



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
WISBECH GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Wisbech Grammar School

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Full Name of School       | <b>Wisbech Grammar School</b>  |
| DfE Number                | <b>873/6013</b>  |
| Registered Charity Number | <b>1087799</b>   |
| Address                   | <b>Wisbech Grammar School<br/>47 North Brink<br/>Wisbech<br/>Cambridgeshire<br/>PE13 1JX</b> |
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| Head                      | <b>Mr Nicholas Hammond</b>   |
| Chair of Governors        | <b>Dr Dennis Barter</b>  |
| Age Range                 | <b>4 to 18</b>   |
| Total Number of Pupils    | <b>583</b>   |
| Gender of Pupils          | <b>Mixed (312 boys; 271 girls)</b>   |
| Numbers by Age            | 4-5 (EYFS): <b>14</b> 5-11: <b>166</b><br>11-18: <b>403</b>                                  |
| Number of Day Pupils      | Total: <b>583</b>  |
| Head of EYFS Setting      | <b>Mr Chris Moxon</b>  |
| EYFS Gender               | <b>Mixed</b>   |
| Inspection Dates          | <b>04 Feb 2014 to 07 Feb 2014</b>  |

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

### Inspectors

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Mrs Gwen Caddock       | Reporting Inspector                                  |
| Mrs Charlotte Johnston | Team Inspector (Deputy Head (Academic), IAPS school) |
| Mr Stephen Lea         | Team Inspector (Director of Music, IAPS school)      |
| Mr Andrew Matthews     | Team Inspector (Deputy Head (Academic), HMC school)  |
| Mrs Pam Simmonds       | Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)            |
| Mr Jason Slack         | Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)              |
| Mr Jonathan Ullmer     | Team Inspector (Principal, ISA school)               |
| Mrs Rosamund Walwyn    | Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years              |

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Wisbech Grammar School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged from 4 to 18 years. The school was created by the merger of the original Grammar School, a boys school founded in 1379 by the Guild of the Holy Trinity, with a girls school, Wisbech High School, founded in 1904. The school remains on the site of the girls school on North Brink, the riverside, in the market town of Wisbech. The school became independent in 1983. In 1997 the preparatory school, Magdalene House, was established alongside the senior school and named after the Cambridge college with which the school had long links. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) offers places for approximately 20 pupils aged 4 to 5 in Reception. Many pupils start their education in Reception and continue through to the sixth form. The school is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The school is governed by a board of 11 governors, all of whom are trustees. Two members of the board are nominated by Magdalene College and one by the Bishop of Ely. Three committees and individual governors who take on specific responsibilities such as safeguarding or health and safety support the work of the full board.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a wide range of opportunities in a harmonious and disciplined environment, inspired by its Christian foundation, which allow all pupils to realise their potential.
- 1.3 The school has 583 pupils, with 14 in Reception, 166 in the prep school and 403 in the senior school. The results of nationally standardised tests administered by the school show that the ability profile of the prep school is above the national average with approximately two-thirds of pupils having ability that is at least above average, with few below average ability. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with around three-quarters of pupils of at least above average, and almost a fifth having ability that is well above average. Ability at entry to the sixth form is broadly average. Pupils come from a wide range of family backgrounds, including farming, business and professional with many families having long links with the school. Many different nationalities, religions and cultures are represented. Pupils travel from the town and the wider region. The school has a long tradition of assisted places, continued from its earlier foundation; currently the Governors' Assisted Places Scheme supports one-third of pupils.
- 1.4 At present 68 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mainly dyslexia, of whom 14 receive support for their learning in school. Two pupils have statements of special educational need supported by the local educational authority. Eleven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) but all are assessed as fluent and not needing any additional support.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

**Early Years Foundation Stage Setting**

| School    | NC name   |
|-----------|-----------|
| Reception | Reception |

**Magdalene House**

| School | NC name |
|--------|---------|
| P1     | Year 1  |
| P2     | Year 2  |
| P3     | Year 3  |
| P4     | Year 4  |
| P5     | Year 5  |
| P6     | Year 6  |

**Senior School.**

| School      | NC name |
|-------------|---------|
| First Form  | Year 7  |
| Second Form | Year 8  |
| Third Form  | Year 9  |
| Fourth Form | Year 10 |
| Fifth Form  | Year 11 |
| Lower Sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper Sixth | Year 13 |

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievement is good. By the time they leave the EYFS, pupils have learnt to read with support and to write simple sentences, a strong foundation for future learning. Pupils consolidate and develop these skills in the prep school and by the time they reach the senior school they are confident learners, able to use mathematical skills and to write showing independent thought. Pupils become skilful users of information and communication technology (ICT) from Year 6 in the prep school, and produce work showing good use of ICT, although they do not have sufficient opportunities to consolidate these skills in all areas. The results of nationally standardised tests show that pupils learn in line with their abilities and make appropriate and sometimes good progress. The excellent curriculum supports the pupils' learning in both the breadth and depth of their experience and excellent provision for extra-curricular activities results in excellent achievement in a wide range of both team and individual activities. Teaching is good across the school, with careful planning and strong subject knowledge underpinning the pupils' learning. Marking needs improvement. As yet the provision for pupils with SEND is good in support lessons but not widely individually planned in mainstream lessons. Similarly, planning does not always provide targeted challenge for the most able.
- 2.2 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent at all stages of the school. They become self-confident and assured individuals, meeting the aims of the school. They are able to reflect, to acknowledge their responsibility to others and to discern right from wrong. Socially, the school is a harmonious community; older pupils relate very well to the younger children and interact sympathetically with them, through the many opportunities to take responsibility, including within the all-age house groups. Pupils of a number of nationalities and cultures work well together in the school and all take pride in sharing their heritage. The pastoral care of pupils nurtures their development in a calm and supportive environment with excellent relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. All aspects of the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are given meticulous attention, safeguarding procedures are clear and all staff have been appropriately trained. All the required checks on the employment of staff are undertaken and properly recorded and all other health and safety checks comply with regulations.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is good. The governors know the school well, are well informed of the life of the school and fulfil their legal duties, including the required review of child protection policies and procedures. The leadership and management is good; strong management structures underpin good learning, excellent curricular provision, achievement in extra-curricular activities and pastoral care. High quality staff have been recruited and trained. As yet, some aspects of development, training and review of staff in the EYFS are not fully developed. Parents are highly supportive of almost all aspects of the school, in particular the range of subjects and activities offered and the quality of care which ensures that their children are safe and happy at the school.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that all teachers consistently apply the school's requirements for the marking of work.
2. Ensure that all teachers incorporate into the plans for every lesson how they will meet the needs of all pupils, including, specifically, those with SEND or those who are able.
3. Ensure that pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills in ICT through their learning in all subjects.
4. Within the EYFS, establish and implement rigorous arrangements for self-evaluation, improvement planning and the appraisal, performance management and targeted professional development of all members of staff, including support staff.

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

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. In the EYFS the children's learning is good. They use pencils successfully, they colour pictures, sing songs and are beginning to count accurately using both the French and English language. They play co-operatively, make patterns and retell stories, such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears, using finger puppets. By the middle of their first year in school the children can all read with adult support and they can draw and identify most letters as well as many simple numerals.
- 3.3 Prep school pupils achieve good levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in all areas of the curriculum and work well independently. They develop good mathematical and writing skills, and speak and listen well. All pupils achieve at least merit and many gain distinction in speech examinations. Pupils achieve well in the Junior Mathematics Challenge, recently winning two silver awards. Pupils enjoy their extra-curricular activities, with many successes in sport, winning a Rugby 7s competition, being runner-ups at the Rugby schools festival and successes in the preparatory schools under-9s trampolining championships and in external music exams. The majority of pupils win places at the senior school. Over time pupils have won academic scholarships at other schools.
- 3.4 Senior school pupils display good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in academic work, they work well co-operatively and excel in their activities. Pupils are articulate, express themselves clearly and confidently and are keen to share their knowledge and understanding. Their written work is fluent, accurate and well-presented. They demonstrate good mathematical and scientific skills which they apply confidently in their learning. Pupils display competence in their use of ICT although they do not have opportunities to use these skills in all areas of the curriculum. Creativity and imagination are evident in art, drama, music, and creative writing. Independent thought and learning are seen in a range of subjects. Pupils' physical skills develop well through sport.
- 3.5 In the senior school pupils achieve notable success across a wide range of activities, including team sports and individual recognition at regional and national level in a range of sports from rugby and hockey through to dressage and ice-hockey. Pupils are successful in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) with large numbers achieving at least bronze award and significant numbers going on to silver and gold. Achievement in the Mathematics Challenges at all levels is excellent and pupils also achieve considerable success in external music examinations. Young engineers, who developed their own electric car, competed creditably in the finals of the national racing competitions. Individual achievements include success in competition in cooking, public speaking and poetry, and publishing of a scientific research paper.
- 3.6 In the EYFS all pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. By the end of the Reception year, outcomes for children are good with most making at least the expected progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Most are able to read and write simple sentences as well as use numbers and make simple calculations. They make choices and are

active learners, confident to practise and use the skills they have developed and to play co-operatively with others.

- 3.7 In the prep school, the pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, including standardised tests used by the school, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment represents good progress, which is confirmed by the progress they were seen to make in lessons, by work seen during the inspection and by discussions with the pupils. Progress is clearly tracked by the school and records show successful progress from year to year and through into the senior school.
- 3.8 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Over this period GCSE results have been above the national average for maintained schools and in 2010 and 2011 were similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Results in 2013, with 50 per cent of grades at A\* or A, are in line with previous years. At A level, results have also been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Results at A level for 2013, with 70 per cent of grades at A\* to B, are also in line with previous years.
- 3.9 The level of attainment at GCSE, judged using nationally standardised measures of progress, indicates that pupils make progress from Years 7 to 11 that is at least appropriate and often good in relation to pupils of similar ability. This is supported by other evidence seen during the inspection, including the work done by the pupils. Although the school does not carry out standardised testing of ability or progress in the sixth form, the level of attainment at A level, together with evidence seen during inspection, both indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. Sixth formers generally go on to higher education with the majority achieving places at their first choice university.
- 3.10 In the EYFS, those with SEND or EAL are quickly identified through initial baseline assessments and their individual needs catered for through suitable support and tasks, but the more able children, although identified as such, are not always provided with appropriately challenging tasks or interesting materials to help develop their skills and stimulate their curiosity. In the prep and senior schools, inspection evidence supports results in public examinations and school records to indicate that pupils with SEND, together with the able, gifted and talented, also make at least appropriate and sometimes good progress in relation to their ability. This reflects the support that they receive and the school's monitoring of their progress.
- 3.11 Both in the pupil questionnaires and in interviews with inspectors, pupils overwhelmingly felt they were making good progress. Parents, too, in their questionnaire, expressed pleasure at the progress made by their children.
- 3.12 Throughout the school, pupils are positive, organised, motivated and enthusiastic learners, settling quickly to work in lessons and applying themselves well.

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

- 3.13 The contribution of curricular and extracurricular provision is excellent
- 3.14 In both prep and senior schools, the excellent curriculum supports the aim of the school to provide a first class education. In the EYFS suitable opportunities are provided for the children to develop a variety of skills and make good progress from their starting points in whole-class activities. However, there are few opportunities provided for children to initiate their own activities, develop their own individual interests or to engage with ICT. A new space for outdoor learning has been created, but its use is not sufficiently well planned to support the children's learning or to challenge their thinking.
- 3.15 In the prep school the pupils' experience an excellent, well organised and wide-ranging curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is regularly monitored and its suitability assessed. The National Curriculum is followed for most subjects ensuring a clear progression of skills and good breadth of coverage. In Years 5 and 6, prep pupils receive an 80-minute science lesson in the senior school each week, a welcome development since the previous inspection, as the pupils benefit from using sophisticated equipment and materials in the science laboratory and develop links with the senior school. The senior school offers an excellent curriculum with a suitable range of creative and academic subjects including the three sciences and up to three languages. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is provided throughout the school. The use of ICT varies between subjects with pupils encouraged to bring their own devices to lessons so they can access on-line resources and work independently. In the sixth form, pupils have a very wide choice of 25 subjects. General studies and the extended project enhance research and critical skills successfully while PSHCE sessions prepare them for life beyond the school with sessions on health issues, safe driving, cooking and finance. An extensive series of talks encourages sixth formers to engage with spiritual, emotional and academic issues as well as sessions on leadership and studying abroad. Careers education, including talks and visits, provides independent advice and help with applications to higher education.
- 3.16 In both the prep and senior schools, appropriate arrangements are made to identify and support pupils who have SEND, are of high ability, or have particular talents. These include careful and systematic identification of specific learning difficulties and one-to-one and small group teaching. In some lessons those identified as more able are given specific challenges to promote their development. The extensive activities programme provides challenge both for the more able and the talented; essays written in response to a topic tackled in the Philosophy club showed engagement with challenging ideas and thoughtful personal responses.
- 3.17 In the prep school there is wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities from Reception onwards, an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the clubs, particularly enjoying the choirs, gardening and cookery clubs. In the senior school pupils are provided with an excellent range of activities beyond normal lesson times with pupils tracked effectively and attendance monitored to encourage involvement in the opportunities offered. Within and beyond the curriculum, pupils engage in competitions at local, regional and national levels. A sport-for-all policy allows pupils of all abilities to participate in traditional sports supplemented by archery, girls' rugby and weightlifting. A thriving DofE group

involves a majority of Year 9 as well as older pupils. An extensive and varied musical life not only joins younger and older pupils together, but allows extensive musical performances in the local community to assist charity fund raising and international dimensions such as playing with pupils from Argentina. A feature of the school is links between prep and senior school, particularly in mathematics, French, sport, science and music.

- 3.18 A programme of visits extends the pupils' experiences and independence, for example through residential trips in the prep school including a geographical field trip for Year 4 to the north Norfolk coast. Prep school pupils also enjoy visits to the local community, singing at a local care home and church, as well as undertaking trips further afield. In the senior school, academic visits extend pupils' experience and develop their knowledge. Links are made with local businesses including a sponsorship deal for the school's young engineers, connections with the aerospace industry and also a car factory. The school organises a wide range of overseas visits including geography field trips, skiing trips, sports visits and longstanding language exchanges. Participation in regular music and drama productions, house competitions, and concerts considerably enrich the life of the whole school.

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

- 3.19 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.20 Teaching supports the aims of the school, but does not always draw upon the best examples of excellence evident in the school to provide pupils with a more consistent experience.
- 3.21 In the EYFS suitable opportunities are provided for the children to develop a variety of skills and make good progress from their starting points. The adults have a good knowledge of how children develop and know the children very well, actively supporting individuals as needed. Children feel supported by adults and there are good relationships between them. However, the setting does not always meet the needs of the range of children who attend. While assessment is well used to identify and support children with SEND or EAL, the more able do not receive the same support, for example in extending their thinking or developing more independent ways of learning. Parents are given helpful guidance in how best to support their child's developing skills in literacy and numeracy.
- 3.22 In the prep school good teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and supporting the aims of the school. Pupils learn in a positive, engaging learning environment. High expectations of work and behaviour ensure excellent learning by pupils in class. Lessons are well planned and pupils are usually given a suitable range and volume of work, although opportunities are limited for pupils to use ICT in learning, and in a small number of lessons, the teacher talked too much. As a result, some pupils became bored. The needs of pupils are catered for very well. More able pupils are given appropriate extension work in lessons, sometimes supported by senior school pupils, while classroom assistants provide support for pupils with SEND. Assessment needs to be improved, as at present, there is inconsistency in teachers' practices. Work is usually marked regularly although teachers do not always give written comments that recognise success and also identify how improvements might be made. In lessons, pupils receive good, constructive oral feedback. Formal assessment is carried out and recorded at the end of units of work across the curriculum, but the use made of the information is limited. For

example, the use and accuracy of target setting is inconsistent between year groups and subjects.

- 3.23 In the senior school, teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and benefit from the strong subject knowledge of the teaching staff. Teachers clearly thrive in the delivery of knowledge within the classroom and this enjoyment is inherently communicated to the pupils. Teaching makes constructive use of a good range of resources to enhance learning. However, although teachers use ICT effectively in presentations, there is inconsistency in the use of ICT by pupils, the good practice evident in some classrooms is not being used widely. Relationships are good. Pupils recognise that teachers are always willing to help them outside lessons. At its best, teaching uses well directed questioning to help pupils to analyse contexts for themselves and effectively apply knowledge to further develop their understanding.
- 3.24 As at the time of the previous inspection, assessment needs improvement. As a result, work in class is still not sufficiently well matched to the needs of all pupils, whether the more able or those with SEND, even though their needs have been recognised. Where pupils with SEND receive additional tuition with a specialist teacher, their progress is much better. Whilst marking is regular, its quality is inconsistent, much of it lacking constructive comment and feedback on how to improve. Marking policies and practices lack consistency between departments as there is no clear whole-school guidance. However, pupils value the grade card system, which enables them to plot their progress as they move through the school.

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

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent, in accordance with the school's aim to nurture spiritual awareness and moral development and to build self-confidence and a desire to serve the wider community. In the EYFS the youngest pupils are able to make choices and are active learners, confident to practise and use the skills they have developed and to play co-operatively with others, all of which provides them with secure foundations for future learning and well-being. Older pupils develop confidence and awareness of their strengths and weaknesses through the encouragement given by their teachers and the many opportunities to perform in drama, music, sport and school assemblies. Pupils show sensitivity to the needs of others and are emotionally mature for their age. They appreciate the non-material aspects of life as was demonstrated by pupils in interviews when they talked enthusiastically about the origins of the universe and by pupils in Year 6 who were observed in a thoughtful discussion about welcoming people into the church.
- 4.3 Moral development is strong. Pupils are very well behaved and are kind and respectful to each other. They relish the opportunity to discuss moral issues, for example those arising in assemblies and the PSHCE programme. They exhibit a clear sense of right and wrong, which is nurtured through the school's culture of honesty at all times.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent across the school. In the EYFS the children feel safe, have secure emotional attachments with key adults and enjoy their time in school. Older pupils are keen to take on positions of responsibility such as form captain or representative for school council. Sixth formers take their responsibilities as form prefects seriously, getting to know the younger pupils and offering support as required. Pupils develop good economic and political awareness, learning about financial matters during PSHCE and going on visits to public institutions such as the local council offices and the Houses of Parliament. Pupils have a clear understanding that others do not share their good fortune. A charitable group is involved in active fundraising in the school. There are also links with the local community include working with a cancer charity, primary schools, local senior citizens' homes and day centres, a special school and a local museum.
- 4.5 Pupils develop an excellent appreciation of cultural diversity. Different nationalities within the school get on well and are keen to learn about each other's faiths and customs. As a result, they learn to understand and respect other faiths and cultures. They appreciate the achievements of the Western cultural tradition, whilst also valuing those of other cultures. From the very youngest pupils to members of the sixth form, the personal development of pupils is excellent and by the time they leave the school they are very well prepared for the challenges which lie ahead.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 In the EYFS the staff ensure the children's well-being is excellent. They provide effective support and guidance and high expectations of the children's behaviour. They ensure that children are happy and enjoy what they are doing, helped by the

high quality of relationships between staff and children, and amongst the children themselves. The setting is successful in promoting good behaviour. Children are rewarded for their efforts and achievements with stickers and house points and are selected for special praise at the weekly assembly. This reward system helps the children to develop a sense of well-being and of responsibility towards the wider school community. The children learn to follow the class rules, and they learn how to keep themselves and each other safe as they walk around the school and the site. They talk about how to look after each other, what they need to do to prevent accidents and what they should eat to keep themselves healthy. Most children can reliably attend to their own toileting and dressing needs. By the end of their time in Reception, the children are very well prepared for a smooth transition to the Year 1 class.

- 4.8 Across the whole school there is a clearly structured plan for pastoral oversight, and this is recognised by staff and pupils alike. Staff support pupils of all ages very well. The pastoral team meets weekly and concerns are shared with other staff as required. Tutor groups are kept small in order for staff to get to know their pupils well. Relationships are positive between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves. Pupils are confident that they can turn to any member of staff for help, as well as knowing those with particular pastoral responsibilities.
- 4.9 Pupils understand the need for a healthy lifestyle. They have a good awareness of dietary health and the need for a balanced diet. This is encouraged by a varied menu with healthy options served in the school kitchens, where food is available before school and at breaks and lunchtimes. There are numerous opportunities for exercise both through the sports curriculum and the activity programme.
- 4.10 The school has very effective systems for promoting good behaviour. A culture of praise runs throughout the school. The school has a comprehensive anti-bullying policy which is understood by staff and pupils; pupils say that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with swiftly. Incidents are carefully recorded and proper procedures are followed. An anti-bullying week held in the prep school ensures that pupils know how to ask for help. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a few pupils felt that staff were inconsistent in their use of rewards and sanctions. Inspectors found that records show that both rewards and sanctions are appropriately used and recorded. A minority of pupils felt that their opinions were undervalued, a view echoed during pupil interviews. Inspectors do not agree, finding that the school has, and draws upon, a good range of mechanisms to seek the views of the pupils. The school council and forums consider a wide range of concerns, and formal responses are published on council notice boards. Feedback is given by the form representatives. The charity committee seeks pupils' views through form representatives.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with particular needs.

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

- 4.12 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.13 The safeguarding arrangements for pupils of all ages, including those in the EYFS, have regard to the current official guidance and promote their safety. All members of staff and, where appropriate, helpers, receive suitable training, both when starting at the school and at appropriate intervals.

- 4.14 Pupils of all ages feel safe and the youngest children in the EYFS quickly learn to trust adults. If pupils are unwell they are carefully looked after in a comfortable room and all procedures are adhered to. Careful and appropriate attention is given to any medical needs of pupils with specific needs. There are suitable numbers of staff trained in First Aid and their training is appropriately updated.
- 4.15 Policy and procedures for health and safety meet requirements and are implemented meticulously, providing a safe environment for the pupils at all levels of the school. The school takes seriously the need to minimise the risks of fire. Fire practices are regularly held and the results carefully recorded. The school is meticulous in carrying out and maintaining risk assessments for all areas and activities around the school and off-site.
- 4.16 The completion of attendance and admission registers is detailed, rigorous and meets requirements. Attendance is promptly recorded and monitored daily with any concerns being immediately followed up. The registers are stored for the required period.

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

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

- 5.1 The governance of the school is good.
- 5.2 Governance is successful in the support and encouragement it offers to the school to achieve its aim of allowing all pupils to realise their potential in a harmonious and disciplined environment. Governors have overseen many significant changes since the previous inspection but some aspects of the recommendations have still to be followed through. The governors have a wide range of valuable expertise and show commitment to their roles in the school. Governors have a good relationship with school staff; direct support is given to senior managers in both the senior and prep schools. Individual governors link the board to particular areas such as safeguarding and health and safety, as well as creating good connections with specific areas. In EYFS the involvement of the governors is effective and there are satisfactory arrangements in place to oversee the educational programme offered as well as the children's behavioural and welfare needs. The governing body is also informed of the work of the other sections of the school through the reports of the heads of the senior and prep schools, through regular health and safety reports and by presentations to them by staff, in particular heads of departments. These mechanisms keep the board up to date about in the work of the school. Governors regularly visit classrooms in all areas of the school, observe lessons, and talk to both pupils and staff as well as attending functions, matches and productions in the school.
- 5.3 The governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities including the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements. Through careful financial management and planning they support the high standards of welfare, health and safety, the employment of well qualified and appropriately experienced staff and further developments of facilities on the school site, for example the purchase of new playing fields. The plans for a new refectory are at an advanced stage with a date set for work to begin. The governing body ensures that staff undergo appropriate checks which are fully recorded in the central register and that the work of the head is effectively evaluated.

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

- 5.4 The leadership and management of the school are good.
- 5.5 Since the previous inspection a new management structure has been developed with careful job descriptions and, in general, appropriate time allowances for those taking on new roles. An effective pattern of regular meetings enables the team to deal well with the day-to-day running of the school as recommended in the previous report. The members of the senior team successfully discharge their responsibilities for policy implementation and for safeguarding procedures, which are seen to be effective.
- 5.6 A clear vision and aims for the school are set out in the mission statement. These aims can be seen to be being realised throughout the school in the happy and confident bearing of the pupils, their academic success and their high regard for the many aspects of the work of the school.

- 5.7 Leadership and management at senior levels, whilst respecting the long-standing traditions of the school, have carried out self-evaluations and as a result identified appropriate areas for development. Whilst there has been some progress at whole-school level, implementation at middle management level has been less successful. As a result, there are still wide variations in the quality of planning of work to meet the needs of all pupils. Middle managers still need to tackle the inconsistent quality of marking, the use of assessment to promote consistently the progress of able pupils or those with SEND, and in the monitoring of teaching to ensure that pupils learn to use higher order thinking skills and to be independent and investigative learners, as recommended in the previous inspection report.
- 5.8 Within the EYFS, staff are appropriately trained, welfare and safeguarding requirements are undertaken responsibly and the environment is safe and welcoming. However, work is still needed to establish effective systems for the appraisal and performance management of staff, including support staff. Self-evaluation procedures are not consistently used within the setting to help identify priorities and set targets for improvement. As a result, opportunities for continuous professional development are not provided on a consistent basis. This means that children are not always provided with appropriately stimulating resources or interesting and challenging activities.
- 5.9 The senior team has successfully recruited capable staff, and provides an effective induction and training programme for new teachers. All required checks have been carried out and recorded in a suitable manner. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in safeguarding and in welfare, health and safety.
- 5.10 Links with parents are good. The responses to the parental questionnaire show that parents of pupils of all ages are highly appreciative of the work of the school, highlighting particular strengths in the progress made by their children and the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities offered. There is a high level of agreement that pupils are happy and feel safe and are well looked after. Parents indicate that information about the school is easily accessible, that concerns are well dealt with and that they receive timely responses to questions. The vast majority say they would recommend the school to another parent. A very small minority of parents indicated a concern that cases of bullying were not well dealt with. During the inspection, pupils interviewed said that bullying rarely happened and records maintained by the school showed that care had been taken to investigate bullying issues and that appropriate sanctions had been applied. A high proportion of parents commended the standards of behaviour achieved in the school.
- 5.11 The school publishes and implements an appropriate policy and procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints. Parents say that they are happy with the opportunities to be involved in events and other aspects of the life of the school and provide regular support at matches, performances and productions in the school. A recently formed "Friends of WGS" group provides social and fund-raising opportunities.
- 5.12 All the required information is provided for the parents of pupils and prospective pupils on the school website and additionally in parental handbooks. The website and a number of school publications celebrate events in the school and individual and team successes. Parents receive full reports at regular intervals giving clear information on the progress made by their child, and grade cards are issued several times a term to keep them well informed. Parents of pupils in EYFS are kept very well informed about their child's progress through meetings with the teacher, the

daily use of a 'Home/School' book and a very detailed written report at the end of the year recording their child's progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Parents are given helpful guidance in how best to support their child's developing skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils in the prep school have reading records and homework diaries which channel communication between the teachers and parents. Dialogue with staff takes place at regular parents' information evenings.

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