



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**READ SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	<b>Read School</b>
DfE Number	<b>815/6019</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>529675</b>
Address	<b>Read School Drax Selby North Yorkshire YO8 8NL</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01757 618248</b>
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Email Address	<b>headspa@readschool.co.uk</b>
Head	<b>Dr John Sweetman</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Roy Manock</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>290</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (179 boys; 111 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 12    11-18: 220</b>
	<b>5-11: 58</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>Total: 245</b>
Number of Boarders	<b>Total: 45</b>
	<b>Full: 45</b>
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Caroline Wynne</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection dates	<b>31 January 2012 to 3 Feb 2012</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 October 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. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed through the following link: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

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

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

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

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

Under Government arrangements, the inspection of boarding became an integrated part of ISI inspections from 1 September 2011. This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in November 2008 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The grades used by ISI and Ofsted are different to 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 for Achievement the descriptor 'exceptional' is available in addition.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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

### **Inspectors**

Mr Martin Bussey	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Catherine Hill	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, HMC school)
Mr Patrick Lee Browne	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Roger Waller	Team Inspector (Former Head, SHMIS school)
Mr Gregg Davies	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Miss Louise Savage	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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

- 1.1 Read School is a coeducational independent day and boarding school for pupils aged from three to eighteen years. It was founded in 1667. Previously a grammar school, it became independent in 1967. The school occupies a rural site in North Yorkshire, a few miles from Selby. It comprises the senior school for pupils aged from eleven to eighteen and the prep school for younger pupils; this includes the pre-prep department which is made up of Years 1 and 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It currently educates 290 pupils, of whom 220 are in the senior school, including 36 in the sixth form, and 70 are in the prep school. Of the latter, twelve are educated in the EYFS. There are 45 boarders, aged from nine to eighteen. They are accommodated in two boarding houses, the girls' house, Adamson House, being about a mile away from the school. Oversight is provided by a governing body of twelve who act as trustees of the school, a limited company since September 2010. The school has a broadly Christian ethos but welcomes pupils of all faiths or none.
- 1.2 The school is accommodated in a range of buildings mainly dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Since the previous inspection the prep school has been created from the existing junior school, and the pre-prep, which has moved onto the main site; a creative arts centre has been opened; and the school day has been extended. The chair of governors was appointed in January 2010, the head in January 2012 and the head of the prep school in May 2011.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide an education which is caring, inspiring and fun; to care for pupils as individuals, promoting self-respect and respect for others; to enable them to experience a wide range of educational opportunities, including learning outside the classroom; and to support them in their endeavours to rise to the challenge while involving parents fully in the education of their children.
- 1.4 The school does not set specific admission criteria. Places are offered to suit a pupil's potential to benefit from the education provided. Pupils are admitted to the prep school following a taster day, and to the senior school on the basis of a visit, interview, and report from their previous school. The average ability on entry to both sections of the school is broadly in line with or slightly above the national average. Pupils demonstrate a wide range of abilities and cohorts vary from year to year. The pupils' abilities in the sixth form are in line with the national average. Most pupils come from North Yorkshire from a range of social backgrounds. Some boarders come from overseas, including Germany and Hong Kong. There are 14 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), most of whom receive additional support from the school. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are 72 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 66 receive specialist help with their learning.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 The overall achievement of pupils of all abilities and ages is good. They develop well in knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas and some achieve excellent standards. Pupils from the EYFS to Year 11 make good progress, and those in the sixth form make progress appropriate to pupils of similar ability. They do so as a consequence of curricular provision which is good throughout the school, allied to an excellent range of activities. The pupils' progress is facilitated by good and sometimes excellent teaching. At its best, teaching stimulates pupils and challenges all, including the more able but this is not consistent across all subject areas and ages. Pupils are good learners, keen to succeed, and they work well with others. Teaching is well-planned, particularly with regard to meeting the needs of those with SEND or EAL.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children in the EYFS achieve excellent personal development for their ages. Pupils of all ages show confidence, self-respect and respect for others. They show a good sense of right and wrong, although their responses to ethical issues sometimes lack depth. They develop good social skills and cultural awareness, the latter heightened by the contribution of the international boarding community. Their personal development is supported by excellent pastoral care and good arrangements to ensure their welfare, health and safety. Those pupils who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires were positive about the school. The quality of boarding is good although unevenness in staff deployment results in limited opportunities for girls to take full advantage of their accommodation. The experience of boarding contributes well to the boarders' personal development.
- 2.3 Good governance supports the school's aims and ethos, recognising the role that boarding plays in the school community. Governors demonstrate a good understanding of the school's needs which enables them to support the pupils' good academic achievement and personal development. They have restructured their work to meet the recommendation of the previous inspection well although the limitations of some recent recruitment systems for senior staff are acknowledged by governors. The actions on regulatory issues required by the previous inspection, including those regarding safeguarding, have been met effectively. Good oversight of the governors' legal responsibilities is combined with careful financial management. The school has made significant progress since the previous inspection, including in boarding. Current senior leaders have ensured that this has been maintained during recent personnel changes in senior roles and work hard to promote the ethos of the school as a supportive community. This community extends to include parents, with whom the school maintains good links. Good leadership and management results in effective policy making which is implemented and monitored well overall, including in the EYFS and in boarding, but not wholly consistently. Parents expressed satisfaction with the education provided by the school in pre-inspection questionnaires. A few expressed concerns about opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the school and information provided to them, including on their child's progress. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views.

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that teaching across all subject areas and ages matches the quality of the best, particularly with regard to offering appropriate levels of challenge to all pupils.
2. Ensure that staff deployment in boarding is sufficient to allow girls the maximum opportunity to use the resources of their boarding house, including those who are unwell.
3. In the EYFS develop the outside area and ensure its use reflects the six areas of learning equally.
4. In the EYFS ensure that activities for children include a greater proportion of opportunities for child-initiated learning.

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

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

##### ***Whole School***

- 3.1 The pupils' overall achievement is good.
- 3.2 Pupils at all ages, including in the EYFS, are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to provide an education which is caring, inspiring and fun.

##### ***Prep School***

- 3.3 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are good. From different starting points children make good progress across the six areas of learning and excellent progress in literacy and numeracy. By the end of Reception most have attained the Early Learning Goals and some have exceeded them. In the Nursery, children demonstrate strong social skills, clear co-operation and good levels of self-expression. Older children read simple texts fluently and have a secure understanding of number operations between one and twenty.
- 3.4 Pupils in Years 1 to 6 develop their knowledge, skills and understanding well. They read fluently and write neatly and coherently. Pupils are articulate and express themselves with confidence and knowledge when discussing their work. They have excellent numeracy skills and can apply these successfully. They achieve well in science and some make rapid progress. Pupils execute imaginative ideas in art work, and younger pupils enjoyed inventing vocalised accompaniments to poetry in a music lesson. They are able to use information and communication technology (ICT) for word processing and older pupils can research using the internet.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve good standards in extra-curricular activities. A number have been selected to play at district, county and regional levels in a number of sports including swimming, football, rugby and cricket. They achieve success in local speech and drama festivals, and instrumental examinations.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from their work and their performance in lessons, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good, sometimes rapid progress when compared to the average for pupils of similar ability. Those pupils with SEND achieve in line with their peers, indicating good progress. The more able show skill levels in advance of their ages when tasks provided in teaching enable them to do so.
- 3.7 The pupils' successful achievement is supported by their enthusiastic attitude to their work, by high standards of behaviour in class and excellent cooperative work with staff and with their peers. Pupils are able to work independently when encouraged to do so. All children in the EYFS enjoy coming to school; they are happy, sociable and keen to learn.

##### ***Senior School***

- 3.8 Pupils of all abilities achieve well in response to well-planned teaching. Some achievement is excellent. Sixth form pupils showed a thorough grasp of concepts of inclined planes in physics and could demonstrate the underlying reasons for their

understanding of texts in English. Art work shows high levels of creativity. Pupils develop effective, confident speaking skills, including those with EAL. They read well and write fluently and accurately using appropriate vocabulary for their age. Pupils develop good knowledge, skills and understanding across a broad range of subjects in Years 7 to 9. This enables them to choose options for GCSE study freely.

- 3.9 The pupils' mathematical skills are well developed enabling pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers, and these skills are applied well in other subjects particularly in the sixth form. Achievement in science is good and particularly strong in the sixth form. In modern foreign languages, younger pupils develop good skills in both French and Spanish. Pupils can reason well but are less inclined to do so when teaching sets tasks which give limited opportunities for independent thinking and learning. Pupils use ICT confidently in specialised areas, such as manipulating images, desktop publishing and in design technology (DT). They demonstrate good creative and performing skills. Excellent standards are attained in physical education (PE) by some, and those with less aptitude demonstrate good fitness and perseverance.
- 3.10 Those pupils with SEND achieve targets set for them with regard to their potential and individual needs and sometimes surpass them. The achievement of more able pupils, and those with particular talents, is good, particularly when teaching provides additional challenges. In mathematics some more able pupils achieve excellent standards for their age. Pupils with EAL achieve good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding and are able to express their thoughts cogently and clearly.
- 3.11 Pupils perform well in instrumental examinations and gain prizes in local music festivals. A good number attain bronze in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) scheme and some achieve at higher levels. Pupils achieve well in awards promoted by the combined cadet force (CCF) including in public service and outdoor pursuits. Individuals have achieved places in county teams in hockey and rugby and success in national go-karting competitions.
- 3.12 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2008 to 2010. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for pupils in maintained schools. Results at A level have been similar to the national average for maintained schools although the small size of cohorts makes definitive comparison difficult. These results, when considered alongside evidence from the pupils' work and their achievement in lessons, indicate that they make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability at GCSE. At A level pupils generally make appropriate progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Around a half of pupils proceed from Year 11 into the sixth form, with leavers proceeding to maintained or independent sixth forms or to undertake vocational study. Most sixth formers enter higher education.
- 3.13 Pupils are good learners. They enjoy their lessons, try hard and are keen to succeed. Pupils take care over their work although presentation can vary in quality. They are very successful in working co-operatively, sharing ideas freely.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.

- 3.15 Throughout the school, the curriculum provides a wide range of educational experiences in line with its aims. In the EYFS, the quality of the provision is good. The setting meets the needs of every child, ensuring that they make good progress in their learning and development. It fulfils its aim of caring for children as individuals.
- 3.16 From Year 1 upwards, a broad and balanced curriculum facilitates the pupils' good level of achievement. In addition to the core subjects, a good mix of creative, expressive and technological subjects is offered, many of which are accommodated in excellent purpose-built studios within the creative arts centre. Since the previous inspection, Spanish has been introduced throughout the prep school and Latin in the senior school, and the time allocation for French and Spanish in Years 7 to 9 has been increased to provide an improved foundation for GCSE. A good range of subjects is offered at GCSE and A level including food technology at GCSE and PE, business studies and DT at A level. Careful planning ensures that almost all pupils can study their preferred combination of subjects at GCSE and A level.
- 3.17 The pupils' differing needs are catered for well. The inclusive learning and EAL departments provide highly effective support for pupils with SEND or EAL; testing on entry to the school identifies each pupil's particular needs. Class and subject teachers are given good information about these pupils. Additional individual support is given where needed, including in class. A flexible approach enables an individual pupil's curriculum to be matched to their needs: for example, pupils may study a reduced number of GCSE or A-level subjects. Pupils identified as mathematically gifted follow an accelerated course from Year 5 upwards, joining the year above for their mathematics lessons and completing GCSE in Year 10. Challenge for more able pupils in other subjects is the responsibility of subject teachers. Effective liaison between the different sections of the school ensures continuity of progression at all ages.
- 3.18 Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Year 6 pupils join with pupils in Year 7 to 9 for assembly each week, and several senior school staff teach classes in the prep school. In the senior school, a comprehensive programme of careers education and guidance is provided, through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) up to Year 11 and during tutor periods in the sixth form.
- 3.19 Provision for PSHCE throughout the school is strong; sixth formers benefit from an imaginative series of talks by visitors ranging from the local MP to a forensic scientist during their Thursday social evenings. Well organised visits, such as a residential trip to Derbyshire for Years 4, 5, and 6 and a sixth form visit to London museums help broaden the pupils' horizons.
- 3.20 Throughout the school an excellent programme of activities is offered, making a significant contribution to the pupils' personal and social development and supporting the school's aim to provide an education that is caring, inspiring and fun. Since the previous inspection, the range of extra-curricular activities has been extended for all pupils in terms of diversity and provision for different age groups. Links with the wider community have been strengthened, meeting the recommendations of that report. Parents and pupils value the range of provision highly.
- 3.21 Many pupils represent the school in competitive sport, including at weekends, whilst sixth formers play a valuable role in coaching younger pupils. There are good

opportunities to take part in musical and dramatic performances; for example, all prep school pupils are involved in a production of *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*. All senior school pupils develop their leadership skills through participation in the CCF in Years 9 and 10, with some completing an external award in public service. Pupils are encouraged to suggest and set up new activities, and initiatives such as *Boxercise* are entirely pupil led. Prep school activities include a well-attended Book Club and a popular after-school sports skills session. The Latin club is open to the local community and local primary school pupils join in games lessons. Pupils of all ages are involved in gardening for local senior citizens while musical ensembles regularly perform in the community.

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

- 3.22 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.23 Teaching supports the aims of the school, enabling pupils to rise well to the challenges supplied by the curriculum. It encourages pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, to make good, and in some cases excellent, progress and engage confidently in their lessons. Relations in teaching between staff and pupils are excellent; mutual respect and a sense of common academic purpose are often found throughout the school.
- 3.24 Teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge. Lessons are enjoyable; encouragement and praise are strong features of classroom practice. Most teaching gives opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, although it does not always ensure that less confident pupils are required to articulate their thoughts and opinions. In the EYFS, adults support the children's learning and development well. They listen carefully to them and respond with encouragement and praise, building on their responses and steering them towards clearer understanding.
- 3.25 Effective use of data to identify individual pupils' ability and potential, and good knowledge of their needs, are evident in most teaching. This results in well-planned lessons and ensures that pupils achieve the objectives set by those plans. In some teaching, information about the pupils' potential is not used to best advantage in planning tasks and methodology. Sometimes discussion is overly led by the teacher, teaching moves too slowly to challenge the more able pupils or tasks are set that do not promote the full range of possible responses or allow pupils to develop individual, independent ideas. As a result progress is hindered. In the most successful teaching rapid progress is enabled by the provision of stimulating tasks; for example, older prep school pupils reinforced their prior knowledge of terms such as mean, median and mode and extended it to a higher level when given an activity which required them to put their understanding into practice.
- 3.26 The school provides excellent support for pupils with SEND or EAL. Detailed evidence of these pupils' needs is communicated to staff, and teaching enables them to address their learning difficulties highly effectively. Pupils feel very well supported by the inclusive learning department and in their lessons. Younger senior school pupils with learning needs were supported very well by teaching assistants in science lessons, enabling them to make progress equivalent to that of their peers. Teaching provides good support for pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- 3.27 Marking is good: it is regular, often giving helpful and encouraging comments which identify the pupil's strengths and inform progress. Staff apply the school's

assessment policy well, and continuous assessment is used to good effect alongside other marking strategies to enable the pupils' development. The results of standardised tests are shared with senior school pupils to set targets and raise expectations of their future performance. Prep school pupils are familiar with the system of 'traffic lights' which is used to help them set individual targets for learning. In the EYFS, the children's next stages of learning are identified clearly through careful observational assessment. Subsequent planned activities mostly ensure appropriate challenge and engage the children's interest and enthusiasm but their adult-led or adult-selected nature restricts opportunities for child-initiated learning.

- 3.28 Teaching benefits from good resources. The EYFS classroom is spacious and welcoming and is an integral part of the pre-prep building which contributes to a strong sense of community. The designated EYFS outside area is extensive, but due to the grassed surface its effectiveness is hampered by any bad weather. It is used appropriately, but teaching plans include limited opportunities for purposeful play and exploration. In the prep and senior schools two well-equipped ICT suites allow pupils to make effective use of ICT within lessons; younger senior school pupils used desk top publishing to good effect to compile newspaper reports about Christopher Columbus. Not all departments currently take full advantage of these facilities. A library is also provided for research, but its dual role as a teaching room hinders access and its use by pupils for independent research or study is limited. The resources of the creative arts centre are used highly effectively for both curriculum teaching and activities in art, DT and food technology.

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

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- 4.2 Many of the school's aims focus on aspects of the pupils' personal development and these are met well. Self-respect and respect for others are notable features of the pupils' high standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. In the EYFS, the children's personal development is excellent.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, good spiritual development is evident in the pupils' readiness to rise to the challenges put to them in a variety of situations, whether memorising and performing solo pieces in a prep school production or tackling challenging activities in outdoor pursuits. They do so with confidence borne of the school's culture of recognising achievement at all levels and in diverse areas. Although sometimes diffident in discussing their achievements, pupils develop imaginative and individualistic responses to art.
- 4.4 Good levels of moral understanding are evident at all ages. Pupils show an understanding of the need for fairness in sport which reflects their respect for necessary rules of community life. Occasionally the pupils' responses to ethical questions demonstrate a lack of depth. Pupils are keen to support charitable causes and demonstrate a readiness to support the less fortunate. They show a willingness to promote good behaviour. Serious lapses in behaviour are few and are followed by an appropriate apology.
- 4.5 The pupils develop strong social skills. Behaviour round the school is good. While lively in their demeanour, both day and boarding pupils are aware of the social responsibilities of life in the school community. This is reflected in the willingness of older pupils to give regular support to younger pupils in the classroom, on the sports field and in activities. This willingness is developed further and projected into the public sphere through community service as part of the DofE scheme and by those members of the CCF who take a qualification in public service. In the prep school, pupils develop a good understanding of their social responsibilities through the award of a prize for citizenship. Both here and in Years 7 to 11 schemes of work in PSHCE ensure that pupils develop a broad understanding of public institutions. Pupils in both sections of the school take seriously opportunities to participate in decision making through school councils. This is mirrored in other situations, for example, in a willingness and enthusiasm to act as sports captains or take responsibility for an aspect of an enterprise in the business club.
- 4.6 In the EYFS, all children respond well to the high expectations of staff who guide them to behave with consideration and courtesy. They get on well with each other and interact confidently with adults. Children understand that physical exercise and healthy eating, together with personal hygiene, are essential for a healthy lifestyle. They were able to explain the need to wash their hands carefully before eating their fruit snacks in order to avoid the spread of germs.
- 4.7 Pupils develop good cultural awareness, strengthened by close integration of the international boarding community into school life. Younger pupils in the prep school enjoy taking their first steps in understanding Spanish while younger senior school pupils joined in with overseas boarders in wishing each other a happy New Year in Cantonese during an assembly. Pupils enjoy the variety of international dishes they

cook during cookery club. Classical cultures are familiar to all senior school pupils through their study of Latin. Drama and musical performance are well supported by pupils, and they visit galleries regularly.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The pastoral care provided for pupils throughout the school fulfils its aims in providing an education which is caring, and encourages respect and courtesy for others. The staff provide outstanding support and guidance as class and subject teachers and form tutors. Senior managers offer further support when needed and monitor care highly effectively. Regular meetings between members of the pastoral staff ensure that all receive necessary information to provide the appropriate support for individual pupils. Parents of pupils in the prep school can meet with staff when they bring their children to school; those with children in the EYFS appreciate the informal daily contact with staff which provides additional support for children. In both sections of the school, pupil planners provide an additional opportunity for parents and staff to support pupils jointly.
- 4.10 Pastoral arrangements foster the pupils' personal development extremely well. All staff promote the pupils' self-confidence through praise and encouragement. All pupils say they are cared for well. They have the confidence to turn to an adult in case of need. In the EYFS, staff promote healthy and safe habits and ensure that the welfare of all pupils is given a high priority through the key person system.
- 4.11 Relations amongst pupils are excellent and between pupils and staff they are strong overall, promoting a caring and friendly atmosphere. Adults within the school community serve as excellent role-models.
- 4.12 The pupils believe that the school rules are fair. They respect the strong systems in place to promote good behaviour and these promote a happy and caring environment. Pupils report that bullying is rare, and that if it does occur it is dealt with effectively. Responses to the parents' questionnaire show that almost all agree that the school promotes high standards of behaviour and has effective procedures to guard against bullying.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise through timetabled lessons or through the programme of activities and fixtures. Most say that they enjoy school meals, which are nutritious and provide a healthy choice. Pupils receive good guidance on how to stay healthy through the PSHCE programme and the sixth form lecture series.
- 4.14 The school council meets fortnightly in the senior school and twice each half term in the prep school. It forms an effective method of seeking the views of pupils of all ages. The boarders' committee and occasional surveys of the pupils' views provide additional information. Attendance by a governor at school council meetings ensures that pupils' views are heard widely.
- 4.15 The school has a plan designed to improve access for those with either physical or learning disabilities. It takes its responsibilities in these areas seriously.

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

- 4.16 The arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good.

- 4.17 The school has strong arrangements to safeguard the pupils' welfare and these are implemented with great care throughout the school. Designated staff receive regular, effective training and this is communicated to all staff, ensuring that procedures are clearly understood. All staff participate in local authority online training. Relationships with external agencies are strong, including in the EYFS where advisors from the local education authority support and guide if necessary. Advice from such agencies is sought whenever appropriate.
- 4.18 Registration of the pupils is undertaken with care and any absence is followed up quickly. The school maintains and stores an appropriate admission register. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety are good; in the EYFS, comprehensive risk assessments are reviewed regularly. Good arrangements overall exist for pupils who feel unwell during the day and these are operated in conjunction with a comprehensive first aid policy. Due care is taken to ensure the health and safety of those with special physical or learning needs.
- 4.19 Measures to prevent risks of fire and other hazards are good. Regular drills are held and equipment checked appropriately. A concise but detailed policy ensures the pupils' health and safety on educational visits. This includes differentiated requirements for different types of visit and robust requirements for residential visits. The policy takes excellent note of existing guidance and is reflected well in assessments of risk.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding (for schools providing boarding accommodation)**

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 Since the previous inspection by ISI significant improvement has been made in nearly all areas. The recommendations of the most recent Ofsted report have been met.
- 4.22 Boarders are encouraged to be confident in social situations and they have a high regard for the quality of relationships between each other and with adults. They are given responsibility in the boarding houses from an early age and this develops both leadership qualities and an understanding of the needs of others. Boarders are supportive of each other and will go out of their way to give help to those who need it.
- 4.23 As they become older boarders are encouraged to become more independent and self-reliant. Sixth form girls take responsibility for their own laundry and both boys and girls help with the coaching and teaching of younger pupils, who greatly value and respect their input. Boarders contribute to the operation of the boarding houses through the boarding council made up of year representatives. The boarders appreciate this opportunity, and that their recommendations are adopted when appropriate. As they move up the school, boarders are increasingly willing to debate cogently with adults about issues in their community and this is valued by senior staff.
- 4.24 Boarders develop tolerance through their experience of boarding, and relationships between older and younger boarders are excellent. In response to questionnaires some parents commented that relationships between boarders and some staff have deteriorated in some areas. Inspectors found that, in many but not all areas, there are easy and positive relationships between boarders and house staff.

- 4.25 Boarders are cared for well. There is an appropriate number of staff to whom boarders can turn for help including an independent counsellor. A good induction process is in place for new boarders. A 'buddy' system operates whereby a new boarder is paired with an existing boarder of the same age. Those boarders with particular needs, including those with EAL, are given strong support. Good handbooks are provided for all boarders and a programme to translate these into other languages has been initiated.
- 4.26 Arrangements to ensure the boarders' health and safety operate effectively. Fire evacuation drills are held regularly and appropriate logs are kept. Appropriate assessments of risk are made for boarding houses and activities. Arrangements for medical care ensure that boarders receive much advice and support; boarders who are unwell receive medical assistance when required. A close link with the local general practice means that boarders can be seen by a doctor quickly if needed. The arrangements for the administering of prescribed medicines are clear. Most house staff have a first aid qualification. An en-suite room is available if a boarder needs to be isolated because of illness although girls cannot always be accommodated in their own boarding house. The provision is adequate although, as the school is aware, the location does not make it easy to monitor a patient continually.
- 4.27 Boarders take all their meals in the dining hall. The choice and quality of the food provided is good: boarders are especially appreciative of the cooked breakfasts. Substantial and varied snacks are provided for evenings and, in addition, boarders can use the boarding house kitchens to make simple and quick food. The boarders' views on menus are given through the boarders' committee. Catering staff monitor the eating habits of boarders and are proactive in providing alternative items at short notice.
- 4.28 There is a good, efficient laundry service. Much care is taken over returning un-named items. The boarders' private possessions can be locked away in a personal cupboard. Generally boarders respect each other's property well.
- 4.29 Each boarding house has a common room in which boarders may relax. In Norfolk House, the boys' house, pool and air-hockey tables are popular and the video-game consoles are in constant demand during recreation time. The common room in Adamson House is the centre for socialising whilst a second room is used for movie nights and more energetic activities such as Zumba. For others, simple projects like making bird-feeders are offered. The activities programme available to boarders during the week is excellent. There is a varied range of sporting, creative, musical and artistic opportunities in addition to the DofE scheme and the CCF. At weekends appropriate activities are organised but the deployment of staff limits opportunities for girls to spend time in their own boarding house. There is always an outing for junior boarders to local leisure attractions or more cerebral venues. Senior boarders choose more self-directed visits, usually to Selby.
- 4.30 Accommodation for boarders is sound. Recent improvements in decoration in Adamson House have brightened up rooms and corridors but in other areas of the house the décor is tired. A cosy atmosphere is generated by the choice of furnishings and the girls make their areas more personalised with posters and magazine pages. Norfolk House rooms similarly reflect individual tastes. High standards of tidiness are expected and achieved. Recent improvements in showering facilities have been well-received by the boys. The bedroom furniture in both houses has been changed recently and is of a good standard. There are still

some areas which remain to be upgraded to a similar standard as part of the school's maintenance programme.

- 4.31 Boarders are able to keep in touch with events in the outside world easily. Both boarding houses are equipped with wireless systems which enable connection to the internet through personal laptops, although in Adamson House this becomes very slow in the evenings. There are also desktop computers available. Boarders are able to watch television at certain times in the week. Boarders mostly use mobile phones to contact parents and friends but there are landlines available which are generally used for incoming calls. Video-calling is made easily available to overseas boarders at certain times. Parents appreciate recent improvements in communication with house staff. They particularly value the written feedback that is given if they cannot attend a parent-teacher meeting.
- 4.32 The school ensures that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding of boarders and that positive behaviour and relationships are promoted, including the prevention of bullying. The school follows safer recruitment procedures.
- 4.33 The leadership of both boarding houses has recently changed. Good policies and a development plan have been put in place and are implemented well overall, although the quality of leadership and management in boarding is not wholly consistent with regard to relationships between staff and boarders. House staff attend the recently formed pastoral committee; this ensures that they can follow up any academic or pastoral issues affecting individual boarders. Boarding staff are encouraged to attend external training courses and take advantage of good, local and relevant professional development.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance provides good support for the school's aims; it demonstrates a clear understanding of the school's ethos and recognises the role of boarding in contributing to the development of a caring community. The governing body includes a good range of experience in the law, education and business and is active in trying to extend this range still further. The roles of individual governors are well defined. This ensures effective oversight of developments within the prep school; oversight of the EYFS is less clearly focused although its operation is discussed regularly at governors' meetings. A comprehensive system of committees operates well to provide the full body with good quality information about the school's activities. Many governors are regular visitors to school and they provide good support to staff including senior managers, supporting the pupils' academic achievement effectively. These arrangements are supplemented by regular attendance at school events.
- 5.3 Governors give effective support to the school through careful financial management and the prudent provision of human and material resources. The limitations of systems used to recruit senior staff in the past are acknowledged by the governing body; good planning is informed by well-focused self-review. Planning includes practical aims for the development of governance through a range of training. Governors provide good oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities. They have restructured their work to meet the recommendation of the previous inspection well. They review welfare, staff recruitment, and health and safety arrangements regularly to support the pupils' personal development, including an annual review of safeguarding measures. This has ensured that all the actions on regulatory requirements required by the previous inspection have been undertaken. The school buildings are maintained in a sound condition with their use kept under ongoing review. This has resulted in an effective recent move to unite accommodation for the education of younger pupils with that of older.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.5 The dedicated and tireless contributions of current senior management figures during changes of leadership at the highest level over recent months have ensured that the school's educational provision remains consistently good in its support of the pupils' academic achievement and personal development. The school's ethos of providing an education which is caring, inspiring and fun within a supportive community is promoted strongly by current leaders and communicated to and shared by all teaching and non-teaching staff. All pupils, including children in the EYFS are given equal opportunities to thrive. A strong, consistent emphasis on the needs of individual pupils and their safeguarding is a significant feature of school life.
- 5.6 The school's concept of an integrated community extends to its links with parents, which are good. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires a few parents felt that there was limited encouragement for them to be involved in the life of the school and

were dissatisfied with the information they receive about the school and about their child's progress. Inspection evidence shows that there is a variety of ways in which parents can become involved in the life of the school such as events organised by the parents' association and attendance at school meetings, including information evenings about option choices. Good quality information ensures that all required policies are provided to parents as well as regular newsletters. New initiatives to communicate through emails and text messages are combined with current upgrading of the school website. Good quality reports and grade cards provide parents with detailed information about their child's progress.

- 5.7 Parents of children in the EYFS are very supportive of the setting; they value highly the happy introduction their children receive to their education. Appropriate information about the setting is provided to parents, although details of routines and activities given prior to admission are limited in scope. Throughout the school an effective relationship is maintained with parents, and concerns are handled sensitively and promptly. The school's published procedure for handling complaints is good and is operated appropriately when needed. Responses to parental questionnaires showed overall satisfaction with the school, particularly with the education it provides and its support for the pupils' personal development. Inspection findings support these views.
- 5.8 Effective management at nearly all levels has contributed much to the significant progress made in both sections of the school since the previous inspection. Changes to the structure of the prep school and the move of the pre-prep to the main school site have been carried through with success and new management structures are becoming embedded well, although some consolidation remains to be achieved in this area and in boarding. Teaching and learning have developed to include a wider range of approaches. These have been implemented and monitored well by middle managers in some subject areas, but practice is not yet consistent. Changes to the school day have been introduced successfully together with a reorganised pastoral structure in the senior school. The overall monitoring of this system is provided for in the post of deputy head which was awaiting appointment at the time of the inspection.
- 5.9 The school reviews its provision and practice effectively and this results in well focused policy making and monitoring. Development planning is realistic and looks to build upon the successful attributes of the school. Mindful of financial prudence it seeks to provide greater coherence to the school's boarding through bringing the girls' boarding house onto the main site in the medium term. Systematic plans for the prep school include clearly-identified criteria for success and demonstrate a good level of ambition. The EYFS setting has a good capacity to sustain improvement and newly appointed managers are keen to develop strategies for meeting its own exacting standards of care and provision. The development plan provides clear aims for the future and specific areas for improvement. Careful financial planning throughout the school ensures that pastoral and academic areas of school life, including the EYFS, receive good resources. These are used well overall.
- 5.10 The school appoints well qualified staff, both teaching and non-teaching, throughout the school, although some aspects of their deployment in boarding limit opportunities for girls to make the most of the facilities their house provides. A regular system of performance review identifies appropriate areas for professional development which is linked to training; staff in the EYFS have had few opportunities to expand their professional knowledge through external training. Arrangements to ensure the

pupils' welfare, and for health and safety, are implemented effectively, including the training of all staff in safeguarding procedures. In the EYFS, children are safeguarded exceptionally well. Checking procedures to ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers and governors to work with children are good, and the central register is maintained with care. All staff, including efficient secretarial, administrative, medical and other non-teaching staff work very hard to ensure the success of the school. Many show great flexibility in adopting a variety of roles, whether teaching across wide age ranges or participating in activities; this is a key element in the school's success.

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