



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

QUEEN ETHELBURGA'S COLLEGE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Queen Ethelburga's College

The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of College	Queen Ethelburga's College
DfE Number	815/6014
EYFS Number	EY285382
Registered Charity Number	1012924
Address	Queen Ethelburga's College Thorpe Underwood Hall Thorpe Underwood Estate Ouseburn York North Yorkshire YO26 9SS
Telephone Number	01423 333300
Fax Number	01423 333310
Email Address	info@qe.org
Principal	Mr Steven Jandrell
Proprietor	Queen Ethelburga's College Ltd
Provost	Mr Brian Martin
Age Range	0 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	717
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (388 boys; 329 girls;)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 40 5-11: 150 3-5 (EYFS): 27 11-18: 500
Number of Boarders	420
Number of Day Pupils	297
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Karen Kilkenny
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	25 Sep 2012 to 28 Sep 2012

PREFACE

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

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. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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

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

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

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

inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Jean Marsland	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Lynn Maggs-Wellings	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Miss Jenny Butler	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Susan Court	Team Inspector (Former Head of Professional Development, ISA school)
Mr Colin Haddon	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)
Mrs Anne Howells	Team Inspector (Principal, COBIS international school)
Mr Michael Jacob	Team Inspector (Vice Principal, HMC school)
Mrs Eileen Grimes	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Lawrence Groves	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Junior School, GSA school)
Mrs Mary Hughes	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Queen Ethelburga's College, for boys and girls aged three months to nineteen years, is a boarding and day school, with boarding available from age five. The origins of the college date from 1912. It was acquired in 1991 by Queen Ethelburga's College Ltd. when it transferred to its current location on the 110-acre Thorpe Underwood Estate, northwest of York. It became part of Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate Foundation in 2006 when its sister school, The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's, was established. The college is based in Thorpe Underwood Hall, and supplemented by a range of purpose-built accommodation.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has been re-structured so that, since September 2011, it comprises: Queen Ethelburga's College for pupils aged fourteen and over; King's Magna for pupils aged ten to fourteen; and Chapter House, which includes Kindergarten for children aged three months to three years and Preparatory for pupils aged three to ten, each containing elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Also within the Foundation is The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's catering for pupils aged fourteen and over. It offers a broader curriculum of academic and vocational courses, and is subject to a separate inspection report. Governance of the Foundation is led by the provost who is the chair of governors, principal trustee of the Queen Ethelburga's Charitable Foundation and director of Queen Ethelburga's College Ltd. The provost is assisted in the governance of the Foundation by an advisory board of governors.
- 1.3 The Foundation aims to provide an excellent and challenging education which is outward looking and broadly Christian in ethos. It aims to welcome pupils of whatever background, creed or race and of a range of abilities and aptitudes; to prepare them well to meet the demands of work, leisure and family and to make a positive contribution to society. The Foundation intends that the hallmark of this education will be to instil in all pupils the virtues of enthusiasm and curiosity, self-discipline and endeavour; courtesy, compassion and tolerance; the pursuit of excellence and service to others.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 172 pupils on roll in Chapter House, of whom 67 were in Kindergarten and 105 were in Preparatory. There were 236 pupils in King's Magna and 309 in the College. Of the pupils in the College, 174 were in the sixth form, with a number of those joining the school at that point. In total there were 757 boarders. Of these, 337 were in the Faculty but judgements on provision for their boarding are included in this report. Pupils come from a broad mix of social and cultural backgrounds. Day pupils come from within a radius of thirty miles. Boarders come from the UK, with around a third coming from families serving with the Armed Forces, and from a wide range of countries, including the Far East, Russia, Mexico and Europe.
- 1.5 Evidence in the school indicates that the ability range up to Year 6 is in line with the national average. From Years 6 to 11 standardised tests indicate that the ability profile is in line with the national average, with that of pupils in Year 7 being above the average. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented.
- 1.6 The school has identified 75 pupils as having a special educational need or disability (SEND), 41 of whom receive specialist learning support. For 255 pupils English is an additional language (EAL), 129 of whom receive additional support.

- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school from Year 1 to Year 13. In the EYFS, children aged three months to three years are in Kindergarten, children aged three to four are in Nursery, and children aged four to five are in Reception.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school successfully meets its aims. Throughout the school the pupils' achievement, both in their academic work and in their activities, is good. In the Sixth Form the pupils' attainment is excellent. All pupils, including those with SEND, those with EAL and those who are gifted and talented, make good, and often rapid, progress in relation to their abilities, although this is not as successful for the most able pupils in the EYFS. In all parts of the school, including in the EYFS, the pupils are well supported by the good and often excellent teaching they receive although, on occasion, the teaching is less successful in meeting the pupils' needs.. The pupils' achievements are strongly supported by the excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision and are further enhanced by their positive attitudes to their studies, by the high-quality skills they develop during their time in the school, and by their almost always good behaviour.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. Their spiritual development is strong and they have a highly developed awareness of moral issues. Their social development is excellent and they have a keen awareness of cultural matters. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and, at all ages, they demonstrate a high level of mutual respect and support for each other and for all members of the school community. They are keen to take on responsibility and they make a valuable contribution to the school and to the wider community. Excellent arrangements for their pastoral care are in place and are highly effective in supporting the pupils' all-round well-being and development. The arrangements to promote their welfare, health and safety are good with examples of excellent practice although, as yet, policies to support this are not cohesive throughout the school. The quality of boarding is excellent and makes a highly effective contribution to the pupils' overall development.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good. The provost and the team of advisory governors are highly committed to all sections of the school and to its continuing development. They give thorough attention to their role of overseeing the work of the whole school and are aware of their responsibility to check regulatory matters although, as yet, they do not monitor policies sufficiently carefully. The quality of leadership and management throughout the school is good, including in the EYFS, and includes excellent links with parents. Senior staff continually develop the work of the school and what it offers to the pupils. The school has made good progress in meeting all the recommendations of the previous inspection report.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 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. Establish a cohesive set of policies to cover the whole school to remove contradictory provision in different sections.
 2. Ensure governors monitor policies robustly.
 3. Raise the level of teaching throughout the school so that all teaching matches the quality of the best.
 4. In the EYFS, ensure that the roles and responsibilities of senior staff are clarified to provide more effective monitoring and evaluation.
 5. In the EYFS, ensure that planning meets the needs of all children, particularly the most able.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The school is successful in fulfilling its maxim for the pupils, 'to be the best I can with the gifts I have' so that, in the Sixth Form, the pupils' achievement is excellent. As they progress through the school, the pupils demonstrate increasingly good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in their academic work and activities. Pupils at all stages speak and listen well and have good reading and writing skills. The pupils also develop well in their ability to think logically and independently and express their views coherently. Throughout the school, the pupils demonstrate good levels of creativity; they apply their mathematical skills well and use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively. The pupils' physical skills are excellent. Pupils with SEND and EAL and those who are gifted and talented achieve increasingly well as they progress through the school. In their activities, the pupils' achievement is excellent. For example, in 2011, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 won first place in a local festival of music, speech and drama and Year 4 and 5 teams won the county biathlon championships. Older pupils also achieve at a high level in many areas; for example, gaining silver and gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE), being selected to play professional rugby, taking part in international dressage competitions and in achieving a gliding scholarship. Nearly all pupils progress on to university, with around ninety per cent going to their first choice of university and a few taking a gap year before going on to university.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. For pupils in Years 1 to 5, attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be good overall in relation to national age-related expectations. Results in national tests at age 11 have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools, with results in 2009 being stronger than in 2010-11. Similarly, results in GCSE have been good in relation to the national average for maintained schools and, at IGCSE, over the same period, results in English Language and Literature were higher than worldwide norms, whilst results in English as a Second Language and Food and Nutrition were below. For 2010-11 IB results were similar to the worldwide average overall. Results in 2011 showed an improvement over results in 2010, and were above the worldwide average. A-level results in 2009 were above, and in 2010 and 11 were high in relation to the national average for maintained school, showing consistent improvement. In 2010 and 2011 they were above the national average for maintained selective schools. A further improvement in A-level results was recorded in 2012.
- 3.4 The pupils' progress in Years 1 to 5, as indicated by inspection evidence, is good overall. The level of attainment in Year 6 and Year 11 indicates that all pupils are making good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The level of attainment in the sixth form, and the nationally standardised progress data that is available, indicates that all pupils make progress that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. Throughout the school, the performance of pupils with SEND and EAL indicates that they make good and often rapid progress from their starting points. These levels of progress for all pupils were confirmed by inspection evidence.

3.5 Throughout the school, almost all pupils are effective learners and almost all pupils behave well and display positive attitudes to learning and in their wider activities. Pupils with a range of abilities, from very different backgrounds, usually settle to work quickly, are willing to learn from each another. They are highly supportive of each other and respect the contributions made by their peers. At all stages, pupils make full use of the excellent variety and number of activities presented to them.

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

3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.7 Throughout the school, the curriculum is broad, balanced and highly effective in covering the required areas of study and beyond, and is entirely consistent with the school's aims. In Years 1 to 6, it is enhanced by the addition of philosophy and by specialist teaching in music, French and physical education (PE) and games. A topic-based programme, covering the humanities and science, has recently been introduced and provides excellent opportunities for independent learning and research. In Years 7 to 9, all pupils study French and, from Year 8, German and Spanish can be added. Science is taught in separate biology, chemistry and physics lessons and provision for creative subjects is well supported, with pupils having the opportunity to study art, design & technology, drama and music. In 2011, the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 was changed to enable pupils to study additional subjects to GCSE level, and since 2011 pupils are expected to enter for the English Baccalaureate. All pupils now sit GCSE examinations in a language and a humanities subject at the end of Year 10. In Year 11, the time no longer required for these subjects is used to enable pupils to study additional subjects including a second humanities subject, economics, Latin, a creative subject, further GCSE languages, AS level mathematics and AS level languages. GCSEs in English, science and mathematics are taken in both Years 10 and 11. The pupils also have the opportunity to pursue music and drama through lessons outside the curriculum.

3.8 In the sixth form pupils are offered a wide range of subjects leading to A-level, International Baccalaureate or BTEC qualifications, as well as an excellent programme of enrichment to complement their academic studies. In Years 7 to 13, the pupils are given regular opportunities to undertake independent learning. For example, in Year 8 they undertake a 'Children of the World' project, and pupils in the sixth form can enter the annual Foundation essay competition on a topical subject with a moral or ethical question at its heart.

3.9 Throughout the school, all pupils follow well-developed programmes in ICT, PE and games and an excellent programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) which includes careers and elements of religious education. Extensive individual guidance is provided for pupils in Year 9 and Year 11, prior to making their choice of subjects, to ensure that they embark on courses to which they are well-suited, and in the sixth form for choices beyond school.

3.10 Programmes for pupils of all ages with EAL and those with SEND provide excellent support. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and appropriate provision to meet their needs is made in lessons and in the many enrichment opportunities. In line with the recommendation of the previous inspection report, good progress has been made in the provision for gifted and talented pupils in Years 1 to 6 and this has been enhanced by the recent introduction of topic-based learning.

3.11 An exceptionally wide programme of extra-curricular activities including academic, creative, social, cultural and sporting pursuits provides outstanding enrichment and

support to the curriculum. A wide range of trips, visits and special events is provided throughout the school including international visits such as the Year 9 visit to Gambia and sixth form links with India. The pupils also benefit from excellent links with the community. These include welcoming visitors from the local community to the school and pupils undertaking service to the community via, for example, carol singing in local care homes and pupils working towards the DofE undertaking service in the local community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.12 The contribution of teaching is good.

3.13 Teaching at all stages is almost always effective in promoting the pupils' learning and progress and is often excellent. It supports the school's aims well. In all sections of the school, the best teaching is well planned, offers an excellent variety of activities, makes good use of time, demonstrates excellent pace and challenge, and a clear understanding of the needs and abilities of individual pupils. In a French lesson for younger King's Magna pupils a variety of different activities was used to good effect to keep the pupils' interest and reinforce their learning, and in a sixth form psychology lesson the pupils' learning and understanding was checked by the use of skilful questioning.

3.14 The most successful teaching offers excellent opportunities for independent learning. In a science lesson for older Chapter House pupils their understanding was enhanced when required to research information about planets. Where the quality of teaching is inconsistent, the less successful teaching is characterised by slow pace, less challenge and less effective behaviour management so that the pupils' learning and progress are hindered. Teaching is almost always well targeted to support pupils with SEND and EAL and teaching assistants are used to good effect to provide in-class support for EAL where the pupils' needs warrant it but in some teaching a lack of planning to meet individual pupils' needs slows their progress. Pupils who are gifted and talented receive appropriate support and are provided with extension activities. For example, in an English lesson, in a project on witchcraft in *Macbeth*, the pupils extended their knowledge of the play's context through further research.

3.15 Teaching shows commitment and good subject knowledge. It is characterised by a high level of care for the pupils and by relationships with the pupils which are mutually friendly and respectful and which create an atmosphere conducive to learning. Teaching is enhanced by the widespread, imaginative use of resources. Following the recommendation in the previous inspection report, the use of ICT in teaching has developed well and is frequently used to good effect to support teaching and learning, particularly in Years 1 to 5. Library provision throughout the school supports the pupils' learning.

3.16 Assessment information is used effectively, throughout the school, to inform lesson planning, meeting well the recommendation of the previous report. In a geography lesson for King's Magna pupils, good planning and use of assessment information ensured that individual pupils' needs were met, including the more able for whom extension tasks were identified in the planning. Marking is generally thorough, detailed and frequent and the best marking offers constructive advice so that the pupils know how well they are progressing in relation to their targets. Pupils say that they find the marking helpful and they appreciate the individual oral feedback they also receive. In the pupil pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils said that

homework does not help them to learn although this was not borne out by inspection evidence. The pupils are set an appropriate volume of work for their age and ability, and homework tasks enable them to effectively consolidate and build upon what they have learned in class.

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 personal development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Throughout the school, the pupils are compassionate, tolerant, courteous and self-disciplined in accordance with the school's aims. Their spiritual development is excellent. They are highly respectful of and sensitive to the beliefs of others and readily share their thoughts and feelings during lessons and form time. Pupils of all ages make the most of opportunities to reflect, as demonstrated in assemblies, and in subjects such as art, drama and music as well as in PSHCE lessons. In conversation, pupils display a high level of emotional maturity. They show great appreciation for the non-material aspects of life. Pupils say that they are inspired by the tranquillity of the beautiful gardens and grounds. They are extremely confident and aware of their own strengths and weaknesses when asked to evaluate their performance.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils of all ages demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong and this is reinforced in every lesson through their understanding of the code of conduct and their extremely positive response to the recently-introduced reward system which both pupils and staff say has resulted in a rapid and clear improvement in the pupils' behaviour. They take full advantage of the numerous opportunities to discuss and reflect on moral and ethical values provided by the PSHCE curriculum. Examples of the pupils' understanding of moral dilemmas were seen in lesson in King's Magna where older pupils enjoyed a knowledgeable discussion on human rights, and in a lively debate amongst pupils in the College on whether police should carry guns.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. They readily support and care for each other; relationships are excellent and the pupils make friends easily. They relish opportunities for responsibility and enjoy contributing to the school community in roles such as helping new pupils settle in, play-time helpers, mentors, prefects, sports captains or by helping in the equestrian centre. The pupils are extremely generous in helping those less fortunate than themselves and they particularly enjoy participating in house charity events. They show initiative and leadership in fund-raising for local, national and international charities and have strong links with schools in Gambia and an orphanage in India. Many pupils undertake voluntary work as part of the DofE award. Pupils of all ages have a high level of political and economic awareness, whether taking part in the Youth Parliament, or confidently talking about tax issues. Senior pupils are regularly successful in business and enterprise competitions where they demonstrate good economic awareness.
- 4.5 The pupils' extremely strong cultural development is a central feature of the school and their cultural diversity is enriched by the over fifty nationalities represented in the school. Pupils of all faiths and cultures work together harmoniously celebrating the achievements of all. In many lessons, the pupils are able to enrich a discussion by giving their own cultural perspective to the topic being discussed. The high-quality work the pupils produce indicates that their cultural development is also greatly enhanced through their study of art, literature, drama and music, from which they clearly gain a clear appreciation of western and other cultures.

- 4.6 Throughout the school the pupils' personal development is excellent in relation to their age so that, by the time they leave the school, and in line with the school's aims, they are very well prepared to make a positive contribution to society.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 At all stages, the staff provide highly effective support for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims. They know the pupils very well and excellent systems of communication ensure that individual pupils' needs are recognised and tracked. Any concerns are addressed, guidelines put in place regarding the support to be given, and detailed records kept. The pupils can also receive support from a counsellor, who comes into school twice each week, from the chaplain and from staff in the medical centre. Pupils who speak languages other than English are supported by staff or other interpreters who speak their home language. The pupils appreciate the support they are given and say that they are confident there is a member of staff they can turn to if they have a personal difficulty. High quality relationships exist between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves, both in the classroom and beyond. A tangible air of mutual respect is evident.
- 4.9 At all meals, the wide variety of appetising and nutritious food available encourages pupils to eat healthily. The pupils are encouraged to comment on the food choices on offer via the food committee. Pupils with special dietary needs are consulted daily and alternative foods provided as necessary. Healthy snacks are provided. At all ages, there are extensive opportunities for exercise in the curriculum and also via numerous clubs and activities.
- 4.10 Clear guidelines are in place to promote high standards of behaviour. For those pupils who arrive with limited understanding of English, the code of conduct is made available in their home language. The introduction of a system in which the pupils can gain rewards for behaviour, academic success, effort, progress and improvement and contribution to school life has resulted in an excellent response from pupils in all parts of the school. Any unacceptable behaviour is monitored and appropriate sanctions imposed, taking into account any related difficulty or disability. Measures to prevent bullying and harassment are effective. The pupils say that incidents of bullying and harassment are rare and they feel confident that any such incidents would be dealt with efficiently and resolved satisfactorily. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.11 A small minority of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. However, the inspection found that this is not the case. Questionnaires are sent to all pupils seeking their views on all aspects of school life. Outcomes are fed back to the pupils and the actions to be taken in response clearly explained. Elected school councils in all three sections of the school represent the views of their peers. They have contributed to the mobile-phone policy and to the instillation of improved drinking-water fountains. The pupils can also raise any concerns via the school intranet where provision is made for them to express their concerns in their home language.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.13 Measures to reduce the risk of fire, including a fire risk assessment and regular fire drills, are carried out highly efficiently and clearly documented. An annual health and safety audit of the site is carried out and responded to. The health and safety committee meets regularly and any concerns raised are speedily addressed. Detailed risk assessments are in place for all aspects of school life, both for on-site and for external visits, so that all health and safety hazards are minimised. Welfare, health and safety policies have been recently revised. However, as yet, these are not all cohesive across the three parts of the school, with the result that inconsistencies in welfare, health and safety practice occur. Effective arrangements are in place for meeting welfare, health and safety needs within boarding.
- 4.14 The well-equipped medical centre offers twenty-four hour care and caters well for the needs of those pupils who are ill or injured or have difficulties or disabilities and an appropriately detailed first aid policy is now in place. A good number of staff are first-aid trained, including at a very high level in order to cover the school's programme of challenging outdoor activities. A suitable safeguarding policy is now in place and training for all staff in child protection procedures is carried out at the required intervals and is clearly understood and efficiently implemented. Thorough attention is given to carrying out the required pre-appointment checks on staff and these are meticulously recorded. The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and are correctly stored for the required time.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.15 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.16 The boarders' personal, social and emotional development is enhanced by the high-quality boarding experience. They report that they feel safe and well cared for and are confident that the house staff are always available for help and support. They are aware of who to contact if they have any concerns or worries and understand the role of the independent listener who visits the boarding houses on a regular basis and whose contact details are displayed in various languages.
- 4.17 Staff know and understand each boarder well and are aware of their individual needs. A detailed induction programme is in place for new boarders, including a 'buddy system' to help new boarders to settle in, which the boarders report works extremely well. Boarding staff liaise closely with academic staff to enhance both the boarders' academic well-being and quality of life. The boarders are extremely confident and articulate. They have excellent relationships with and respect all adults and peers within the house and appreciate their efforts. They appreciate the excellent range of activities provided at weekends and in the evenings, as well as time to relax with friends. Behaviour within the boarding houses is excellent and is supported by an appropriate prefect system. The boarders understand the house rules and the use of sanctions and, therefore, develop an understanding of right and wrong and the consequences of their actions. The school has recently introduced a positive approach to behaviour and both staff and boarders feel this is working extremely well and has had a positive impact on boarding life.
- 4.18 All staff promote a fully inclusive environment and the boarders are encouraged to develop an understanding of each other's cultures and religions. Boarders with EAL

are encouraged to communicate in English; however, at their early stages of learning English, a range of leaflets and posters in various languages provides welcome support and, should the need arise, the boarders are also able to access translators and interpreters. The boarders state that they feel that boarding makes a valuable contribution to supporting their studies. The organisation and structure of prep time and the support and encouragement offered by the staff provide the motivation to complete work and improve academic performance.

- 4.19 The quality of the boarding provision and care is excellent. All boarding houses are extremely well resourced and maintained. All rooms have en-suite facilities, and a range of storage equipment including secure storage for personal belongings. The boarders are encouraged to personalise their own space and to contribute to the smooth running of the house. All communal areas are maintained and resourced to a high standard and this provision is appreciated by the boarders. Whilst CCTV is in operation within the school grounds, in the teaching areas and in the public areas of boarding, it is not in operation within the boarding accommodation itself. The boarders are able to maintain extremely good links with their parents and guardians and others at home and are able to use a wide range of technologies: landlines, internet and mobile phones. All areas of boarding have wireless connection so the boarders are easily able to use their own lap-tops to aid communication. The boarders also have telephones within their own rooms for incoming calls. Staff very successfully accommodate Forces' personnel who are on deployment and wish to contact their children. Boarding staff make sure that parents are kept informed about all events in their child's life and parents are able to access a range of information via the parents' portal. Staff ensure that this is kept up to date. In addition, they communicate with parents via email and by phone, with appropriate consideration for time differences. Staff have access to both Chinese and Russian speaking colleagues who are able to translate and interpret as required. All boarding literature is produced in a range of languages.
- 4.20 Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding within boarding are excellent, including the careful carrying out of the required pre-employment checks on staff. An extensive range of policies and procedures is in place to ensure that the health needs of all boarders are well met. An excellent and well-equipped medical centre means fully-trained medical staff are able to provide high-quality twenty-four hour care for the boarders' needs, both physical and emotional. A varied range of meals is available at breakfast, lunch and in the evening, with healthy options always available. The boarders have free choice at all meals which are served in canteen style. Catering staff compile menus on a three-weekly rota and, within these, consider individual boarders' dietary and cultural requirements. In addition, the boarders are able to prepare snacks in their houses, with the oldest boarders having facilities in their rooms. A high level of consideration is given to the international makeup of the boarding houses. Boarding staff are highly effective in ensuring the boarders are supported both by staff and their peers, and they encourage boarders of all nationalities to socialise together. Health and safety issues within boarding are effectively addressed by the boarding estates team.
- 4.21 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. Safeguarding is of paramount importance to all staff within the boarding houses. They have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding procedures and processes to be followed. There is a clear management structure within boarding and the boarders are well supported by a professional and highly competent boarding team. They, in turn, are supported by the link governor, who understands the aims of the boarding staff and supports them with implementation.

Boarding staff are encouraged to access training and to pass on what they have learned to other staff. Systems for appraising the work of boarding staff assist staff in identifying training needs; however, arrangements for appraisals are inconsistent across the houses so that not all boarding staff have equal opportunity to review their work and training needs. Boarding is supported by a clear statement of boarding arrangements and principles. These are shared with all boarding staff and with parents so all are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

5.1 The quality of governance is good.

5.2 The provost, assisted by the advisory board of governors, provides highly effective oversight of all sections of the school, fully supporting the school in achieving its aims. Together, they carefully discharge their responsibilities for monitoring educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. They have an excellent insight into the work of the school and are highly successful in providing support, challenge and stimulus for growth. They are largely effective in exercising their overall monitoring role although, as yet, governors do not monitor the school's welfare, health and safety policies sufficiently carefully. so that inconsistencies in practice occur. They are aware of their responsibilities for meeting statutory requirements, including conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements, which is done with due care. They ensure that the necessary pre-appointment checks on staff are carried out scrupulously and that the central register of staff is meticulously maintained.

5.3 The governors bring to their role a wide range of experience and expertise although, at present, there is no governor from an educational background. They are conscientious in undertaking training for their roles and, when appropriate, they seek external expertise pertinent to their needs at the time. They are a strong support to the principal and regularly evaluate his work informally although, as yet, there is no formal process of appraisal. The provost is well known in school. He and the advisory governors work closely with senior staff and, on occasion, pupils in reviewing and developing the work of the college.

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 Throughout the school, the quality of leadership and management is good and links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The recent re-structuring of several aspects of the senior leadership and management of the school is already impacting successfully on the quality of teaching and learning and the pupils' highly successful personal development, in line with the school's aims. The school has grown rapidly in recent years and the necessity for change that this has brought has been recognised and acted upon. In response to the recommendations of the previous inspection report, the school has made good progress in ensuring that assessment information is more effectively used throughout the college, that the use of ICT in all aspects of teaching and learning has been developed, and in accelerating the provision for gifted and talented pupils in Years 1 to 6.

5.6 Further development of what the school offers its pupils is a priority and the senior leadership team is wholeheartedly committed to ensuring the curricular and pastoral progress of all pupils. They have clear, long-term plans for the future academic direction of the school and have worked collaboratively to introduce a number of initiatives to improve standards of teaching and learning, attitudes to learning and the quality of pastoral care as a result of careful self-evaluation. All required pre-

appointment checks on staff are carried out carefully and recorded accurately and responsibilities for safeguarding pupils are taken seriously. As yet, monitoring of welfare, health and safety policies is not fully robust and these policies and procedures are not sufficiently cohesive in their coverage of the three sections of the school.

- 5.7 An effective middle-management structure is in place to implement identified initiatives and to mentor staff and provide support for daily management matters within their respective areas. The monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school is largely effective. However, in Years 1 to 5 and in the EYFS monitoring currently lacks sufficient rigour, leading to some inconsistencies in teaching and learning. In the EYFS, planning does not always take account of the needs of the more-able pupils. Management at all levels is successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high-quality staff. Recent changes in the structure of the leadership and management teams are supporting a professional, learning community which motivates staff and ensures they are suitably trained and developed appropriately for their respective roles. Various systems are in place for staff to assess and reflect upon their own performance and, in most areas, the appraisal system is well-thought through and well implemented and enables staff to identify areas for further training although inconsistencies in the pattern of appraisals within boarding mean this aspect is not as successful in supporting the pupils' overall development. The school ensures that all staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of the pupils, in safeguarding and in welfare, health and safety.
- 5.8 The partnership between the school and parents is excellent. The overwhelming majority of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said they are happy with almost all aspects of the work of the school. In particular, they appreciate the range of curricular and extra-curricular activities provided, that information about the school is readily available and that they receive timely responses to their questions, all of which the inspection evidence confirms. A few parents said that they feel the school does not encourage them to be involved in events and in other aspects of its work. However, the inspection found that parents have good opportunities to be involved. Regular parents' evenings are held and parents are invited to meetings with a specific academic or pastoral focus, as well as to social occasions such as the annual garden party. Parents are also invited to attend events such as the harvest festival and the Christmas concert. For those parents who cannot attend, speech day is broadcast via the internet.
- 5.9 Parents have easy access to information regarding their children, including medical care given, via their unique log-in to the school's website. The staff are available by telephone or by email and they contact parents with any concerns and when there is good news to report such as sporting success. Achievements are also reported in newsletters and in the school magazine which is available in a number of different languages. The parent portal enables parents to communicate with the school in their own language. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure in place. Any complaints are dealt with in accordance with the procedure.
- 5.10 Parents of existing and prospective pupils are provided with all required information about the school. Key documents are accessible via the school's website, which also has other useful information including details of forthcoming events and arrangements. General information about the school is available on the website in fourteen languages. The downloadable prospectus is available in 36 languages. Very helpful handbooks are in place for new parents and as the pupils move through

the school, including for when pupils make choices about future courses of study. Parents receive two written reports each year. These reports are detailed and reflect the character of each child. They also provide useful information about progress made and helpful targets for improvement.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The setting makes good provision to meet the needs of the range of children who attend. The strong emphasis on the prime areas of learning delivered through purposeful play in the Kindergarten ensures that good progress is made by those under three. For the older children, the broad educational programmes in Chapter House contribute to the good progress they make in all areas of learning. Skilful staff questioning and appropriate intervention effectively promote the children's learning and help widen their vocabulary; for example during an investigation into the properties of coloured ice. This allowed the children to develop a good understanding of words such as freezing and melting. A broad range of stimulating activities promotes good exploration and learning by experience; for example when babies handle and taste a variety of fruit and vegetables. Regular assessments of the children's progress are used to plan the next steps in each child's learning. Planning successfully incorporates each child's own interests and suggestions. However it is not always sufficiently adapted to individual needs, particularly those of more able children for whom expectations are insufficiently high. Children with SEND, and those children who have EAL are well supported.
- 6.2 Parents are effectively encouraged to support and share information about their child's learning and development at home through the learning journals and home observation sheets. Parents and carers are appreciative of the way that staff help children quickly settle into school and of the regular information they receive about their child's progress. Exemplary daily Kindergarten reports and the Tree of Achievement ensure that parents are well informed about their child's achievements.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.3 Provision for the children's well-being is good. Outstanding relationships exist between children and their key person. A strong focus on care and nurture and the creation of a family atmosphere, particularly for the youngest children, ensures that children are happy and feel safe and valued. Staff's high expectations of behaviour and their good knowledge of the needs of individuals enable children to behave well, gain confidence and grow in independence. Strategies such as the supervised self-registration for older children and the pouring of their own drinks by the toddlers, further develop independent skills. Staff are vigilant about the children's welfare. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed to ensure children are in a safe environment. Staff ably encourage children to manage risk and help them understand how to keep themselves safe. This was seen as toddlers waded into a deep puddle and when older children used scissors safely to cut ribbons. The children are helped to develop independent hygiene routines with sensitivity and to understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. A good range of resources is well deployed to aid learning and create a stimulating environment. However, not all resources in the Kindergarten are accessible to the children. Effective transition procedures ensure that children are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

6.4 Leadership and management are good. The link governor takes a keen interest in the EYFS. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are met and all required policies and procedures are now in place. Robust recruitment procedures and staff training in child protection and health and safety ensure that children are kept safe. There is satisfactory monitoring both of the educational programmes and of teaching and learning. However a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of senior staff has resulted in inconsistent practice in effectively reviewing provision. This results in some different practices between Kindergarten and Chapter House. The staff work well together as a team and meet regularly in their departments to evaluate how well individual children are doing and to reflect on and review practice. However, there are limited opportunities for the whole EYFS team to meet together to share best practice, particularly in developing planning to cater for all needs. A sound professional development programme is in place for staff. An outstanding partnership with parents makes a strong contribution to meeting children's needs and ensures that relevant support is provided if needed. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, and in discussions, parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the school, and particularly valued the easy access to staff on a daily basis.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

6.5 The overall quality and standards are good. Overall, the children, including those with SEND make good progress relative to their ability and needs. The youngest children make good progress in their language development. Babies squeal and babble with delight as they play. Toddlers communicate meaningfully and mark make in foam and gloop. They make good progress in their physical development and competently 'paint' electronically on the interactive whiteboard. Nursery children show well-developed fine motor skills as they trace letters. Reception children are articulate, can write their names independently and use numbers well in everyday routines. At times when more able children are insufficiently challenged, their progress slows. Outstanding personal development is evident throughout.

6.6 The children readily trust in the support of the staff in a secure environment in which their welfare is properly safeguarded. Good progress has been made in improving the provision since the previous inspection, with all development points addressed. Improved ratios ensure that children receive much individual attention and there are increased opportunities for outdoor learning. Cohesion between the Kindergarten and Chapter House has improved but some inconsistencies remain. The recommendation from the previous report regarding responsibility for the EYFS has been partly addressed. However, there is a lack of clarity in senior management roles to ensure a clear overview of the whole EYFS. A good development plan, together with improvements to the provision, shows a good commitment to continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

6.7 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.