



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
CLAIRES COURT SCHOOLS**

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 February 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. 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 proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions, tutor periods 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 and other written policies and procedures made available by the school.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The school was founded in 1960 at Ray Mill Road East as a proprietorial Catholic day and preparatory boarding school for boys aged 6 to 13. As demand for boarding declined, the boarding accommodation, Ridgeway, became the preparatory school initially for boys between the ages of 6 and 10, latterly between 4 and 11. During this time, a senior department was created on the site in Ray Mill Road East for boys from the age of 11 to 16. In 1993 the school took over a former girls' school, the College Avenue site, to provide a co-educational Nursery facility and a girls' school for those between the ages of 4 and 16. In 1994, a co-educational sixth form was opened, thus completing the provision of an all-age education for boys and girls from 3 to 18 years of age, spread across three sites in Maidenhead, Berkshire. The three educational venues are collectively known as Claire's Court Schools. The two principals are the proprietors and lead the academic and administrative operations of the school. Each of the three sites has its own head and management team. In 1999, the ownership and control of the various sites was consolidated into a company, Claire's Court Schools Limited. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved accommodation and facilities, and has purchased land for the future development of the school. The school has invested in information and communication technology (ICT) and has secured support from two of the world's leading digital technology companies.
- 1.2 The school has developed its own learning philosophy, referred to as the Claire's Court Essentials, through which the school aims to encourage pupils to develop the key values of responsibility for themselves, respect for others, loyalty to the school and integrity above all. The school also seeks to enable pupils to pursue and acquire a modern relevant education; a love of learning; a range of life skills – academic, social, musical, creative and sporting; and a strong spiritual and moral character. The school recognises the importance of striving to build confidence and self-esteem in each of its pupils, and of preparing them for the next step in their schooling.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, the schools were providing education for 983 pupils (658 boys and 325 girls), of whom 235 girls from Years 1 to 11 are on the College Avenue site, together with 95 children from the ages of three and five in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Also on this site are 112 pupils in the co-educational sixth form. The junior boys' site accommodates 199 boys, with 24 in a Reception class of the EYFS. On the senior boys' site, there are 318 boys in Years 7 to 11. Throughout the school, nine pupils have statements of special educational needs, and the school has identified 301 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 147 receive specific support. Although 27 pupils come from families speaking other languages, many are fluent in English and only 13 require additional support in acquiring the language (EAL). Pupils are mainly white British and are drawn from business and professional families in the immediate area and Thames Valley. Most of those with EAL come from families on temporary business postings in the area, particularly from continental Europe. Pupils take a range of standardised aptitude and ability tests at different stages throughout the school. These indicate that the ability profile of the school up to Year 9 is above the national average. In Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form, the ability is broadly in line with the national average. Throughout the school, a fairly wide spread of abilities is represented.
- 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 The school is highly successful in promoting its core values and fulfilling its stated mission and purpose. Pupils throughout the school are very well educated in line with the school's ambitious aims to develop confident, resilient and collaborative learners. Throughout all stages, from the EYFS to the sixth form, all pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to make the most of their talents and the opportunities available to them, in relation to their abilities, aptitudes and circumstances. The high level of success enjoyed by pupils is seen not only in class, but also in the myriad of activities, individual and collaborative endeavours, and in their attitudes for study and learning. Pupils make good long-term progress. They display exemplary attitudes to their studies and activities and show strong learning skills and excellent collaboration with other learners. The very high standards achieved by pupils are enhanced by the excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision and by an innovative approach to enhance the pupils' use of digital technology. Highly effective teaching is responsive to the needs of individual pupils and contributes strongly to their progress and achievements. Educational provision and outcomes for children in the EYFS are excellent.
- 2.2 Pupils of all ages display excellent personal development and show particularly high levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They are supportive of each other, very mature for their age, and develop exceptionally strong and supportive relationships with each other and with their teachers. Pastoral care, support for pupils with particular learning needs and the management of behaviour are strong. Arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are highly efficient. Procedures for safer recruitment of staff are effective and rigorous.
- 2.3 The proprietors provide a strong sense of purpose and a clear commitment to the future success of the school. Proprietorial support for and leadership of the educational and administrative areas of the school are strong. Leadership and management of all sections of the school, including the EYFS, are of high quality in nearly all areas, and ensure the high standards achieved by pupils. However, some inconsistencies in a number of aspects of educational practice are evident, and the evaluation of some areas for development within each section of the school is not sharply defined. The school has formed an excellent partnership with parents, who are highly satisfied with the education provided. The school has responded appropriately to the recommendations of the previous inspection in 2008, which covered improvements to the provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE), the greater use of information and communication technology (ICT) and developing the role of middle managers.

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. Sharpen the process of self-evaluation within each school so that it more accurately reflects and supports the identified priorities for improvement.
2. Extend opportunities for all staff to reflect on and share strategies to remove inconsistencies and enhance the learning and progress of all pupils.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Given the nature of the school population, its mobility and spread of ability, and the proportion of those with SEND, pupils achieve high standards, and are very well educated in line with the school's ambitious aims to develop confident, resilient and collaborative learners. Throughout all stages, from the EYFS to the sixth form, pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to make the most of their talents and the opportunities available to them, appropriate to their abilities, aptitudes and circumstances. The very high level of success enjoyed by pupils is seen not only in class, but also in the myriad of activities, individual and collaborative endeavours, and in their attitudes for study and learning. Pupils' achievements successfully reflect the school's aims and the ethos inherent in the Claire's Court Essentials.

The EYFS settings (College Avenue and Ridgeway)

- 3.3 Children are enthusiastic and well motivated by the highly experienced staff and imaginative curriculum. As a result of the support received, especially for those with SEND or EAL, all children make good and often excellent progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities, achieving and often exceeding the Early Learning Goals.
- 3.4 Children make good use of available resources to create their own play narratives and to challenge themselves. They are industrious, focused and demonstrate high levels of concentration and creativity. In the Nursery, children recognise and name a range of two-dimensional shapes and describe qualities of three-dimensional shapes in class and the wider environment, and count confidently to ten, for example as they spoon sand into large jars. Older children add three numbers in a dice game and count confidently to one hundred.
- 3.5 Children become confident communicators as they talk about toys and other objects during 'show and tell' sessions. They listen attentively and are confident about asking questions. Nursery children assign meaning to marks and storybooks on their own or with an adult. In Reception, children become independent writers, forming letters accurately and making plausible attempts at tricky words, for example, as they complete an emergency report in the fire station role-play area. Children show great interest in nature and the world around them, and are confident users of ICT.

The Junior Schools (College Avenue and Ridgeway)

- 3.6 Pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities relative to their ages and abilities. They are articulate, speak confidently and reason skilfully in explanations. Pupils achieve high standards of literacy, as shown in their factual and imaginative writing. Their numeracy skills are strong and applied across different subjects. Their use of ICT is excellent in many contexts, including in classroom tasks and homework. Pupils exhibit significant creativity in art, music and drama.
- 3.7 The wide range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to extend their interests and, where appropriate, compete successfully at regional or national level. Sports teams compete at a high level in local and regional competitions. Accomplishment

in music is very strong, demonstrated by the standard achieved in performances and the response of able musicians to specially arranged compositions. Pupils with specific gifts or talents also join outside clubs or organisations to develop further their individual potential.

- 3.8 More able pupils and those with SEND and EAL achieve at a high level relative to their ability and aptitudes, as evidenced by their performance in standardised tests and more challenging tasks, and the improvement in their work over time. Some able pupils gain places at academically selective local secondary schools at the end of Year 6. Pupils identified as having a particular talent in sport have a portfolio which very efficiently charts their achievements.
- 3.9 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be at least good in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils follow a broad curriculum and the majority move on to the senior school. Inspection evidence, as assessed from lessons, pupils' written work and interviews, confirms this judgement and indicates that pupils make a good and sometimes excellent rate of progress over the longer term in relation to pupils of similar ability.
- 3.10 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Extremely positive relationships amongst pupils and a strong rapport between pupils and staff, as well as high levels of motivation and behaviour in the classroom, all serve to enhance effective learning and support overall achievement. Pupils are diligent, organise their work efficiently, persevere and propose and explore ideas with independence and confidence. They are eager, active learners, who thoroughly enjoy working co-operatively. They respond very well to opportunities to show initiative in their work, think critically and express themselves creatively.

The Senior Schools (Senior Girls, Senior Boys and the Sixth Form)

- 3.11 Pupils gain a good, and often excellent, level of subject knowledge and expertise, not only for success in public examinations but also for extending their thinking and relating their learning to explain and understand a wide range of everyday and contemporary issues. They apply knowledge well to unfamiliar situations. Pupils' speaking and listening skills, literacy and numeracy are strong and their ICT skills are excellent. They make excellent use of the school's extensive digital learning environment for collaborative tasks and projects and to support and promote their learning. Pupils use resources effectively and assimilate knowledge and new ideas readily. In the sixth form, pupils show strong levels of reasoning and analysis.
- 3.12 In extra-curricular activities and various competitions, pupils achieve extremely high standards. Both boys and girls succeed prominently in a variety of sports at county, regional and national levels. Senior girls are county hockey champions, boys have won honours in rowing at National Championships, and in sailing boys and girls have beaten some university crews. A high standard of art and photography is seen around the school and in local exhibitions, demonstrating strong levels of creativity.
- 3.13 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results in GCSE examinations were similar to the national average for maintained schools in 2011, and above this level in 2012 and 2013. Results at A-level have been similar to the national average for maintained schools. In 2013, over four out of ten grades were achieved at A* to B. This level of attainment at GCSE and A Level, and nationally standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that senior and sixth-

form pupils make appropriate progress, and for some it is good. Evidence from pupils' performance in lessons, examination of their work, interviews and other achievements indicates that they make good or better progress over the longer term.

- 3.14 Pupils with EAL and SEND respond well to the professional and focused support they receive and make particularly good progress in overcoming their difficulties, as seen in the improvement in their work over time and in their performance in various tests. More able pupils, and those with particular gifts and talents, respond enthusiastically and with success to the additional encouragement and challenges given to them. For example, those attending master classes at the Royal Institute of Mathematics and lectures at the University of London benefited greatly from these intellectually challenging experiences.
- 3.15 Pupils' attitudes to their work and their enthusiasm for learning are outstanding. They show high levels of motivation, interest, commitment and perseverance. They form exceptionally supportive and productive relationships with their teachers and with each other. Pupils co-operate well and show great skill in group activities and team initiatives, many of them through the interactive digital environment. Pupils concentrate extremely well in class, even when tackling difficult or unfamiliar work. They have great respect for each other, and ask and answer challenging questions with confidence, knowing that they will always receive a supportive response from their peers. Pupils take great pride in their work, which is well organised and presented. More able and older pupils show strong reasoning and analytical ability.

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

- 3.16 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.17 Across the school, the academic curriculum provides a broad and coherent education for pupils of all ages, and fully supports the learning principles and philosophy of the school, and the high level of pupils' achievements. The Claires Court Learning Essentials are embedded across and throughout the curriculum and extra-curricular provision, and enable pupils to work together collaboratively, solve problems, take risks, acquire knowledge, and to be inquisitive, creative and reflective. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils with a wide range of abilities, talents and learning needs very well, and is supported by an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits outside school.
- 3.18 In the EYFS settings, excellent provision is made to meet the needs of the range of children who attend. Richly resourced and, for the most part, well-organised classrooms and outdoor areas promote purposeful play through a highly effective balance of adult-initiated and self-directed activities. Overall, opportunities for children to extend their learning outside are good and children make full use of the various man-made and natural areas to explore, investigate and develop their ideas. Classroom themes are expertly intertwined with other permanent resources to provide outstanding coverage of the EYFS curriculum. Carefully focused support for children with SEND or EAL, and additional challenge for children who are more able, ensures all children achieve well, reaching high levels of learning and development for their age and capability.
- 3.19 In the junior and senior schools, the curriculum covers a broad range of subjects and includes all the required areas of learning across the full range of ages and abilities, reflecting the school's aim to develop the pupils' desire to succeed in life, equipped with a love of learning. In the junior schools, pupils' educational experience is

enhanced by specialist provision in art, music, sport and physical education, and languages. Taster sessions in Latin and Spanish are available. The girls' junior school has introduced a topic- and skills-based curriculum while the boys' junior school has retained a more traditional specialist teaching model. The school has considered this difference carefully, and both curricular models meet the needs of the pupils effectively. In the senior schools and sixth form, the core curriculum is developed and enhanced by a wider range of choice and the opportunity to take new subjects. Opportunities to try up to five modern and classical languages are available, including Mandarin Chinese. Separate sciences are taken at GCSE. For older pupils, alternative courses with a more vocational focus, such as business and communication, media studies and the sports leaders' qualification, meet the needs and interests of pupils very well.

- 3.20 Curricular planning throughout the school is thorough and well organised, and ensures that all pupils have access to the full range of educational experiences, whilst encouraging continuity and progression in learning. Pupils benefit from a programme which is created around their individual choices. Listening and speaking skills are developed well throughout the school. Libraries are used effectively for research and study, and pupils are strongly supported with their reading habits. The use of the school's digital learning platform as a shared resource is promoted widely throughout the whole school and serves to reinforce the ethos of collaborative learning. Coherent planning and imaginative programmes to use this digital facility to maximum effect are evident for some subjects but not all.
- 3.21 Arrangements to support and promote the progress of pupils with SEND or EAL are particularly well-organised and effective and incorporate the close monitoring of progress in their learning. Support for individual pupils is well planned and is provided in small groups as well as through normal class teaching. Clear strategies and targets are identified which enable efficient monitoring of progress. Teaching assistants in classrooms are well-deployed. A well-planned programme of PSHE provides pupils with a valuable range of personal strategies and life skills and enhances their personal development. This provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection. In the sixth form, the PSHE lesson is replaced by an extensive tutorial programme which includes presentations by external speakers. Careers education programmes in the senior schools give clear and effective advice about subject choices at school and beyond.
- 3.22 Pupils' success and their personal development are greatly enhanced by the excellent extra-curricular programme that includes a wide range of sporting, creative and performance activities, as well as leisure and recreational activities and clubs. Pupils rate the quality and range of the programme very highly. Those in the junior schools value the opportunities to try out new activities and express great enthusiasm for more adventurous ones such as bushcraft. They develop their skills and self-reliance in the senior schools through opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) and, in the sixth form, pupils have the opportunity to provide support in the EYFS where they can gain qualifications in child care or the sports leaders awards. Educational experiences are further enriched by highly effective links with the local and wider community. The contribution of visiting speakers and school trips broadens pupils' educational horizons, making extensive use of the cultural and historic opportunities in the local area. Residential trips for pupils in Years 5 and 6 foster their independence. A visit to the local home for elderly people gave Year 5 girls insight into memories of VE day and, in the senior schools, visits to Ypres and Berlin help develop essential skills and enable pupils to

reflect on these experiences with maturity. The school has formed productive partnerships with the local Rotary and Lions clubs.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.23 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.24 Teaching makes an excellent contribution to the high quality achievements enjoyed by pupils throughout the school. It is successful in promoting pupils' progress and in supporting the aims of the school as a learning environment. Small teaching groups and the teachers' strong understanding of the needs of individual pupils enhance their progress and learning and enable the teaching to be flexible and responsive when needed. Teachers' use of ICT has improved greatly since the previous inspection. The teaching meets the requirements set out in pupils' statements of special educational needs.
- 3.25 In the EYFS settings, adults working with children embrace new technology well to record and assess children's progress, resulting in planning that accurately reflects the children's individual needs and interests. Staff value parents' input and actively encourage them to come to school to share activities with the children. Technology is also used very effectively to enhance teaching and learning, for example to stimulate emergent writing and problem solving in role-play activities. In much teaching, challenging open questions promote excellent thinking skills and encourage children to find alternative solutions, in line with the school's values. Staff encourage children to reflect on their learning and consider what they might do next.
- 3.26 In the junior schools, teaching contributes very strongly to the significant success of the pupils in class and in extra-curricular activities. The strongly child-centred approach, where each pupil is well known and given close individual attention, is a great strength. Highly effective support is given to all pupils especially those with SEND and EAL. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour lead to well-organised lessons and a highly productive learning environment. In the great majority of lessons, time is used very well and the pace of lessons is well matched to the pupils' needs and abilities, sometimes moving slower for consolidation, but more usually moving at a brisk pace to engage pupils and maintain their interest. Explanations are clear and pupils are encouraged to work together effectively in pairs and groups and to discuss what they are doing. Teachers are well qualified and knowledgeable. They emphasise the importance of pride and good presentation in pupils' work. Digital technology and ICT are used extremely effectively in many lessons and in all subjects, enabling pupils to refine their skills and enhance their learning in research, coding, data handling and writing in ways that allow them to see and share each other's work. Interesting and original lesson starters are also used to engage pupils and build confidence. Lessons are very well organised, with thoughtful grouping and a high level of teacher intervention and attention.
- 3.27 A thorough system of formal assessment in the junior schools, particularly in mathematics and English, enables teachers to understand pupils' capabilities and progress, which assists their lesson planning. Much of the teaching employs personalised oral feedback, which helps pupils to improve their work and make further progress. Teachers use questioning extremely well in many lessons, engaging pupils, and encouraging them to think. Marking of pupils' work is regular and thorough and generally rigorous. Variability between subjects and year groups in the methods used to mark work prevents some marking from reaching the standard of the best. The system of effort and achievement grades is understood by

pupils and the two schools are moving towards a more standardised approach to grading. Pupils' progress is closely monitored by all teachers.

- 3.28 In the senior schools, teachers' subject knowledge is generally excellent and their expertise and familiarity with the material support pupils' learning well. This enables teachers to give detailed explanations and pose interesting and challenging questions. Excellent use of the available resources, including innovative use of digital technology, enables teaching points to be demonstrated and pupils' learning and understanding to be enhanced. The great majority of lessons and extra-curricular activities enable pupils to fulfil their potential, satisfy their natural curiosity, slake their thirst for learning and achieve their very best. Carefully planned teaching fosters independence and stimulates progress. For example, in some science lessons, experiments are set up in a way that challenges pupils to think for themselves and seek their own solutions to problems. Pupils feel strongly that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently. In some small A-level classes, the teaching style resembles that of a university seminar, where the pupils' own responses and contributions largely determine the direction of the lesson.
- 3.29 Pupils with SEND or EAL are extremely well supported, and in some lessons paired tasks are particularly effective, with a more able pupil paired with a less able one, to the benefit of both. Background information about pupils' circumstances and learning needs is shared among staff.
- 3.30 At its best, the marking of pupils' work in the senior schools is sharply diagnostic, explaining what is wrong and how to improve, and helps to enhance pupils' progress. Although marking is regular and nearly always accurate, variation in practice within individual subjects and sections of the school occasionally leads to inconsistency in the helpfulness of comments and the use of targets for improvement. Excellent use is made of the vast range of data from assessments in planning teaching and monitoring the progress of the pupils. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils felt that homework tasks were unhelpful. Scrutiny of typical homework tasks by inspectors indicated that homework is by and large used effectively by teachers as a tool to reinforce pupils' learning and help them to prepare for future work. This judgement was confirmed in various discussions with pupils.
- 3.31 In the junior and senior schools, in those lessons where teaching is less effective and successful, planning does not use time efficiently and a limited variety of tasks are employed. Pupils thus lose concentration and attention, and their progress slows. On a few occasions, lessons are too tightly controlled and directed by the teacher, so that pupils had few opportunities to think for themselves and be involved in the learning process. In the junior school, occasional inconsistency in planning imaginative tasks to challenge the more able pupils limits the effectiveness of their learning.

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 Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development fully supports and reflects the school's essential core values of responsibility, respect, loyalty and integrity. Pupils understand the importance of these qualities and work hard to uphold them. Pupils of all ages are confident, reflective and highly supportive of each other. They take great pride in their school and value their teachers and the education they provide. By the time they leave school, pupils have gained very high levels of personal development.
- 4.3 In the EYFS settings, children develop a strong understanding of tolerance and respect through age-appropriate assemblies that reinforce positive social skills, and how to be a good friend. Children have excellent understanding for their age of the school's principles such as collaboration and being a risk taker, and recognise these qualities when they use them. They exhibit good levels of independence, and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. They are co-operative, considerate and collaborate extremely well, for example when trying to build the tallest tower of wooden blocks. They are very well prepared for the transition to the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 In the junior schools, pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They value moments of reflection, both in lessons and assembly time. Pupils reflected on the importance of 'having your heart in a challenge' to help them be more successful, on the nature of friendship, and on what generosity really means. They show an interest in thinking deeply about areas of the world around them, marvelling at the staggering scale of Mount Everest within a physical geography discussion.
- 4.5 Their moral awareness is well developed. Pupils are extremely considerate and courteous to one another and also their teachers. They listen carefully and respectfully to the views of others and, from a young age, they are able to make valued and honest judgements on each other, and also on what is right and wrong. They are encouraged to be independent and responsible and to make decisions for themselves, but they are confident in seeking support and help from adults at any time if needed.
- 4.6 The social awareness of pupils is extremely strong. They seek opportunities to contribute to the successful functioning of their school, whether these are through one of the many positions of responsibility or simply by offering help and support to others at any opportunity. Understanding the importance of helping those less fortunate than themselves, pupils show a genuine sense of goodwill and support, raising awareness and funds for many worthwhile causes. Pupils supported a local charity event with huge enthusiasm and raised significant sums in support of this. New pupils who join the school throughout the year are always made to feel very welcome and immediately an important part of the school family.
- 4.7 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. Through a range of trips to galleries, theatres and museums, pupils broaden their cultural horizons and experience. Pupils maturely explore the characteristics of a range of different faiths and cultures through well-planned curriculum opportunities. Pupils' understanding of Judaism was strengthened by their visit to the local synagogue.

- 4.8 In the senior schools, pupils have a strong sense of spiritual awareness. They reflect maturely on their own lives and their own place in the world. Pupils make the very most of the opportunities for personal growth and benefit from their own interventions in tutor time, and in assemblies, where issues are often presented and debated by the pupils themselves. Pupils also develop a quiet sense of community through religious celebrations and formal school services. They respond well to issues explored in the curriculum to strengthen their sense of reflection and acknowledge the wider issues at stake in the world around them. In religious education, GCSE pupils considered the relative validity of a universe whose source could be a creator or a cosmic event.
- 4.9 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and they behave with dignity and respect around the school. They accept the school's four moral values as the basis for their behaviour and they are keen to achieve awards for their adherence to them. Pupils explore moral and ethical issues in debates and discussion. They benefited greatly from a day-long commemoration of the Holocaust, which served to bring home powerfully the horrors of suffering, and were moved by a visit to Ypres, where they were given time to reflect on the number of casualties.
- 4.10 Pupils demonstrate excellent social development. They are polite to their peers and their teachers and the atmosphere throughout the school is one of friendliness and caring. Pupils are keen to grasp the many opportunities for responsibility and for helping others, typified by older pupils supporting and working with younger ones through a variety of activities, reading support and sporting events. Work in the community, both through the DofE scheme and the sports leaders course, involves pupils giving up their time to help others, including disabled children in the community, and organising a football tournament for local children.
- 4.11 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have a strong appreciation of their own and other cultures through the curriculum and local visits. Pupils throughout the schools benefit from numerous visits to art galleries, museums and concert halls, both in the locality and in London. Pupils' cultural experience is further enhanced by trips abroad, such as those to Berlin and Salamanca. Older pupils gain an understanding of British political culture, studying the workings of Parliament, the Royal Family, and the British justice system.

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

- 4.12 The quality of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.13 The pastoral care of the pupils throughout the school is a major factor in the high levels of success they enjoy and their outstanding personal development. It enables the four core values of the school to be realised and enhances the pupils' sense of well-being.
- 4.14 In the EYFS settings, the warm welcome given to all children at the start of each day is characteristic of the positive relationships developed by the 'key person' which are highly effective and ensure that children settle quickly when they are new to the setting, feel safe and that their needs are met. Children's behaviour is outstanding. Strong home-school links are further reinforced through 'Rafi Rabbit' and 'Eddie Bear' who go home with different children each weekend. Children manage their own personal hygiene well. They understand and can explain the importance of healthy eating, including at snack time, and of drinking plenty of water. Physical

- activity is strongly emphasised, with weekly physical education, games and swimming lessons throughout the year. Class helper responsibilities and encouragement for children to try on their own first promote independence, although on occasion, opportunities to reinforce independence are not taken during group activities.
- 4.15 In the junior and senior schools, the staff across all sites provide a high quality of care for pupils of all ages. Form teachers and tutors provide close support and guidance, and monitor pupils' academic and pastoral progress thoroughly. Pupils trust their teachers and feel well supported by them. The sharing of pastoral information among staff across the schools is very effective. Pupils appreciate the service of the school counsellor.
- 4.16 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, is excellent. Teachers are good role models. Pupils have no difficulty in identifying a wide range of adults they could approach for advice or help with a problem. Pupils appreciate the cultural and social diversity of the school and firm friendships are established between pupils of different ages.
- 4.17 Pupils of all ages are encouraged to be healthy and take regular exercise. Sporting activities are well attended and appreciated. Guidance, appropriate to their age, is given to pupils in areas such as healthy eating and substance abuse. All pupils are encouraged to make informed choices. A good choice of freshly prepared food is available at lunchtimes and is appreciated by the pupils.
- 4.18 A small minority of pupils who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school did not listen to their views or seek their opinions. Discussion with pupils and other inspection evidence do not support these views. Pupils' opinions are sought in a number of different ways. The various school councils meet on a regular basis and provide an effective forum for debating pupils' ideas. A number of recent initiatives have been pursued following discussion at these forums, such as an improvement in the number of lockers available. All pupils who were interviewed were confident that they could raise issues for discussion with staff informally and would be happy to approach teachers about all aspects of their life and work at school.
- 4.19 The schools are very effective in promoting good behaviour. Staff work hard to affirm and celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils agree that the school deals with any bullying effectively. Scrutiny of the records of reported bullying behaviour reveals that the school takes this seriously and deals with it robustly. Systems of rewards motivate pupils to achieve and behave well and instances of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively through a system of escalating sanctions. Comprehensive records are kept of rewards and sanctions and these are reviewed on a regular basis. A small minority of pupils' questionnaire responses suggested that they believed that rewards and sanctions were not consistently applied and were sometimes used for trivial incidents. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Scrutiny of school records and discussions with pupils suggest that sanctions for misbehaviour and the issue of rewards are, by and large, consistent and proportionate.
- 4.20 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational and physical access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.21 The arrangements to safeguard and promote pupils' health, safety and welfare are excellent.
- 4.22 In the EYFS settings, high priority is given to health and safety, and adults discuss risks to encourage children to take steps to minimise the chance of an accident, such as how to behave during a visit by the fire brigade. Staff adhere strictly to all health and safety procedures and good communication ensures children are safeguarded at all times. Secure procedures for identifying, reporting and implementing repairs and hazard removal ensure a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment.
- 4.23 Across all the schools, the arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are in line with the school's aims and make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. The safeguarding policy has due regard to government guidance and is well implemented. Appropriate training in child protection and a helpful guidance booklet is provided to all adults working in the schools. Nine members of staff with specialist safeguarding responsibilities have received higher-level training from the local authority. Staff understand the correct response if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Careful records are kept of welfare concerns which are appropriately dealt with. Effective relationships exist with local external agencies. Staff provide guidance and support for pupils on matters connected with internet safety.
- 4.24 The school takes highly effective measures to reduce risks from fire and other hazards, and takes its responsibility to ensure pupils' health and safety very seriously. Appropriate training in fire safety, safe working practices and first aid has been provided to many staff members. Risk connected with different sections of the school, subject areas and facilities, and off-site trips is carefully assessed and action taken to minimise its impact.
- 4.25 Medical care of pupils is well planned and provided for through nursing cover across the school sites, appropriate accommodation for sick or injured pupils, and clear procedures for providing first aid and dealing with accidents. Staff understand the welfare needs of pupils with disabilities and those with specific medical conditions.
- 4.26 The school maintains accurate admission and attendance registers and these are stored appropriately as required.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The two principals have dual roles as school leaders and proprietors. They have overall responsibility for the academic and administrative areas of the school's operation across three sites and five different school sections, including the EYFS. They share and promote a strong sense of purpose with passion and commitment, and provide inspiration and a flair for innovation, especially in the promotion of digital learning. They have a clear and ambitious strategic vision for the school as a whole, although this is not yet fully enshrined in a set of specific targets to guide the day-to-day development and future improvement of the school. However, the proprietors have begun to involve staff in making decisions about key development areas. The proprietors show great confidence and faith in the school's success through their financial planning, and by purchasing a large area of land adjacent to the current junior boys' school with the intention of moving the whole school onto purpose-built premises on a single site. The school is facing the challenge of planning how this vision will be translated into educational reality.
- 5.3 The proprietors are assisted and supported in their monitoring role by a number of external professional visitors who provide support and expertise in areas covering welfare, health and safety, careers, transport and pensions. The health and safety and safeguarding visitors attend the school up to six times each year and provide perceptive analyses of the school's provision and practices. These support the proprietors in carrying out their annual reviews of the effectiveness of safeguarding and health and safety throughout the schools.
- 5.4 The proprietors take responsibility for drawing up key policies and procedures to guide the school's operational and educational areas, and delegate some responsibility to senior and middle managers for their implementation. They are highly successful in recruiting, appointing and developing teaching and non-teaching staff. They ensure that accommodation, facilities and resources are used effectively and efficiently, and contribute to the high standard of outcomes for pupils.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 Throughout the school, many aspects of leadership and management are excellent, fulfilling the school's mission and achieving its aim to develop pupils to succeed in life. Leaders and managers set a clear educational direction for the school, reflected in the high quality of the pupils' achievement and in their personal development. Within this structurally complex and geographically disparate organisation, a few areas of variable practice are, not surprisingly, evident. For example, areas such as marking, well-planned challenge for the most able, use of the new digital technology within the curriculum, and opportunities for staff to reflect and share good practice, are sometimes inconsistent between and within schools.

- 5.7 Heads of all schools discharge their delegated responsibilities very effectively. A wide range of meetings between managers within and across schools and regular communication between the heads of the schools and subject and pastoral leaders enable a clear view of the effectiveness of their schools to be achieved. However, the leadership is not always evaluating practice with sufficient precision and consistently drawing on this information to create sharply-defined development plans; these are more representative of the overall vision for the school rather than the specific needs of the individual schools.
- 5.8 Management tools and techniques are constantly under review, and an effective new appraisal system has been introduced into the junior boys' school. Across the schools, improved procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are also being developed to ensure that the current highly effective teaching is sustained and to enable less successful teaching strategies to be refined. Well co-ordinated arrangements for assessing pupils' progress mean that all schools have a consistent view of pupils' achievements and are able to intervene to ensure the pupils' excellent achievement and good progress are maintained.
- 5.9 The school is successful in recruiting, motivating and retaining high-quality staff. Effective middle management ensures that the school underpins its stated core values with the implementation of appropriate policies and procedures. The contribution of middle managers to decision making has improved since the previous inspection, but the time and autonomy available to them still limit the opportunities they have to take greater responsibility and reflect more on the development of their own areas.
- 5.10 A strong learning development department ensures that the widest educational opportunities are accessible to all pupils, whilst a large, well-organised and effectively managed administrative department ensures high quality support for the smooth running of the school.
- 5.11 Selection and appointment procedures for new staff are rigorous and efficient. At all levels, new staff are mentored, and staff are trained in their responsibilities for safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety.
- 5.12 In the EYFS settings, leadership and management are extremely well co-ordinated, whilst recognising the individuality of the two sites. Monitoring and analysis of assessment, planning and EYFS profile data are good, and used effectively to improve provision. Staff value the support and supervision provided by managers. Regular appraisals identify areas for professional and personal development, and staff are actively encouraged to attend and share training, and undertake further qualifications. Opportunities for staff to observe and share best practice within the setting are limited, although a programme of peer observation is developing. Close links with local agencies and positive relationships with parents ensure appropriate support is secured. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection in improving the outdoor areas and other resources, and priorities for the continued development of the EYFS have been identified through on-going, reflective practice and self-evaluation. These have been fully integrated into the ambitious plans for the future development of the school. The potential for continued development is very strong due to the high quality of leadership and management within the setting and the continuous self-evaluation that involves all staff.
- 5.13 Throughout the whole school, excellent links with parents, carers and guardians have been developed at all stages from the EYFS to the sixth form. In their

responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. The overwhelming majority of parents said they would recommend the school to others. Parents particularly approved of the range of subjects and extra-curricular opportunities available, the care provided that enables their children be happy and feel safe, the information provided about the school, and the quality of leadership and management.

- 5.14 Comprehensive information booklets, welcome packs and an extensive website ensure that the parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required information and have easy access to school policies. Parents appreciate the regular newsletters and email updates that keep them very well informed about events and activities.
- 5.15 Parents feel very welcome within the school, and are confident that their children are well known and cared for by staff. Constructive relationships with parents are characterised by the ease with which parents can discuss their children with staff, managers or with the leadership. Parents feel that concerns are handled quickly and effectively in accordance with the school's procedures.
- 5.16 Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life and work of the school, and progress of their children, particularly in the junior schools. Assemblies, concerts, sports matches and other presentations and events are well attended. The active parent/teacher associations organise social and fund-raising events, such as an annual firework display, May ball and summer fete for parents and their children, raising significant money for the benefit of all pupils.
- 5.17 Parents appreciate and value the written reports and consultations that are provided at appropriate intervals throughout the year for each age group. Reports are detailed and, in the best examples, provide clear targets for improvement and suggestions for supporting learning at home, although these are not consistently or routinely provided. Parents also receive an interim grade card indicating progress at certain intervals.

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