



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**FARLINGTON SCHOOL
STANDARD INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Farlington School

Full Name of School	Farlington School		
DfE Number	938/6144		
Registered Charity Number	307048		
Address	Farlington School Strood Park Horsham West Sussex RH12 3PN		
Telephone Number	01403 254967		
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Email Address	office@farlingtontschool.net		
Headmistress	Mrs Jonnie Goyer		
Chair of Governors	Mr Mike Simpkin O.B.E.		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	365		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age		5-11:	124
	3-5 (EYFS):	20	11-18: 221
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	330	Capacity for flexi-boarding: 5
Number of Boarders	Total:	35	
	Full:		Weekly:
EYFS Gender	Mixed (2 boys, 18 girls)		
Inspection dates	09 Nov 2010 to 10 Nov 2010		
	06 Dec 2010 to 08 Dec 2010		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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 is as follows.

- (a) Quality of education provided (curriculum)
- (b) Quality of education provided (teaching)
- (c) Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) Welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) Premises and accommodation
- (g) Provision of information
- (h) Manner in which complaints are to be handled

*These Standards Regulations replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003.

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

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) 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 31st 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 the Care Standards Act 2000, an inspection of boarding was carried out at the same time by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The report of this inspection is available separately at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will 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.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Farlington School aims to educate for confidence. It sees the pupils as unique and aims to foster individuality. The school wishes to enable the pupils to be happy, succeed and flourish. Each pupil should be known and provided with substantial opportunities. Neither anonymity nor mediocrity are seen to be options at the school.
- 1.2 The school caters for pupils from three to eighteen years of age. It is situated four miles west of Horsham in West Sussex. It is located in Strood Park in a listed building in 33 acres of parkland. The school was founded in Haywards Heath in 1896 and moved to its present site in 1956. There have been significant developments in the educational provision and to the buildings in the last thirty years. Full preparatory school provision was established in 1994. A co-educational Nursery class was introduced in September 2008. The present headmistress took up post in September 2006. The school is governed by a governing council.
- 1.3 The early years' provision was inspected by Ofsted in January 2005. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is attended by 20 children, all of whom are under five. The preparatory school for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is attended by 124 pupils and the senior school is attended by 187 pupils in Years 7 to 11, with 34 pupils in the sixth form. There are 35 boarders, 30 of whom are full-time boarders. The ability profile of the preparatory school is above the national average. In the senior school most pupils are of above average ability with some of average ability and some of well above average ability.
- 1.4 The school reflects the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the area. Most of the pupils come from professional or business backgrounds.
- 1.5 The school has identified 66 pupils as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), it provides learning support for 49 pupils; two pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN). The school has identified 21 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) all of whom receive language support. Most preparatory school pupils proceed to the senior school and most senior school pupils continue with their education post-16.
- 1.6 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 An overall excellent curriculum and outstanding teaching enable preparatory and senior school pupils to achieve excellent all-round standards. In the EYFS, good leadership, management and provision result in outcomes which are good with some outstanding features. Pupils are excellent learners. They enjoy their work and maintain high levels of concentration. They make good progress in relation to their abilities; those with LDD progress well and pupils with EAL rapidly become fluent English speakers. The more able pupils achieve the high standards of which they are capable. The standard of literacy is excellent and high standards of numeracy are achieved. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently, learn independently and are creative. They excel in sport and the arts and are very successful in charitable work. Attainment is high, national test, GCSE and A-level results are good and pupils proceed to universities of their choice.
- 2.2 As a result of excellent guidance pupils exhibit outstanding personal development. The school is successful in fostering individuality, pupils are happy, succeed and flourish, and relationships are very positive. It is a very friendly, welcoming school. Pupils are confident, well-rounded individuals who show a keen interest in the non-material dimensions of life. They are aware of moral issues and are committed to abiding by the school rules and conserving the Earth's resources. High standards of behaviour are effectively encouraged. Pupils have well developed social skills and exercise designated responsibilities conscientiously. A lively interest is shown in their own and other cultures. Pastoral care and guidance are excellent. Relationships are very positive and effective measures are in place to promote good behaviour and to minimise bullying. The school is thorough in its attention to safeguarding and provides high quality training in child protection for all those working at the school. With the exception of the pottery kiln, fire, health and safety are effectively overseen.
- 2.3 The preparatory and senior school benefit from excellent governance, leadership and management that ensure that the school meets its ambitious aims and complies with requirements. Leadership and management of the EYFS are good but priorities for improvement are not clearly identified within an Early Years development plan. The governing council is well organised and provides useful expertise for the school. Relationships are very positive, providing both support and challenge. Leadership and management are highly effective in implementing policies and plans. Morale is high and a positive ethos is evident.
- 2.4 Parents are very satisfied with the education and support provided. Their views were largely similar to inspection findings but the concern of a few parents about the provision for pupils with LDD or who have been identified as gifted and talented were not borne out by the inspection.
- 2.5 The school responded well to the recommendation from the previous inspection. Pupils are now much more competent and confident users of ICT. Child protection arrangements have been much improved but the school omitted to risk assess or protect the pottery kiln.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.6 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it was required to:
- provide a safety guard around the pottery kiln in the art department [Part 3, paragraph 11 under Welfare Health and Safety].
- 2.7 At the time of the final team visit, the school had decommissioned the pottery kiln thereby becoming compliant with regulatory requirements. A purpose built safety guard had been ordered but its installation had been delayed due to inclement weather.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.8 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve the preparatory school library.
 2. Bring more teaching into line with the best by presenting more opportunities for independent thinking in lessons.
 3. Improve assessment by embedding pupil self assessment and the use of data.
 4. Ensure priorities for improvement in the EYFS are clearly identified within an Early Years development plan.
 5. Incorporate observations and assessment of a wider range of child-initiated activities into the children's developmental records in the EYFS.
 6. Ensure evidence used to reach Early Years and Foundation Stage profile judgements is clearly documented.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 Overall achievement is excellent at each stage; this is in line with the school aim to educate for confidence.
- 3.2 In the preparatory school pupils achieve excellent standards; they demonstrate high levels of literacy. They read well and most have reading ages far in advance of their chronological ages. Pupils are avid readers of fiction, much of which is obtained from class libraries but the preparatory school library does not effectively encourage pupils to undertake research or study. Pupils write well, prose is well structured, grammar and spelling are good and handwriting is neat. Pupils are articulate and speak confidently to adults and their peers. They are attentive and listen well. They use their well developed skills with number when representing data or measuring in other subjects. Pupils' use of ICT has improved since the previous inspection; it is an integral part of many lessons and makes a positive contribution to their work. Pupils achieve high standards in creative and physical activities and in the best lessons, undertake independent study.
- 3.3 In the senior school excellent standards are achieved. Pupils write confidently for a wide range of purposes. They read widely for pleasure and for research and make good use of the libraries. Pupils are attentive listeners and absorb information readily aurally. Their use of ICT has improved since the previous inspection, they now use it confidently and this makes a positive contribution to their standards of achievement. They are numerate and use their skills well in other subjects, particularly in the sciences and some humanities subjects. Pupils are highly creative, particularly in the arts. Physical development is good. Logical and independent thinking is widely evident in investigative work particularly in Years 10 to 13 but is a significant omission in less successful lessons.
- 3.4 Across the school more able pupils including those identified as gifted and talented achieve the levels of which they are capable, some pupils take GCSE examinations and proceed to A-level studies early, and sixth-form pupils undertake additional study for the Extended Project Qualification which gains them additional points for university entrance. Below average ability pupils including those with LDD progress well and those with EAL rapidly become fluent English speakers.
- 3.5 Throughout the school achievement in activities is excellent; pupils excel in sport, music, speech and drama and graded musical instrument examinations. Some participate successfully in equestrian competitions. Pupils are very successful in raising funds for charities. The school has been awarded silver Green Flag Eco status for the pupils' efforts in conservation.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2007 to 2009. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Attainment is high. Results in national tests at age eleven have been far above the national average in maintained primary schools; performance in English has exceeded that in mathematics and science. GCSE and A Level performance overall has been above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and in line with the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. International English Language Testing System results are good. Performance in International GCSE mathematics and sciences has mostly been above international and similar to

national norms. Almost all pupils proceed to universities of their choice. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make good progress.

- 3.7 Pupils are excellent learners; they enjoy their work and maintain high levels of concentration. They persevere and enjoy working together, are keen to help each other and enjoy discussion. They particularly enjoy practical activities such as experiments in science or creative work. Pupils respond well to a challenge which requires them to think hard, for example sixth form business studies pupils explained the matrix structure of a multinational company and effectively evaluated its success. Independent learning takes place in areas such as preparing class assemblies and extended project work but is less evident in some lessons. Pupils provide well considered answers to questions. Behaviour is excellent. In less successful lessons slow pace sometimes causes pupils to lose focus, become unresponsive and consequently make slow progress.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.8 The curriculum is excellent at each stage and in accordance with the school aims. The school provides substantial opportunities for its pupils. In the preparatory school the curriculum emphasises literacy and numeracy and provides a good range of other subjects. Linguistic development is well supported by literacy in the earlier years, and then by English language and literature lessons. Two modern languages from Year 3 and Latin in Year 6 are beneficial. Scientific knowledge and understanding are well supported through science lessons taught by class teachers in classrooms in the earlier years and specialist teaching in senior school laboratories in Year 6, but lack of specialist provision in the middle years limits pupils' overall level of attainment. ICT supports technological understanding, and some cookery is taught. Human and social knowledge and understanding are taught through topic work in the earlier years and then history, geography and religious studies in the later stages of the preparatory school. Physical development is well supported through adequate physical education (PE) and games lessons, and in the earlier years, swimming lessons are provided. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a carefully organised course which includes topics pertinent to pupils' age and stage of development, such as friendship and maintaining healthy lifestyles.
- 3.9 In the senior school the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 provides well for linguistic development with English, two modern languages and Latin. Scientific development is well provided for with combined science in Year 7 moving to separate sciences in Year 8 but its teaching in single, 45-minute lessons constrains experimental work. Technological development is provided through ICT up to Year 10 coupled with a textiles and home economics curriculum rotation. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is becoming a useful aid to learning; pupils can access learning resources at any time. Games and PE lessons cater well for the pupils' physical development. Life skills, critical thinking in Year 7 and study skills from Year 10 enhance the senior school curriculum. In Years 10 and 11 a substantial core and a wide range of options enable pupils to choose a balanced range of subjects. All Year 10 pupils take the GCSE religious studies short course examination and some take the full course. In the sixth form a wide range of subjects is offered which is enhanced by the Young Enterprise scheme and community service for all. General studies and Associated Qualifications Board Baccalaureate in the sixth form widen pupils' horizons. Throughout the senior school the life skills programme contains personal,

social and health education, careers education and guidance. It is a well organised programme which prepares pupils well for their lives ahead.

- 3.10 Preparation for the next stage is thorough, preparatory school pupils spend a day in the senior school and some Year 6 lessons such as science and art take place in the senior school. Preparation for option choices in Year 10 and sixth form is supportive and helpful. Sixth formers are effectively guided through the university application process.
- 3.11 The school provides well for pupils with LDD, SEN, EAL and those with particular talents. Those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, and dyspraxia or who are slow learners are suitably supported through withdrawal teaching. The requirements of those pupils with SEN statements are fully met. Pupils with EAL attend lessons to improve their fluency. Additional opportunities in the wider curriculum such as science week are open to all but are of particular value to the more able pupils to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 3.12 Extra-curricular provision is excellent and highly valued by the pupils, particularly the boarders. Activities take place before school, during lunch breaks, after school and at the weekends. Sport, music, the arts and general interests are very well represented. Numerous links exist with the wider community which enrich pupils' education. Pupils participate in the Youth Parliament initiative, Recycling Textiles project and they organise and raise considerable funds for a wide range of charities. Many pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DoE). Senior school pupils undertake community service and work experience both of which contribute to pupils' personal development. Community links are extensive, locally, nationally and internationally. Links exist with schools in Uganda and Argentina and the Wilderness Foundation in South Africa. Pupils participate in Young Enterprise and profits are donated to charity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The overall quality of teaching is excellent but minor shortcomings exist in the use of data and in the provision of a preparatory school library. The school achieves its aim to educate for confidence and enables pupils to succeed and flourish.
- 3.14 Teachers know their pupils well and provide work of suitable challenge for the full ability range. In a literacy lesson, carefully chosen activities for each level of ability enabled younger pupils in the preparatory school to learn when to use 'an' and when to use 'a'. Subject teachers in the senior school and class teachers in the preparatory school provide close individual support for pupils with EAL and LDD and this is effective. Learning support teaching is closely focused on overcoming pupils' learning difficulties or, for pupils with EAL, improving their competence and confidence in using the English language. Extension work is provided for the more able pupils in lessons and in the extra-curricular programme.
- 3.15 Most teaching fosters interest and independence. Particularly good use is made of questioning to provoke thought and develop understanding. In a science lesson probing questions challenged older preparatory school pupils to consider similarities and differences between vertebrates and invertebrates. This enabled pupils of all abilities to achieve excellent levels of knowledge. Such exemplary characteristics are not common to all lessons however; a small number of less successful lessons are over directed, requiring pupils to complete closely prescribed tasks such as completing worksheets.

- 3.16 Most teaching is well planned with clear objectives and a range of suitable activities. In a GCSE drama lesson, objectives to develop techniques such as slow motion were made clear at the beginning, questioning was used to engage the pupils and a well planned range of strategies was employed to challenge and support all abilities. This led to rapid progress and high standards of achievement. Suitable teaching methods are used. The best teaching conveys enthusiasm and commitment to the pupils and proceeds at a lively pace. This inspires the pupils to make the maximum effort. However, lack of pace characterises some of the less successful lessons.
- 3.17 Teachers know their subjects well and are fully familiar with examination syllabus requirements. This gives pupils confidence that teaching will enable them to achieve high standards. Sufficient, appropriate learning resources are available and are generally used effectively but the preparatory school library does not serve pupils well because there are insufficient books or facilities for them to study. Class libraries, consisting largely of fiction, are used to good effect in the preparatory school. The senior school library and sixth form library are well equipped and are widely used. The school responded positively to the recommendation from the previous inspection: far more use is now made of ICT; increasingly teachers use interactive white boards to present information to pupils, they often include audio-visual material to illustrate teaching points and computers are frequently used in lessons. Pupils are required to carry out research using the Internet. The pupils' behaviour is excellent and little more than a quiet reminder is required to focus their attention.
- 3.18 Pupils are provided with useful spoken feedback which gives them confidence and the quality of marking is often of high quality. The best marking provides encouraging comments and set achievable targets for pupils. Systems have been introduced which involve pupils in assessing their performance but not all teachers make full use of this. Where it is used it enables pupils to understand what they need to do to improve more clearly. Pupils find regular tests and feedback useful. Their progress is closely monitored but the use of the standardised data to track pupils' performance in relation to their abilities or prior attainment is underdeveloped and has yet to have any discernable effect on pupils' performance.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils exhibit outstanding personal development. The school is successful in its aim to foster individuality and to enable pupils to be happy, succeed and flourish. Pupils are confident, well-rounded individuals.
- 4.2 Pupils show a keen interest in the non-material dimensions of life. They have well developed aesthetic awareness. Silent reflection or prayer is a feature of some assemblies, pupils respond well when asked to reflect on issues such as 'thinking about others' in a preparatory school assembly. They have an appreciation of a wide range of faiths and religions and express awe and wonder, for example in a study support lesson GCSE pupils expressed amazement when they heard that the universe is expanding and that its centre is wherever you happen to be. Pupils express empathy, for example in an English lesson older preparatory school pupils empathised with the terror experienced by the passengers on the Titanic as it was sinking. Pupils exhibit considerable self-confidence and high levels of self-esteem; their achievements are recognised and celebrated in assemblies and they are genuinely pleased when their peers receive rewards. Spontaneous singing around the Christmas tree and a superb rehearsal for the Year 1 and 2 nativity play were memorable uplifting spiritual experiences for all concerned.
- 4.3 A well developed moral awareness is common to all pupils and they are committed to abiding by the rules. They have a good understanding of public institutions through life skills lessons in the senior school and in PSHE in the preparatory school. Pupils exhibit good understanding of local and national government through their participation in the Youth Parliament scheme. Through participation in the Eco-council they show awareness of conservation. During a Year 5 assembly entitled 'rubbish' pupils encouraged their peers to 'reduce, renew and recycle' to conserve the Earth's resources. Mutual trust and friendliness are very positive features; boarders leave their dormitories open confident that nothing will go missing. All pupils are sympathetic to the plight of those less fortunate than themselves and demonstrate this by raising considerable funds for charity.
- 4.4 Pupils exhibit excellent social skills. They exercise their responsibilities as house or form captains with great care. Sixth form prefects undertake their duties conscientiously. The school council considers the views of pupils and presents their requests to the senior leadership team. The pupils are confident that the school will listen and, where possible, respond to their concerns.
- 4.5 Cultural awareness is strong. Pupils actively participate in the arts; many are learning musical instruments and participate at a high level in a variety of school concerts. Pupils are very enthusiastic performers and are keen to become involved in the many ambitious school productions staged. A high standard of pupils' visual art adorns the school. Pupils show a lively interest in a range of cultures through focus days such as the Spanish day when a flamenco dancer performed and the South African whole-school project which included a visit from two Zulu warriors. These made lasting impressions. An assembly given by Year 7 pupils about Moroccan customs and culture showed a good level of knowledge and was well received by the audience.

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

- 4.6 In almost all respects pastoral care and guidance are excellent and make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development and their overall achievement. The school achieves its aim to ensure that each pupil is known and is happy. Form and class teachers know the pupils well and genuinely care about their welfare, pupils' response is very positive, they make the maximum effort and exhibit self confidence and concern for others. Relationships are very positive and pupils have high regard for the staff and feel they can discuss their concerns with them if necessary. Relationships between pupils are also very positive, they care for each other and older pupils act as 'buddies' for younger ones in the EYFS and in the preparatory school. It is a very friendly school where newcomers are made to feel very welcome. Where there are concerns a case conference is convened and appropriate support or action is taken. Form tutors in the senior school and class teachers in the preparatory school monitor the pupils' all round progress and ensure pupils maintain high all round standards.
- 4.7 The school is thorough in its attention to issues of safeguarding and provides high quality training in child protection for all those working in the school; the requirements of the previous inspection are now met in this respect. Excellent relationships are maintained with local welfare agencies. The school effectively encourages good behaviour; six 'golden rules' guide the younger pupils well and in the senior school a straightforward code of conduct is adhered to. Pupils are keen to receive rewards and are careful to avoid sanctions which they generally think are fair. Anti-bullying arrangements are successful and pupils do not feel it is an issue at the school. They are confident that should any bullying occur it would be swiftly and effectively dealt with.
- 4.8 Fire, health and safety are effectively overseen. The school responded positively to the requirements from the previous inspection to risk assess all aspects of the school. Break and lunchtime supervision is vigilant. Risk assessments have been undertaken for almost educational visits. The provision for pupils who are ill is of high quality with good facilities and suitably trained staff; medicines are properly stored and dispensed. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with disabilities. School meals are of a high standard, they are varied, attractive and nutritious; younger pupils are effectively encouraged to choose a balanced meal. Plenty of opportunities for exercise are provided through sport and PE and in the extra-curricular programme. Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and retained for three years.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.9 A boarding inspection was conducted by Ofsted and is the subject of a separate report. The ISI inspection considered boarding in the whole-school context only. Boarding education is excellent. The boarding house is a caring, happy community. In keeping with the school aims to educate for confidence and to foster individuality it helps them to succeed and to flourish. Prep is clearly structured to support learning and pupils have access to school facilities for ICT, the library, art and music rooms and drama studio up to 10.00pm. Sixth form pupils find that study leave spent at school gives them access to the library and teachers for additional help. They feel this helps them do well in their examinations.
- 4.10 Relationships are very positive in boarding. Boarders are supportive of each other and older pupils help to organise activities, such as decorating the Christmas tree. A great sense of mutual support is apparent; pupils are relaxed and comfortable with one another. They say they feel safe and supported and that everyone makes an equal contribution. A very strong sense of mutual trust and care for one another exists.
- 4.11 A wide range of activities is provided; pupils participate in the school's daily extra-curricular programme and, at the weekends, in activities such as skating, trips to the cinema and shopping. During the week additional structured activities such as swimming, computer game competitions or organising a party are provided. The school year starts with a team-building day to establish a sense of community.
- 4.12 Accommodation is good, all rooms and dormitories are pleasantly furnished with enough room to relax and display personal possessions. Sixth-form boarders have twin or single rooms. Laundry arrangements are very good and washing and toilet facilities are good but one of the bathrooms provides limited privacy and the kitchenette is very small.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The school benefits from excellent overall governance that ensures that the school meets its ambitious aims and complies with almost all requirements. Following a recent review of governance the committee structure has been reorganised. The full governing council is supported by sub-committees for finance and general purposes, education and welfare, health and safety; this generally works well and ensures effective oversight. All necessary policies are reviewed annually. The health and safety committee undertakes regular inspections of the school buildings and site. The marketing committee steers the promotion of the school well. The governing council ensures the backgrounds of all adults working with children have been thoroughly checked. An annual planning day for the governors, members of the senior leadership team and representatives of each faculty ensures that financial and school development planning are of high quality and that the school receives sufficient suitable resources. Governors attend suitable training and have kept up to date with legal requirements.
- 5.2 Governors monitor the work of the school closely providing support and challenge where necessary. It contains a good range of valuable expertise for the school, and all governors are linked to an aspect of the school such as the EYFS. Relationships between governors and the school executive are very positive. Governors attend school events such as open days and are well known to the staff. The chair of governors addresses the staff at the beginning of the academic year and there are social events where governors get to know the staff. Senior staff report to the sub-committees and the full council. The headmistress and the head of the preparatory school provide informative reports for the governing council. Safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are effectively overseen; governors with specific expertise in these areas monitor these areas closely and report to the relevant sub-committees and whole school council.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.3 The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent and ensures the school achieves its aims and promotes the pupils' achievements, personal development and care. Leadership and management of the EYFS are good but priorities for improvement are not clearly identified within an Early Years development plan.
- 5.4 The senior leadership team work well together, they effectively oversee the work of heads of faculty and coordinators in the preparatory school. The pastoral dimension of the school is very well managed. Clear lines of communication exist between class teachers and senior leadership in the preparatory school and form tutors and year heads in the senior school, thereby ensuring the pupils' welfare and progress are closely monitored. Boarding and learning support are managed efficiently. Grouping similar subjects into faculties in the senior school is effective.
- 5.5 Leadership and management provide a clear sense of direction. The school development planning process is thorough for the preparatory and senior schools and guides school improvement but such a plan is not in place for the EYFS. Planning has effectively guided innovations such as the move to a faculty structure. Departments identify realistic priorities which are set within the broader whole school

plan. Wider issues such as recruitment and retention of pupils are included. Morale is very positive with all staff working in the best interests of the pupils. Sufficient meetings occur to facilitate communication and discussion in relation to pastoral, academic and boarding issues. Robust oversight ensures that policies are consistently implemented and that safeguarding is assured.

- 5.6 Staff are carefully appointed with a sharp focus on suitability to be involved in the education of children. Staffing is generous with small class sizes which facilitate close individual support and adequate non-teaching time for marking and preparation. Performance appraisal includes identification of in-service training needs for staff, lesson observation and setting achievable objectives. Teachers are up-to-date with curriculum and examination requirements. Whole-school training days have provided high quality in-service training on topics such as welfare, health and safety, safeguarding and the use of the VLE but omitted reference to requirements for pottery kilns. Induction arrangements for new staff are of good quality. Sufficient, suitable resources are used well. The buildings and site provide an excellent setting for pupils to learn in but the preparatory school library does not enable the pupils to study or undertake research. The accommodation is maintained to a very high standard.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents, this is in accordance with its aims that pupils should be known, and the parents are extremely happy with the school's provision for their children.
- 5.8 They are particularly pleased with the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and views and pastoral help and guidance provided. They are satisfied with the high standards of behaviour and the range of extra-curricular activities that take place. They are pleased with the provision for boarders and find the school easy to communicate with. Some were concerned about the provision for pupils with LDD or who have been identified as gifted and talented. This did not concur with inspection findings.
- 5.9 The parents' association is very active; it raises considerable funds for the school which enables additional equipment such as video equipment for the school hall to be purchased. The parents' 'round table' consisting of parent representatives from each year raises issues for the school to consider. Parent form representatives provide a point of contact for parents and assist with the dissemination of information. Parent focus groups are convened to consider issues such as communication, marketing and outdoor learning. Periodic parent information evenings focus on topics pertinent to the pupils' development such as Internet safety, friendship issues and eating disorders. Parent volunteers assist with school visits in the preparatory school, after school clubs and the DoE Award programme.
- 5.10 Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school. The website is informative and contains all of the information parents are entitled to receive. The recently introduced electronic communication system is very useful in contacting parents or enabling them to get in touch with the school. Publications such as the monthly newsletter, Farlington Focus, are of a high standard. Every term parents either receive a report or can attend a parents' evening; from Year 9 pupils accompany their parents to these. Reports are of good quality, they provide clear comments on areas studied, the pupils' progress and attainment. Pupils write targets for their subsequent improvement. In accordance with the thorough school complaints policy, the

parents' concerns are rapidly and sensitively dealt with; thorough, contemporaneous records are kept.

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) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the EYFS is good with some outstanding features, fulfilling the school's aim of educating for confidence. Good leadership and management ensure the children's welfare needs are met, and lays the foundations for all children to make consistently good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Adults have extensive knowledge of the children's interests and abilities and as a result create an environment which is both stimulating and challenging. A highly effective house buddy system, which partners Foundation Stage children with Year 5 pupils, creates a strong basis for transition into the preparatory school. The capacity for continued development of the provision is underpinned by excellent teamwork and reflective self-evaluation; although a formal Early Years development plan is not currently in place.

6.(b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.2 Leadership and management of the EYFS are good. Staff are well supported by senior managers and the recent appointment of a Foundation Stage governor demonstrates a clear commitment to the youngest children in the school. Priorities for improvement in the EYFS are not clearly identified within an Early Years development plan. Recruitment procedures and comprehensive policies, reviewed and updated annually, ensure the suitability of staff, equality of opportunity and the safeguarding of children. Excellent risk assessments and daily checks ensure the premises are free from hazards, and additional checks are carried out before outings or special events. Professional development is supported through good staff appraisal processes which identify personal targets and training needs. Parents express a very high level of satisfaction, with many commenting on the warm, nurturing nature of staff. Links with parents and outside agencies, particularly the local authority, are good and the support they provide adds greatly to the effectiveness of the provision.

6.(c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

6.3 The quality of provision, both indoors and outside is good with some outstanding features. Classrooms are bright, airy and provide free flow access to the stimulating outside environment. Plentiful resources provide very good opportunities for purposeful play and exploration. The balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities is outstanding, with children moving freely from activity to activity. Staff are very confident in supporting the children's spontaneous activities and they develop these into valuable learning experiences. Observations, mainly of adult-led activities, form the basis for ongoing assessment, allowing staff to adapt planning to meet the needs of all children. Individual learning journals provide an informative record of the children's development, although links to the EYFS profile are not always documented. Outstanding support for the children's welfare is provided by caring staff who develop genuine bonds with the children, and the establishment of appropriate health and safety routines provide clear expectations for children to follow.

6.(d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

- 6.4 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are good, with some outstanding aspects. Progress in all areas of learning and development is good for all children and excellent for some. Children enjoy their learning, joining in enthusiastically with the available activities. Very good role modelling, and gentle reinforcement of classroom rules results in children developing outstanding social skills and standards of behaviour. They become confident communicators who are able to express their thoughts and feelings clearly, both verbally and through emergent writing. They are beginning to use number, they can count up to ten and recognise some numerals. Confidence in the use of ICT is very good with children using computers and programmable toys independently. Excellent role-play opportunities, expertly supported by staff, allow children to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the world within meaningful contexts. Children develop an understanding of staying safe and keeping healthy, and are able to explain the importance of physical exercise, eating a balanced diet and hygiene routines.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools were inspected by one Ofsted inspector over two days.

Inspectors

Mr John King

Mrs Rachel Eaton-Jones

Mrs Diana Jefkins

Mr Graham Little

Mr Alan Scadding

Mr Chris Manville

Reporting Inspector

Head IAPS school

Former Head GSA school

Former Deputy Head HMC school

Head of Department HMC school

Early Years Lead Inspector