



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
PUTNEY HIGH SCHOOL GDST**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Putney High School GDST

Full Name of School	Putney High School GDST
DfE Number	212/6310
Registered Charity Number	306983
Address	Putney High School GDST 35 Putney Hill London SW15 6BH
Telephone Number	020 8788 4886
Fax Number	020 8789 8068
Email Address	heads.secretary@put.gdst.net
Head	Mrs Suzie Longstaff
Chair of Governors	Dr Tim Miller
Age Range	4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	954
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS): 44 5-11: 276 11-18: 634
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Sarah Gibson
EYFS Gender	Girls
Inspection Dates	29 Sep 2015 to 02 Oct 2015

PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI interim inspection was in November 2009 and the previous ISI full, second cycle inspection was in 2006.

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Ms Charlotte Avery	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mrs Kate Carey	Team Inspector (Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, GSA school)
Mr Bill Chadwick	Team Inspector (Deputy Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Jane Crouch	Team Inspector (Head Teacher, GSA/IAPS school)
Mrs Christine Douglas	Team Inspector (Former Middle School Head, GSA school)
Dr Christopher Enos	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, GSA school)
Mrs Sue Sowden	Team Inspector (Former Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr David Williams	Team Inspector (Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Mr Richard Balding	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendation for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
(a) The quality of governance	13
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	14

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Putney High School GDST is an academically selective girls' day school situated in south west London. The school was founded in 1893 and is owned by the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), which is a registered charity governing, by Council, a group of independent schools in England and Wales with the aim to promote girls' education. The school has a board of local governors whose chair is appointed by the Council. The school aims to provide an education for bright girls that will inspire them towards academic excellence through a love of learning and a 'can do' attitude. It seeks to place a strong focus on well-being and pastoral care in order to promote a warm and supportive community that recognises all girls as individuals and encourages them to develop the confidence to have a sense of ambition and adventure.
- 1.2 Pupils travel to the school from the surrounding London boroughs and come from a broad range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The junior school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the senior school are located on the same site. At the time of the inspection there were 954 pupils in the school. In the junior school there were 320 pupils, including 44 in 2 Reception classes in the EYFS aged between 4 and 5. There were 634 pupils in the senior school, including 160 in the sixth form. The school has identified 59 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 49 receive learning support. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A number of pupils at the school are bilingual but none require extra support for English as an additional language. The average ability of most pupils at all stages in the school is above the national average, with many pupils having ability that is well above average.
- 1.3 In September 2015 a new head was appointed for the whole school. Since the previous full inspection in 2006 there has been a significant investment in facilities, including the construction of a performing arts centre and a sixth-form centre, and the acquisition of a boat house. A refurbishment programme has included the library, drama studio, music suites and school cafeteria. An EYFS outdoor area has been developed and information and communication technology (ICT) facilities increased, including the provision of one-to-one devices for all pupils from Year 4 upwards as part of a personalised digital learning strategy.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to achieve academic excellence through a love of learning. The pupils' achievement and learning are exceptional. From the EYFS onwards, pupils are highly successful in their academic studies and co-curricular activities due to access to an inspiring pupil-centred curriculum and excellent, innovative teaching. Their positive attitudes to their education, the supportive relationships they share with their teachers and their willingness to share and collaborate in their learning all contribute to their excellent progress. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve extremely high levels of attainment in public examinations and in their activities outside the classroom.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent due to the many and varied opportunities provided for them in school and the high quality of welfare and pastoral support. In a caring and supportive environment they are encouraged to develop confidence and to have a 'can do' attitude to fulfil their academic ambitions and to develop their many talents and interests. Pupils of all ages exhibit excellent behaviour and a strong moral code, and are kind and courteous to each other. Respect and tolerance of others are well developed, and a willingness to make a positive contribution to society is evident. Pupils grow in self-esteem due to encouragement by the school to value and express their own opinions, become leaders and take responsibility for their actions. The excellent standards of welfare, health and safety maintained in the school, combined with a focus on personalised pastoral care, make a significant contribution to the excellent personal development of the pupils.
- 2.3 The excellent educational experience provided for pupils is the result of the high quality of governance provided by the GDST and the local governing body, and the excellent leadership and management. Strategic development from the governors is of the highest standard and supports the shared vision for the continued success of the school and the pupils within its care. Strong leadership continues to promote a culture of high expectation. Recent changes to the leadership and management team have provided the opportunity for a school review, and a spirit of collaboration is providing a positive and creative approach to the future. This collaborative approach to sharing excellent practice in teaching and learning is not yet consistently applied across all subject departments. The governors and the leadership and management maintain strong oversight of their legal responsibilities. The quality of links between the school and parents is excellent. The school has been successful in meeting the recommendations of the previous inspection to improve ICT provision and educational provision for the needs of all abilities.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Share the excellence in teaching across the school, with a focus on extending the collaborative coaching culture.

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 exceptional.
- 3.2 Pupils of all ages, from Reception to the sixth form, display an exceptionally high level of knowledge and understanding. Their achievement in a broad range of academic studies and co-curricular activities is exceptional, strongly reflecting the aims of the school.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, all children reach expected levels and most exceed the required levels of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. By the end of Reception most children exceed expectations for their chronological age in reading and writing. Letters are well formed and long sentences are produced with simple punctuation. Children can identify even and odd numbers up to 100 and can recognise correctly the terms 'subtract', 'minus' and 'take away'. They can subtract various single digits from 20. Excellent ICT skills are apparent, for example in using the mouse, and in understanding how to use programmable toys and the interactive whiteboard to solve simple problems. Fine motor skills are highly developed and used in children's imaginative creative work as they concentrate and produce high quality paintings, drawing and writing. Physical skills are well developed in their activities in the play area and in their physical education (PE) lessons. They can throw and catch, balance, climb and use simple tools. The children enjoy challenge and are able to work independently. They organise themselves exceptionally well as they play and learn. The majority of children, including those with SEND, make excellent progress relative to their ability and needs from their various starting points.
- 3.4 Throughout the junior and senior schools, the pupils exhibit excellent listening skills and are highly articulate. They are keen to pose and answer thought-provoking questions on wide-ranging topics, and are highly successful in national and regional debating competitions. Pupils were seen to have a mature love of literature and written work is often of an exceptional standard; for example, Year 6 pupils can confidently apply sophisticated literary techniques such as pathetic fallacy and idioms to their writing. In the senior school, pupils are highly competent in their use of technical language and exhibit a well-developed and extensive vocabulary. Pupils display excellent mathematical and scientific knowledge and skills. They are able to tackle multi-stage mathematical problems, test their solutions and refine them. Junior and senior pupils are logical and critical thinkers. They are highly competent in conducting science investigations and in formulating and testing hypotheses, and can apply their knowledge in unfamiliar situations. Many in the senior school are successful in achieving the highest honours in science Olympiads. Pupils successfully gain the Arkwright scholarship for design technology and engineering each year. They recognise occasions when technology can assist their learning and they use it with a high degree of competence.
- 3.5 Excellent expressive, creative, artistic and musical skills are evident in all age groups. The quality of music, art and drama throughout the school is excellent. Choirs have been successful in regional and national competitions, and pupils have been selected to join the National Children's Orchestras and the National Children's Wind Sinfonia. Many achieve the highest grades in instrumental music and drama examinations. The standard of art in school displays is excellent. Pupils are successful in reaching excellent levels of achievement in sport through the school's philosophy of sport for all. Success is gained at national and regional level in a wide

range of sports across both the junior and senior schools. Those in the elite sports programme display exceptional levels of ability at national level.

- 3.6 The attainment for pupils in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but based on the evidence available from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work and their performance in lessons, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Junior pupils are successful in achieving school places in highly selective secondary schools, with many continuing their education in the senior school. The following analysis of senior school examinations uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE and A level overall have been exceptional in relation to the national average for pupils in maintained schools, and above the national average for pupils in maintained selective schools. Over 85% of GCSE results were achieved at A* to A grades and the results in 2015 were higher than the previous years. Results at International GCSE (IGCSE) have been higher than worldwide and UK norms. The school consistently achieves over 90% of all A-level grades at A* to B. Pupils with SEND achieve the same high levels of success as their peers. Almost all sixth-form leavers are successful in gaining places on highly competitive courses at prominent universities, both in the UK and abroad.
- 3.7 Standardised measures of progress in the junior school indicate that pupils make progress that is good, and in some cohorts, high, in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The levels of attainment at GCSE, IGCSE and A level, and nationally standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that senior school pupils make excellent progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Those with SEND and the most able similarly make excellent progress. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all pupils and parents expressed satisfaction with the progress the pupils make. Evidence from lessons and activities shows that pupils are making excellent and often exceptional progress in all sections of the school.
- 3.8 Pupils throughout the age range have a very positive approach to learning. They settle to work quickly, listen highly attentively, and are industrious and determined. The pupils are ardent learners, intellectually curious and sufficiently confident to take risks in their learning. In the responses to their questionnaire, almost all pupils said that they are encouraged to do things for themselves and to work independently. Their process is a collective endeavour in which they take full responsibility for their learning. They enjoy their lessons, are self-motivated and have high aspirations both inside and outside the classroom.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.10 The school provides a rich and diverse curriculum that is suited to all ages and abilities, including pupils with SEND and the most able, and is in line with the school's aims. The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of learning and is effectively timetabled with a high degree of personalisation, in line with the school's aim to recognise all pupils as individuals. The co-curricular provision for all ages includes an extensive choice of activities both in and outside of school. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all pupils and parents expressed satisfaction with the curriculum and activities provided.
- 3.11 In the EYFS, the curriculum makes excellent provision in meeting the needs of the range of children. The educational programmes cover all the areas of learning and the curriculum is broadened through the use of specialist teaching in French, music and PE. Curriculum planning includes an extensive range of exciting and imaginative opportunities to promote creativity and stimulate the children's imagination. There is a good mix of child-initiated and adult-led activity, and of play and more formal learning. Excellent use is made of the exciting and well-planned outdoor learning environment. Careful observations and assessments, together with regular planning meetings, ensure that children reach and frequently exceed expected levels of development. Children with SEND and those who are more able are identified and receive excellent levels of extra support through carefully planned lessons. They are extremely well prepared for their move on to the next stage in their learning.
- 3.12 In the junior school the highly effectively planned programmes of study ensure that pupils develop an extensive range of knowledge and skills. Specialist subject teaching has a positive impact on learning. 'Circle Time' and lessons in thinking skills strongly support the pupils' emotional and spiritual development. Themed weeks such as the recent Imagination Week and the work inspired by the 'Writer in Residence' project make significant contributions to pupils' learning and academic development.
- 3.13 Since the previous inspection a curriculum review has been completed. In the senior school this has resulted in a change to the structure of the timetable, enabling the school to increase the amount of curriculum time in the sixth form and to introduce more subject time for drama and a newly designed creative computing course. Computer science and Mandarin have been added to the extensive portfolio of subjects offered in the sixth form. Extensive opportunities are provided to develop language skills, including Mandarin in Year 8. Pupils have a wide choice of GCSE, IGCSE and A-level subjects, and a strength of the school is its endeavours to build the curriculum around individual choices.
- 3.14 The pupil-centred life skills programme is effectively planned and integrated into the pastoral system throughout the school. It is supplemented by the thinking skills lessons from Years 1 to 8 and a personal, social and health education programme in Years 10 and 11. These courses have developed reflective thought, encouraged discussion and debate, broadened pupils' views and extended their knowledge of British values. The careers programme is embedded throughout the curriculum and is highly effective in providing help and guidance to all pupils.

- 3.15 Throughout the school curricular support for those requiring additional help, including pupils with SEND and the most able, is excellent. Class teachers and specialist staff work closely together in the junior school to identify any help required and to develop the right amount of challenge for every pupil. In the senior school all pupils are offered an extensive range of opportunities in and beyond the classroom to extend their knowledge and understanding. The Extended Project Qualification and the 'World Class Universities' programme stimulate further challenge for the sixth form.
- 3.16 Pupils' academic success and personal development are greatly enhanced by the excellent co-curricular programme that offers a wide range of sporting, creative, performance and leisure activities including school productions. The quality, planning and monitoring of the co-curricular programme are highly effective and pupils' views on additional activities are considered. Music is a strength of the school and pupils can join a range of choirs and instrumental groups, from classical to modern. The sports programme is particularly extensive, with opportunities for all to become involved in teamwork or to pursue individual interests. Activity weeks, themed days, and a broad range of trips and visits, both locally and overseas, ensure that pupils develop strong global and cultural awareness. Intellectual societies include those for political debate, law and medicine, and the school ensures a balanced presentation of opposing views in the coverage of political issues. An extension programme called Curriculum Plus has introduced topical talks to support the debate of current affairs and academic research, for example, in biochemistry. The Putney Ideas Exchange (PIE) in both the junior and senior schools invites outside speakers and has increased pupils' knowledge of a wide range of global topics, including a recent talk that explored transgender issues. Through its extensive activities the school has forged excellent links with the community.
- 3.17 The curriculum is greatly enhanced by the high quality resources and facilities on offer, including well-stocked libraries, and a new spacious performing arts centre and sixth-form centre.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 In the vast majority of lessons observed, teaching throughout the school, including the EYFS, was excellent. Fast-paced lessons enable outstanding progress. The excellent relationships between teachers and pupils contribute strongly to pupils' exceptional achievement. This allows the pupils to feel confident in taking risks in an intellectually challenging and supportive environment, in accordance with the aims of the school.
- 3.20 Teaching in the EYFS is excellent. It is lively, imaginative and fun. Teachers have high expectations of the children, who respond enthusiastically to the activities in the classroom and outdoors. The teachers undergo regular training and work together with other EYFS settings to broaden their knowledge of children's learning. Careful observations and assessment, together with electronic tracking and regular planning meetings, ensure that the progress of each child is closely monitored. All EYFS staff use the wide range of excellent resources highly effectively to enable children to develop their excellent creative and personal skills.

- 3.21 Throughout the school, exciting and inspirational learning environments are created by teachers with energetic teaching styles and those who establish a calm, reflective atmosphere in which progress is equally rapid. Teaching encourages pupils to take intellectual risks whilst providing opportunities for enjoyment, fostering further progress. Teaching methods are frequently imaginative and innovative, and teachers make excellent use of probing questioning techniques. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and take advantage of numerous opportunities for further training in subject material or new methodology. They regularly share their excellent practice, always striving to improve, and demonstrate inspirational enthusiasm for their subjects. This collaborative approach to improving teaching standards is not, however, evident in all subject areas. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils said that they find their work interesting and that their teachers help them to learn.
- 3.22 The initiative 'Habits of Learning', though in its infancy, is strongly promoting both independent and collaborative learning. Pupils are encouraged to take the lead in lessons and direct discussions, and teachers have the confidence to let pupils explore ideas. A collaborative ethos amongst pupils within lessons promotes the sharing of knowledge. Time management is excellent within exceptionally well-planned lessons.
- 3.23 Teachers know their pupils extremely well and seek to ensure that the needs of every pupil are met, including the most able and those with a particular learning need. Excellent specialist support is provided for those with SEND, in addition to the careful and sensitive provision in lessons. Extension work is built into lessons to challenge the most able. Inspection evidence did not reflect the concerns of a few parents that very able pupils are not receiving support. Assessment data and tracking are used in a strong framework to measure and follow pupils' achievement and progress. The junior school tracking system identifies those who need support at an early stage, and the individually designed measures put in place are highly effective in raising achievement. Tracking systems are part of the excellent network of monitoring and support provided within subject areas by teachers and tutors. The majority of marking is of very high quality and is a large factor in pupils' progress. Oral feedback is excellent and much use of praise is made. In the sixth form, detailed comments are often provided in marked work, which sometimes stimulate written dialogue between teacher and pupil regarding suggested ways to improve.
- 3.24 Teachers make very effective use of high quality resources and the excellent materials they develop to suit the particular needs of the pupils. The imaginative use of tablet computer technology throughout the whole school provides instant communication between staff and pupils, quick access to information and the sharing of ideas. The school has fulfilled the previous inspection recommendation to extend the provision for ICT and to ensure that the best use is made of this as a teaching tool. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils expressed some concerns about the homework provided and that their workload is not well co-ordinated. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Inspectors found that most homework is incorporated into the planning of a lesson to consolidate topics and is appropriate. During interviews, most pupils appreciated the flexibility with deadlines that teachers give whenever possible.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Through a highly varied and inspiring educational experience, pupils are encouraged to embrace the opportunities provided for them and develop the 'can do' attitude that exemplifies the ethos of the school. They fully achieve the school's aim to develop confidence and consequently become young women who, on leaving the school, have developed an excellent sense of self and a confident determination to make a difference.
- 4.3 Outcomes for pupils' spiritual development are strong. Teachers expect, and pupils relish, the exploration of their own ideas within lessons, and through lively class debate they develop their self-esteem and gain a greater understanding of their place in the world. In the EYFS, children learn to understand themselves in their regular 'Circle Times', as they consider 'who we are, how we share, how we treat each other and taking turns'. Throughout the school, opportunities for self-reflection are many and are well used by pupils. Well-being lessons enable all pupils to explore their personal spirituality as well as to discern important elements for a happy life. Pupils appreciate that they need space and quiet in their busy lives and enjoy using the gardens and other well-planned spaces provided for them to enjoy moments of solitude. They learn to understand their emotive response to music whilst also appreciating the musical talent of their friends. Pupils in the sixth form develop high self-esteem and self-confidence through a variety of innovative methods, including well-established and popular comedy workshops.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. In the EYFS, children show respect for their peers as they help each other and take turns, for example as they constructed a house using wooden blocks. The older pupils become responsible for the decisions they make and develop moral integrity. Pupils respect the school's positive behaviour code and develop an understanding of the civil and criminal law of England. They display exemplary behaviour across the school and understand the need for rewards and sanctions. Matters of morality are important to them and these are frequently raised by the pupils in lively debates in lessons. Pupils of all ages show tolerance and respect in lessons, and their concern for others is manifested through caring, courteous and open-minded behaviour. They develop leadership skills through positions of responsibility in tutor groups, houses and sports teams, and through the variety of mentoring and 'buddy' schemes in which they take part.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils are friendly, well-informed and confident communicators. They display excellent relationships with each other and their teachers. Reception aged children play happily with Year 1 and, when the time comes, transition into the junior phase of education is seamless. Pupils have a clear understanding of what it means to be a good citizen and they eagerly become involved in a wide array of links in the local community, including activities for senior citizens and productive fund raising for local causes. They understand the rule of law and individual liberty. Pupils recognise the importance of global social development through their involvement in the Model United Nations, listening to the many outside speakers and their extensive charity programme. Pupils socialise well across all ages within the school. Through their lively collaboration in lessons and activities they display respect for each other and their understanding of the importance of combatting discrimination. They have a clear knowledge of British

institutions. From the earliest years, pupils develop a strong understanding of the significance of democracy. Junior school pupils voted for the year's chosen charity after making informed individual choices that would benefit the local community, whilst senior pupils took part in a mock election.

- 4.6 The cultural development of pupils is excellent. From the EYFS onwards, pupils develop an understanding of religious principles from different faiths as well as British values, and show excellent awareness of their own and other cultures. They enjoy sharing experiences and making friends with others from a rich cultural range within the school. The many school trips, including to India and China, give them an appreciation of and tolerance towards cultures different from their own. Pupils grow in confidence of their own cultural contribution to the world through varied trips out of school to centres of art, music and the theatre, and to religious centres in the UK and abroad.
- 4.7 By the time the pupils leave the school they have an excellent level of personal development.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Almost all parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that their children are happy and feel safe in school, and that they are well looked after. Members of the excellent pastoral team work closely together across the whole school to implement well-developed procedures and successfully promote the school's aims through a community that is welcoming, caring and kind.
- 4.10 The contribution of the EYFS provision to children's well-being is excellent. A key person works closely with each child and her parents to promote her happiness, health and overall development. Children's behaviour is excellent. They feel safe in the setting and trust in the adults who look after them. They talk willingly to each other, staff and visitors to the setting.
- 4.11 In the junior and senior schools, each pupil receives highly effective care and support from a large staff team that includes senior managers, year heads, form tutors, mentors and specialist medical practitioners. Pupils reported that there are many staff members with whom they would feel comfortable to discuss a concern. There are excellent links between the junior and the senior schools, and the transition of pupils into all sections of the school is thoughtful and well planned.
- 4.12 The school encourages the pupils to be active in the pastoral care system. The 'Big Sister' and 'Buddies' programmes provide peer support throughout the school, and are particularly helpful in building excellent relationships between the different ages and promoting the school ethos of kindness. Relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are excellent and a key factor in the excellent personal development exhibited by pupils.
- 4.13 To establish a more personalised approach for each pupil, a helpful well-being programme is developing, alongside the extensive work covered in personal, social and health education and in life skills. There is an increased focus on mental health awareness, covering issues such as anxiety, depression, stress, resilience to adversity and personal safety.

- 4.14 Behaviour in the school is exemplary, with pupils showing respect for the well-defined code of conduct. The school sets out clear expectations of behaviour and rewards, and records of sanctions show that they have been applied appropriately. A small number of pupils and parents expressed in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires that bullying has not always been handled carefully. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Records show that bullying incidents are rare but are recorded in detail and that the sanctions applied are in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.
- 4.15 A small number of pupils completing the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school does not listen to their views. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Inspectors found that the school listens to pupils' views through a number of forums and questionnaires. The school council representatives have been actively involved in specific consultations. The school also has environment representatives as well as a food committee, all of which allow pupils to have a direct effect on their school experience.
- 4.16 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating, and nutritious choices are available at lunchtime. Children in the EYFS are able to make independent food choices for lunch to help them learn about healthy eating. A very broad programme of sport and other activities ensure that regular exercise is taken. In the EYFS, physical development is promoted through three specialist PE sessions each week and through daily use of the extensive outdoor areas, which are well equipped to help children to develop their physical skills. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, including any with a statement of special educational needs.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.18 The GDST ensures that guidance and support are provided to achieve high standards of health, safety, welfare and risk management in the EYFS and throughout the school. A school health and safety committee involving staff from all areas of the site successfully manages the day-to-day procedures, including the oversight of annual risk assessments. A health and safety policy and an improvement plan are fully implemented and closely monitored.
- 4.19 The school promotes a safe and secure environment that contributes to the pupils' excellent personal development. Welfare policies are clear and detailed. They are implemented efficiently and are reviewed annually by the senior leadership team (SLT) and the GDST. Particular attention is paid to safeguarding and child protection. There are designated safeguarding leaders in all sections of the school, including the EYFS. The staff, volunteers and governors, including those at GDST, are suitably trained in safeguarding. The induction procedure for new staff is thorough in all aspects of welfare. The GDST has oversight of safeguarding matters, and any concerns regarding child protection are handled rigorously by the trust and are recorded carefully at the school. Senior managers are trained in safe recruitment. The school has a 'Prevent' strategy plan to guard against young people being drawn into radicalisation.
- 4.20 The required fire prevention procedures are in place and equipment is tested frequently. Fire drills are carried out each term and are evaluated to assess how

improvements can be made. The school is well maintained and the grounds are kept in good order.

- 4.21 An appropriate first-aid policy is in place. A thorough centralised reporting system records incidents and accidents, which are monitored to identify any trends. A qualified nurse co-ordinates care for pupils of all ages, including the EYFS, and staff are trained in first aid. All EYFS staff are trained in paediatric first aid. Medication arrangements in the school are robust and medicines are stored correctly. Parents are kept well informed of their children's welfare, especially in the EYFS. Arrangements are made and due care is given to any pupil with a specific physical or learning need in the school.
- 4.22 Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored. The school follows up any unexpected absence.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The high quality of governance by the GDST and the Local Governing Body (LGB) has provided very effective oversight of the school, including the EYFS, since the previous inspection. There is a strong and supportive relationship between both elements of the governance structure. Their shared vision and dedication to the success of the school and the pupils within their care have ensured that the school has developed into a place of exceptional learning and where excellent standards of pastoral care and personal development are maintained.
- 5.3 The Council of the GDST and its designated sub- and management committees provide the key structure of governance. This arrangement ensures the provision of excellent strategic development planning, financial management and investment, welfare, health and safety, human resources and legal support. This extensive range of professional support is readily and frequently accessed by the head and other staff. Members of the GDST visit the school regularly and are well informed about its issues and development needs. They undertake an annual review of the school's academic performance and challenge the school to improve through providing constructive input into strategic development planning.
- 5.4 The LGB is highly committed and the school benefits from its close knowledge of the local community. Its members have a wide range of skills and represent a number of different professions and interest groups, and their expertise is offered in ways that effectively support and challenge the senior leadership teams. The LGB members regularly spend time in the school, attending events in both junior and senior schools and sharing their knowledge with the pupils. The designated governor for the junior school also looks after the EYFS, and the excellent and plentiful resources are evidence of the considerable support shown for the younger pupils. The school's annual review and target-setting process, which reviews the school's performance and is attended by representatives of the GDST and the LGB as well as the Strategic Planning Group, sets challenging goals for the coming year. Most of the governors have joined strategy working groups to work on the identified key areas for development.
- 5.5 The GDST Council and the LGB both fully understand their legal responsibilities and maintain strong oversight of policies and procedures. The GDST thoroughly fulfils its overall responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the documentation and procedures for safeguarding and child protection annually, and ensuring that they are implemented in school. Governors undergo suitable training for their roles and responsibilities, including training in strategic leadership and educational management, and in child protection and safeguarding.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.7 Strong, dynamic leadership throughout the whole school, including the EYFS, and a clear shared vision, enable the school to fulfil its aims of academic excellence, outstanding personal development and opportunity for all pupils. In their responses to the questionnaire, almost all parents felt that the school is well led and managed.
- 5.8 Management of the EYFS is excellent and the team members work closely together to provide an inclusive environment for the children. A clear vision is in place to improve the setting, supported by regular planning and self-evaluation meetings to refine medium- and short-term aims. Frequent appraisal and supervision meetings and the encouragement to take advantage of the many training opportunities ensure excellent support for staff to develop their roles. The requirements of the recommendations made at the previous inspection have been carefully addressed. The outdoor area has been improved and the curriculum is effectively planned to carefully support the needs of children. There is a strong relationship with parents, and regular meetings engage them in their children's learning and progress. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were highly appreciative of the care and education provided by the setting and the opportunities provided for them to be involved in the education of their children.
- 5.9 Through careful oversight by the SLT, all sections of the school, including support staff, have been consulted about the school's future development. The GDST provides the framework for strategic planning, and all members of the school community contribute additional areas for development in a realistic and ambitious way. Through collaborative sharing of ideas, the management and staff have contributed to developing the curriculum, improving pastoral care systems, and advancing ideas for learning beyond the curriculum and the phased introduction of tablet computer technology. Developing a collaborative approach to share excellent practice within and between subject departments has improved teaching and learning across the school. Priorities for development have been clearly communicated to staff, parents and pupils in meetings, assemblies and information evenings. Progress is carefully monitored and evaluated through feedback from staff and pupils, and through consultation with parents.
- 5.10 The structure and composition of the management throughout the school are highly effective. The roles of the separate leadership teams in the junior and senior schools are clearly delineated and communication between all groups is efficient. Subject co-ordinators, heads of department and year heads focus on the agreed key themes of the development plan. Throughout the school a systematic programme of teachers' peer observation and 'pupil experience days' also contribute to evaluating the effectiveness of practice in teaching and learning. Heads of department in the senior school and subject co-ordinators in the junior school meet regularly and manage their areas of learning highly effectively. Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement and a greater consistency in the academic standards achieved by departments and within subjects, which has been facilitated by strong leadership.
- 5.11 A spirit of innovation, openness and creativity, alongside values which encourage respect for others and democracy, pervade the school. The presence of a lead teacher on the leadership teams emphasises the desire and commitment to share

excellent practice. The quality of teaching and learning has improved through rigorous monitoring, highly effective assessment and tracking systems, higher levels of academic challenge and the imaginative use of technology in the classroom.

- 5.12 The SLT has created clear and appropriate policies and procedures that are regularly reviewed and clearly implemented. The school is successful in recruiting high quality teaching and support staff, who are rigorously checked for their suitability to work with children. Procedures to safeguard all pupils, including the EYFS, are thorough, and all staff, governors and volunteers are trained in safeguarding procedures. Excellent support management ensures that welfare, health and safety procedures are efficiently managed and staff are appropriately trained. There is a robust induction programme and a well-developed appraisal system, incorporating individual targets which underpin the school vision. The GDST offers a wide range of training at all levels, and school staff are actively encouraged to improve their skills further and to be empowered to take on new ideas.
- 5.13 The quality of links with parents is excellent, reflecting the aims of the school. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the school's provision for their children's education and high standards of pastoral care. The school welcomes and supports parental involvement and values the hard work and dedication of the parents' association and other groups, such as the parents of rowers. Parent representatives throughout the school meet regularly to plan fund-raising and social events. Parents are invited into school to contribute to the many activities, including the PIE talks, junior school reading sessions, the life skills programme and assisting in the recent uniform review. Parent opinion is also sought through questionnaires.
- 5.14 Comprehensive information is provided to the parents of current and prospective pupils through high quality publications, an excellent website, with a parent portal, school meetings and frequent newsletters. A wide range of news and other material is provided, including online access to sports fixture information. The use of social media for parents is encouraged. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, parents expressed satisfaction with improved levels of communication.
- 5.15 Throughout the school, parents receive useful reports about their children's work and progress. Written reports are frequent and clear, and include next steps for improvement and co-curricular activities. Parents' concerns are answered promptly and they appreciate the accessibility of teachers. An appropriate complaints policy and procedure are maintained and correctly implemented.

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