The provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is excellent.
- 4.14 The arrangements for safeguarding pupils throughout the school, including children in the EYFS, are thorough. Since the previous inspection the school has reviewed each of the policies in detail and safeguarding practice is strong. As required in the previous inspection report the policy is fully implemented. Staff and governors, including those with special responsibilities as designated senior staff, have received all necessary and relevant child protection training. Close and regularly reinforced relationships are maintained with local welfare agencies. The recording of incidents, or pupils at risk, is efficient and due regard is paid to confidentiality.
- 4.15 Extremely effective measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards, and documentation of all aspects of health and safety is meticulous. Useful and stringent risk assessments are in place for all areas of the school, and include external visits. Action is taken to eliminate or minimise hazards within the EYFS classrooms and in the outside areas and all decisions concerned with health and safety are based on thoughtful risk assessments.

- 4.16 Arrangements for administering first aid, and for sick or injured pupils, are excellent. Staff are very well informed about individual pupils' needs and conditions, including any pupils with SEND, and the medical centre makes comfortable provision for pupils who are unwell. The excellent facilities and availability of trained staff in the medical centre enable sick or injured children to be looked after with great care. Accident reporting procedures are rigorous and records are accurately maintained.
- 4.17 The admission and attendance registers are maintained accurately, and are suitably archived.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.19 All the recommendations of the previous Ofsted inspection have been met. The outcomes for boarders are excellent, and their personal development is extremely well promoted by their boarding experience. All staff involved in boarding are particularly knowledgeable about the boarders' individual needs, and demonstrate a strong commitment to improving outcomes for those in their care. Consequently, boarders know who they can approach for personal guidance and help, including nominated adults outside the school. Boarders mix well and support one another enthusiastically. They learn to live in a community that incorporates a range of age groups, which enhances their maturity and empathy towards others. Established boarders happily guide and support any new boarders as part of the buddy system and younger boarders appreciate this support, valuing the encouragement, camaraderie, and the friendships they make. This ethos is a strength of boarding life. The relationship between boarders and staff is extremely strong; it promotes a most caring and harmonious atmosphere which is reflected throughout the school. All boarders are proud of the contribution they make to the school community; they are happy and self-assured and demonstrate clearly the successful development of personal integrity. Overseas boarders, including those with EAL, confidently join in all activities and enjoy learning English through their interaction with their friends, their work, and the many varied activities available to them. Boarders are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education and look forward to increasing independence and responsibility.
- 4.20 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The boarding area is warm and well decorated, and provides a welcoming and comfortable environment. Well-furnished common rooms provide exceptionally well for the boarders' leisure time. Facilities for sleeping and washing, and the provision of toilets, are suitable. Boarders experience a wealth of evening and weekend opportunities, provided through clubs and activities. Staff encourage all boarders to participate fully in extra-curricular life. These activities, whilst encouraging the development of numerous different skills, allow for self-directed time and freedom of choice. Staff keep accurate records of all boarders, including records of their participation in activities. There is a thorough process of induction and clear information is given to new boarders at the outset.
- 4.21 Boarders are helped to stay fit and healthy; they benefit from the excellent care they are given by medical staff in the well-resourced medical provision which offers a warm and caring environment for the boarders. Without exception, boarders spoke highly of the plentiful, varied and nutritious food, which provides for individual dietary needs. There are food theme days, a cookery club, and birthday celebrations. The views of the boarders and ideas for new additions to the menu are always

considered. Drinking water is available at all times, and snacks are available at appropriate intervals during the day. The school communicates with parents, carers and guardians through email, phone calls and regular direct contact. Boarders themselves are able to maintain regular communication with their family through a variety of means, and family members are welcomed into the school; they visit regularly for sports matches, plays and seasonal events or for occasional meals.

- 4.22 Pupils' welfare is at the forefront of everyday practice and arrangements for the welfare and safeguarding of boarders are excellent. Comprehensive policies and procedures are firmly in place and adhered to by all staff. Staff have a thorough understanding of safeguarding responsibilities. They are very well supported by designated staff, with appropriate training, and there are strong links with the local authority. All boarding staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Links between boarding and academic staff are strong, enabling any minor concerns and issues to be discussed informally, and recorded when necessary. Any concerns or issues that arise are conscientiously communicated to day staff. This ensures consistency of care and that all pupils quickly become assimilated into the community. The boarders feel very safe within the boarding community; the supportive and caring environment ensures that there is a culture of openness between the staff and pupils, so that difficulties are dealt with swiftly and calmly. Systems for behaviour management are fair and well understood by all. Sanctions are in place and appropriately recorded but are rarely invoked because good behaviour is praised and positive incentives are offered. Stringent measures to prevent unauthorised access to boarding areas and regular fire drills ensure the boarders' safety. Staff are aware of each boarder's whereabouts. Meticulous risk assessments are in place for both on-site activities and out-of-school visits, and boarders are encouraged to be conscious of their own safety.
- 4.23 The quality of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. Enthusiastic staff give of their time and energy to enrich the boarders' lives. This fulfils the boarding aims of the school to develop the whole child within the very friendly and purposeful atmosphere. This is evident from the smooth running of the boarding house and the positive ambience that is apparent throughout. The management of care is well co-ordinated and effectively responds to the boarders' needs and views. While confident in maintaining these high standards of care, staff are not complacent and continue to consider ways to improve further, as outlined in the boarding development plan. A comprehensive induction programme ensures that all new staff fully understand all relevant policies and procedures and child protection training has been undertaken by all staff. In their responses to the questionnaires, parents were highly appreciative of the care and support their children receive, a view strongly endorsed by inspection findings.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

5.1 The quality of governance is good.

5.2 A board of governors with a broad range of expertise has overseen a period of change and challenge since the previous inspection. Their current vision for the school is clear and well founded on self-evaluation. The board is focused on developing the school in line with its aims. The governors very effectively support the day-to-day running and resourcing of the school financially, including in terms of accommodation, to allow the fulfilment of its aims and to ensure the welfare, health and safety of the pupils, and their excellent academic achievement and personal development. However, their vision is not clearly manifested in the current school development plan. They take an interest in educational standards and pastoral matters and have a clear understanding of their statutory responsibilities. This includes an annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements. A recently appointed governor has a particular interest in child safeguarding and the EYFS. This ensures effective oversight of EYFS by the whole governing body. In recent months the governors have overseen a restructuring of the senior leadership in the school, but this is not yet fully embedded.

5.3 Governors are well known to the staff and many are regular visitors to functions and events. There has been little time for close liaison with the academic life of the school, but this is now being initiated through mechanisms such as the appraisal of the headmaster by a governor with academic experience. The board provides for capable staff to be recruited, and ensures that safer recruitment procedures are properly followed. Governors are in regular contact with the headmaster, providing valuable guidance and they undertake appropriate training to support their role.

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

5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good.

5.5 Leadership and management are very effective in promoting the aims of the school and their success is reflected in the pupils' achievements across a broad spectrum of curricular and extra-curricular provision. The pupils' outstanding personal development is a direct response to the exceptional quality of pastoral care and safeguarding afforded to boarders and day pupils alike. In response to the previous inspection report, monitoring has been introduced, aiming to remove inconsistencies in planning and marking, and to provide better specialist guidance about pupils with SEND. Subject co-ordinators now monitor planning, teaching and resources. Lesson observation, mutual peer observation and focused targets are used to support staff, but do not yet ensure consistency in departments' practices and procedures. Following the recent restructuring of the senior leadership, line management is not sufficiently clear to ensure the necessary oversight to embed academic policies across all departments

5.6 Records, policies and procedures for the safe and efficient management of the EYFS are in place and related measures are implemented rigorously. Equality and diversity are promoted strongly and fully embraced by the staff.

- 5.7 A systematic process of staff appraisal effectively identifies areas for professional development. A high priority is given to staff professional development; governors and management are supportive of formal requests through appraisal and informal approaches as often as possible. Since the previous inspection, good quality in-service training has been provided within the school. In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection, departments now produce detailed development plans for their subject area, with specific, measureable, achievable and realistic targets, but these do not currently feed into the overall school development plan, which does not adequately reflect the management and the governors' vision for the future of the main school. Self-evaluation in the EYFS is rigorous but priorities for improvement are not yet included in the whole school development plan. While the immediate needs are clearly identified through self-evaluation, the school development plan does not provide long-term goals that are sufficiently specific, nor are specific timescales provided.
- 5.8 Staff appointments follow clear procedures to ensure recruitment of high quality staff and to assure their suitability and that of governors, to work with children. There is a particularly robust induction process. All staff are suitably trained in their roles in safeguarding, health and safety.
- 5.9 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents. The parents' views as expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school and the progress their children make. They particularly commend the pastoral support and guidance shown to their children, the warm and welcoming environment, the range and quality of extra-curricular activities available and the way in which these opportunities, alongside the supportive teaching, help their children to gain rapidly in confidence. There was ample evidence during the inspection of that unassuming confidence.
- 5.10 Communication between school and home is open and free-flowing. Newsletters keep parents well informed of events and issues. Matters of daily interest are relayed by a text and email messaging service and queries and concerns are dealt with promptly and warmly. The school has an appropriate procedure to deal with complaints and this is operated effectively. Parents of pupils and prospective pupils receive all the required information.
- 5.11 An active parents' association supports the school through a wide variety of fundraising and social events. These range from cookery demonstrations to the Summer Ball. Parents feel that they are welcome in the school community and enjoy the informal opportunities to meet with staff after Saturday chapel or performances and at the parents' forums throughout the year. Twice each term parents are invited to attend short commendation assemblies as well as the larger scale events such as the Carol Service, Remembrance Service and Prize Giving.
- 5.12 In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection, pupil reports to parents have been significantly improved. They are sent to parents twice a year. They are comprehensive and many include specific guidance for further improvement and success. Half-term reviews and termly curriculum overviews give parents further insight into the progress of their children and enable them to follow their learning. Regular parents' evenings take place for each year group throughout the school and 'Open Book', is a very popular opportunity for parents to view their children's books and to engage with staff.

- 5.13 The EYFS works very effectively with all parents to support their children's learning. Parents feel a strong sense of partnership based on mutual trust and confidence in the staff and are very impressed by their attention to detail and individual knowledge of the children's needs.
- 5.14 The management team plans and oversees the highly successful, comprehensive PAT and ET programmes, which add the unique flavour to the school. The school grounds are a particularly well-managed asset of the school, ensuring a safe but exciting environment in which the pupils can enjoy their childhood, within a family atmosphere, created and maintained by a cohesive and committed team of management, boarding, teaching and non-teaching staff.

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