



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
BURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL GIRLS**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Bury Grammar School Girls

Full Name of School	Bury Grammar School Girls
DfE Number	351/6009
Registered Charity Number	526622
Address	Bury Grammar School Girls Bridge Road Bury Lancashire BL9 0HH
Telephone Number	01617 972808
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Email Address	info@bgsg.bury.sch.uk
Headmistress	Mrs Roberta Georghiou
Acting Chair of Governors	Mr Laurence Goldberg
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	812
Gender of Pupils	Mixed aged 3 to 7: Girls aged 7 to 18
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 87 5-11: 255 11-18: 470
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Debra Foden
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	25th to 28th March 2014

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), 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 acting deputy chair of governors and two other governors, 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 Jean Marsland	Reporting Inspector
Mr Peter Rushforth	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Guy Willatt	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Gill Wilson	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Laurence Fleck	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, GSA school)
Mrs Harriet Granville	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Adrian Lowe-Wheeler	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Miss Margaret Pepper	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Mrs Jane Prescott	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bury Grammar School Girls is a day school for girls aged 3 to 18 and boys aged 3 to 7. The school is situated in central Bury. Founded in 1884, it amalgamated with the boys' Bury Grammar School in 1906. The two schools are closely situated, share many joint activities and, in the sixth form, some joint teaching. The school is a registered charity and a limited company. A shared board of governors oversees both schools. The school is housed in a Victorian building, to which has been added a range of purpose-built specialist accommodation. The most recent, an arts centre, opened in November 2013. A new joint sixth-form centre is under construction.
- 1.2 The school aims to help pupils achieve academic success, giving each pupil opportunities to fulfil his or her individual potential through independent effort and collective endeavour. It aims to inculcate a love of learning, to develop in pupils a proper sense of independence in thought and action, and to encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning by acquiring the skills and areas of understanding which will enable them to adapt with confidence and initiative to a rapidly changing world. The school aims to provide a caring, supportive, stable and disciplined environment where pupils are secure and feel valued, where moral, ethical and spiritual values are promoted, cultural awareness encouraged and a healthy lifestyle promoted, within a community with sound values of common sense, courtesy, good manners and respect for others.
- 1.3 At the time of inspection, there were 812 pupils on roll. One hundred and ninety-four were in the infant school for children aged 3 to 7, including 87 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There were slightly more girls in the infant school. One hundred and forty-eight pupils were in the junior school, for pupils aged 7 to 11, and 470 in the senior school, of whom 123 were in the sixth form. The majority of pupils come from Bury, the surrounding towns, Manchester and the Rossendale Valley. They come from a wide range of social backgrounds. The majority are from white British backgrounds, with around a quarter from a mix of minority-ethnic groups.
- 1.4 Evidence supplied by the school indicates that the ability profile of pupils in the infant and junior schools is above the national average with a few being below the national average. Evidence from standardised tests indicates that, in the senior school, the ability profile in Year 7 is above the national average, with around a fifth of pupils being of well above average ability, and very few being below average ability. The ability profile in Year 10 is also above the national average, with a slightly wider spread of abilities. In the sixth form, evidence from standardised tests indicates the ability profile is above the national average for pupils in sixth-form education, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented, although over half of pupils are of at least above average ability. The school has identified 22 pupils as having a special educational needs and/or disability (SEND); none requires specialist learning support. Sixty-eight pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), two of whom receive additional support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its age range equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	Age Range
Fledglings	Rising 3s
Cygnets	3 to 4 years

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in achieving its aims. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS and in the sixth form, pupils' achievements are excellent. Their academic achievement is excellent and their achievement in their activities outstanding. In all parts of the school, pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and those who are able, gifted and/or talented, make good and often rapid progress in relation to their abilities. At all stages, pupils' achievements are extremely well supported by the excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision and strongly supported by the excellent teaching they receive overall. A small amount of teaching is less successful and does not always fully support the pupils' learning and progress. At all ages, the pupils' achievements are further supported by their outstandingly positive attitudes to their work and activities and by the high level skills they develop during their time in the school.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent throughout the school. Their spiritual development is excellent and their moral awareness highly developed. Their social development is particularly strong. At all ages, they show a high level of respect and mutual support for their peers and for other members of the school community. Pupils in all sections of the school have a well-developed awareness of the difference between right and wrong and they respond well to the school's high expectations of behaviour. From the youngest to the oldest, the pupils willingly take on responsibility and are keen to contribute to society, both within and without the school. Throughout the school, the excellent arrangements for pastoral care are highly effective in providing support and guidance for pupils. The arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety in all parts of the school are excellent and successfully contribute to pupils' all round well-being.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good. Governors make a strong contribution to all sections of the school. They exercise oversight of the work of the school and contribute successfully to its on-going development. They are aware of their responsibility to monitor regulatory matters and arrangements are in place for governors to do so. However, their monitoring of the required staff pre-appointment checks has not always been sufficiently rigorous in the past to ensure that all checks have been carried out sufficiently promptly and recorded correctly. In all sections of the school, including the EYFS, the quality of leadership and management is excellent and includes excellent links with parents. Senior staff, in all parts of the school, are highly committed to continually developing all aspects of the work of the school and what it offers its pupils. The school has responded successfully to all the recommendations of the previous inspection report, including those for the EYFS.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Raise the standard of the small amount of less successful teaching so that it more closely resembles the high quality of the best.
2. Ensure that the governors' monitoring of the required staff pre-appointment checks is carried out rigorously in future.

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 excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils' achievement in their academic work is excellent and in their activities outstanding, fully meeting the school's aims. In the EYFS, children begin acquiring excellent skills in all areas. Pupils of all ages listen well and are highly articulate when speaking in public, in class and in conversation. They read and write well from an early age. In the EYFS, Nursery children identify sounds and begin to read simple words, and children in Reception confidently write sentences using their phonetic sounds. At all ages, pupils show well developed numeracy skills which they apply successfully across the curriculum. Pupils have well-developed research skills and are independent and logical thinkers. In the EYFS, children demonstrate high levels of independence for their age and are inquisitive; for example, in investigating the 'dinosaur eggs' found in their outdoor area and when they were seen to think carefully about the design of their rockets, revising their ideas and explaining what they would use for the starter engine. At all ages, pupils show high levels of creativity and originality in their written work and in their work in art and design, in music and in drama. The EYFS children show their creativity in role play and in their design work. In all sections of the school, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed and used effectively throughout the curriculum. At all stages, pupils' physical skills are excellent. Numerous pupils achieve at a high level across a wide range of activities and sports, including at regional and national level. Pupils also achieve success in a wide range of local and national competitions; for example: Young Enterprise, music and public speaking, and in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). At all ages, the achievements of pupils with SEND, EAL and those who are more able, gifted and/or talented are strong, reflecting the high-quality support that they receive throughout the school. When the pupils leave the sixth form, almost all go on to university to study a wide range of courses.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, the children progress extremely well in relation to their starting points; the average attainment of children in all areas of learning is consistently above national age-related expectations. Evidence supplied by the school and work seen during the inspection indicates that attainment in the infant and junior schools is good. The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Over this period, performance at GCSE has been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to that for girls in maintained selective schools. Results in 2013 were higher than in the previous two years, being well above the national average for girls in maintained schools. Results in IGCSE mathematics have been higher than worldwide and national norms. The A-level results in the same period have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and above that for girls in maintained selective schools. From 2011, pupils entering for the AQA Baccalaureate and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) have attained the highest grades.
- 3.4 Of the pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all said they are making good progress; inspectors agree. Evidence supplied by the school and work seen indicates that pupils in the infant and junior schools, including in the EYFS, make good progress for their ability. In the senior school, the level of attainment at GCSE, and standardised measures of progress, indicate that pupils make progress

that is high in relation to pupils of similar ability. Attainment at A level, and standardised measures of progress, indicate that pupils make progress in the sixth form that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, inspection evidence, and analyses supplied by the school, indicates that pupils with SEND, EAL and the more able, gifted and/or talented make good and often rapid progress as a result of the effective support they receive.

- 3.5 At all ages, pupils' attitudes to their work and activities are outstanding. In the EYFS, even the youngest children display a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge, and are keen to explore and experiment. Throughout the school pupils are interested in and thoroughly enjoy their learning and value highly the opportunities given. Pupils in all parts of the school work well independently and in groups, and co-operate fully in all aspects of school life. They display inquisitiveness, flexibility and, relative to their age, high levels of intellect and initiative.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.7 The curricular provision is excellent and the extra-curricular provision is of the highest quality, fully supporting the school's aims and meeting the needs of the range of pupils attending the school. Throughout the school, the curriculum provides excellent coverage of mathematical, scientific, creative, aesthetic and practical spheres of study, and the extra-curricular provision includes an extensive range of activities and trips for all ages. This confirms the views of the overwhelming majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire who said that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and experiences and a good range of extra-curricular activities, and the views of the large majority of pupils responding to their questionnaire who said that they can join in a good range of activities.
- 3.8 In the EYFS, the play-based approach to learning is exemplary. Staff skilfully organise the environment around the needs of the child. Coupled with the wide-ranging educational programmes provided, this ensures that children are offered exciting learning experiences that meet their needs extremely well, encouraging them to be active learners. The setting has been highly successful in responding to the recommendations of the previous inspection so that the emphasis in the EYFS curriculum is now more evenly balanced across all areas of learning and children are clearly conscious of, and accountable for, their learning in self-chosen activities.
- 3.9 In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is enriched by lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), thinking skills and the use of specialist teachers in subjects such as French and physical education (PE). In Years 7 to 9, the already broad curriculum is enhanced by the provision of additional subjects including Latin, Spanish and German, and citizenship. At GCSE, a wide range of optional subjects is offered. Where needed, provision is made for pupils at this stage to receive additional teaching in mathematics and a course of study skills. Such provision reflects the flexibility of the curriculum in meeting pupils' individual needs. In the sixth form, in liaison with Bury Grammar School Boys, pupils are offered an extensive choice of subjects along with the opportunity to follow courses in general studies and critical thinking, to undertake the AQA Baccalaureate and the EPQ.

- 3.10 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, an enhanced emphasis has been placed throughout the school on providing opportunities for pupils to learn independently; this is now a strength of the curricular provision, particularly in the senior school, including in the sixth form, and in the EYFS. Across the school, library provision is highly supportive in promoting reading and developing the skills for independent research. The provision for PSHCE throughout the school is excellent, covering a wide range of topics and is highly effective in supporting pupils' personal development. Provision for SEND, EAL and pupils who are more able and/or gifted and talented is excellent throughout the school, for example by providing support to enable gifted pupils to make up work missed when they need to be out of school to compete at a national level. In the senior school, careers provision is excellent. Beginning in Year 7 with work shadowing, it culminates in the sixth form with extensive support and guidance for choices beyond school.
- 3.11 An extremely wide range of extra-curricular activities is available to pupils throughout the school, including many sporting and musical activities as well as specific-interest activities such as the knitting group in the senior school and, in the infant and junior schools, fencing, 'Crazy ICT' and 'Pirouette' clubs. Throughout the school a wide range of trips is offered, including residential visits from Year 5 onwards. For older pupils these include opportunities to undertake trips further afield, including World Challenge projects to places such as Poland and Tanzania. Pupils from Year 10 upwards are offered the opportunity to join the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) run jointly with the boys' school, and the DofE scheme.
- 3.12 The school has many strong links with the community. Pupils from Year 11 and the sixth form are involved in community service. Pupils from local schools attend Saturday mathematics and science workshops. Other links include the school's involvement in a science partnership with local schools. Visitors from the local community regularly come into all sections of the school to speak to pupils and to be involved in activities. Pupils also benefit from the opportunities afforded by the school's academic links with a number of universities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.14 Teaching throughout the school is successful in promoting pupils' learning and progress and in effectively supporting the school's aims. Pupils praise highly the quality of teaching and almost all of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said their teachers help them to learn.
- 3.15 Teaching is almost always at least good and much teaching is excellent, particularly in the senior school. In the EYFS, teaching is excellent. Planning and assessment in the EYFS are exemplary and teaching considers exceptionally well the children's interests and needs. Staff clearly understand how children learn and develop, make excellent use of resources and provide appropriate learning activities that present suitable levels of challenge. They ensure the children's learning thrives and their early literacy and numeracy skills successfully developed. From Years 1 to 13, almost all teaching is lively and challenging and successfully engages the pupils' interest through the use of a wide variety of approaches and practical tasks. Such teaching sets a fast pace, ensures pupils are actively learning from the outset, is imaginative, shows flair and uses excellent open-ended questioning to develop pupils' thinking. Throughout the school the quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is extremely positive; high levels of mutual respect encourage high

standards of behaviour and endeavour. Teaching is almost always highly supportive and encouraging, with praise often used well to motivate pupils. Teachers give pupils a high level of personal attention, including outside lesson time, helping them to fulfil their potential and grow in confidence. A small amount of teaching is less successful in engaging pupils' interest, in fully supporting their learning and progress, in meeting individual pupils' needs and in making the most of the time available to maximise pupils' progress.

- 3.16 Much of the teaching is highly successful in meeting the needs of the more able pupils, particularly in the senior school and especially in the sixth form. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, good progress has been made in providing more challenging work for the most able in the infant and junior schools to ensure that those pupils are now more sufficiently challenged. Throughout the school, including in the EYFS and in the sixth form, pupils who have SEND and/or EAL receive effective teaching which supports their learning well and enables them to make good and often rapid progress.
- 3.17 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, good progress has been made, particularly in the senior school and the sixth form, in emphasising independent learning and linking it to increasing pupils' use of ICT in their regular work. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the large majority of pupils said they are encouraged to think for themselves and work independently; evidence of this was clearly seen in pupils' work during the inspection. In the infant and junior schools, including in the EYFS, teaching encourages pupils to learn to think critically and to develop independent research skills. This is built on most successfully in the senior school, and particularly in the sixth form.
- 3.18 Also in response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, good progress has been made in the overall quality of marking in the senior school so that it now places sharper focus on subject-specific comments and guidance. Marking throughout the school is mostly constructive, gives detailed comments, and is successful in enabling pupils to understand what they have done well and how they can further improve. However, some inconsistency in the quality of marking remains in all parts of the school. In those cases, pupils are not clear what they need to do to improve. Assessment of pupils' learning is largely of a high quality and used well to plan subsequent lessons. Highly effective use is made of self and peer assessment to enable pupils' specific needs to be met and for pupils to learn from each other.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school is highly successful in meeting its aim to promote moral, ethical and spiritual values and to encourage cultural awareness. The quality of pupils' spiritual development is excellent. All through the school, pupils show high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, without arrogance, and are exceptionally mature for their age; the youngest children in the EYFS demonstrate the same qualities. Pupils are loyal to and proud of their school. At all ages, they benefit greatly from the spiritual aspects of their music, art and charitable giving. They are open-minded and have knowledge of and respect for the religious beliefs of others. They participate actively in faith and other assemblies which stimulate their understanding and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development at all ages is excellent. They develop a sensitive and well-embedded understanding of right and wrong and insist on high moral values. Pupils assisted in drawing up the school's code of conduct, which emphasises the values of courtesy and respect for all members of the school community and beyond. They develop a strong interest in, and understanding of, moral and ethical matters through their work in PSHCE, religious education and citizenship, and through assemblies. Pupils, including the youngest, appreciate the need for kindness and courtesy; they know that bullying is wrong and what part they should play to stop it. Pupils understand their role as global citizens and do much to alleviate world problems that worry them. For example, the suffering of children, eco concerns such as the need for clean water and penguins affected by oil, for which pupils are knitting jumpers to protect them whilst their feathers recover. Pupils develop good political awareness from their lessons in citizenship and PSHCE, and from trips such as the sixth-form visit to Parliament.
- 4.4 Throughout the school the pupils' social development is excellent. At all ages their relationships with each other and with staff are excellent, characterised by courtesy and mutual respect. Children in the EYFS play harmoniously together and demonstrate kindness to one another, thus acquiring strong skills for the future. At all ages, pupils strive for and shoulder many positions of authority as leaders of the school, as chairs of committees and as buddies to younger pupils. Pupils in the infant and junior schools and in the senior school participate actively in their school councils. Pupils of all ages are keenly aware of the needs of others and raise substantial amounts of money to support a wide variety of local, national and global charities; older pupils undertake various kinds of community service, for example, helping local deaf and blind people.
- 4.5 Pupils at all levels have an excellent and well-developed sense of cultural awareness. They are keen to experience and to learn about Western and other cultures, through music, art, literature, assemblies and guest speakers, and from celebrations of events such as the Chinese New Year and St Patrick's Day. They are highly respectful of those from other faiths and cultures and have harmonious relationships with those from families different from their own. The pupils also gain a great deal of cultural awareness from the wide variety of trips the school organises to places as diverse as Poland, Russia, Madagascar, USA, Spain and Italy.

- 4.6 By the time pupils leave the school, they do so with an excellent standard of personal development and a highly-honed desire to become useful world citizens.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Throughout the school pastoral support and guidance for pupils is excellent and fully supports the school's aims. For pupils of all ages, the school provides a caring, supportive, stable and disciplined environment where pupils feel secure and valued. Staff know the pupils extremely well and have a genuine concern for their wellbeing. In interviews, pupils were quick to praise the support they receive from staff. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent. In the EYFS, the well-established 'key person' system ensures that all children's needs are extremely well met. Staff are clear about their responsibilities for the children and are excellent role models. The children feel secure in their environment and demonstrate that they feel safe in the care of the adults who work with them. Transition from Reception to Year 1 is seamless, aided by the EYFS children sharing the outdoor area and by visits to Reception by the Year 1 teachers during the summer term.
- 4.9 The school has clear expectations of good behaviour to which pupils of all ages respond positively. They are aware of the need for sanctions should any inappropriate behaviour occur. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents said that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. A small minority of pupils, in their response to the questionnaire, said that teachers are not fair in giving rewards and sanctions. Pupils spoken with expressed a more positive view. Behaviour records scrutinised indicate that sanctions are appropriate and measured. The school takes a strong stand against bullying, including against cyber-bullying. Pupils spoken to said incidents of bullying are rare and were confident that, were it to occur, staff would take it seriously and respond to it effectively.
- 4.10 Pupils are made aware of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. A wide variety of food with hot, cold and healthy options is provided. In the EYFS, children confidently take responsibility for their own healthy eating through the provision of a 'rolling snack' station in all classes. For the youngest children, guidance on the importance of correct hand washing is provided in pictorial form in the cloakrooms and they follow this guidance well. Throughout the school, opportunities for regular exercise are many and varied, provided within the curriculum and in activities and, in the EYFS, through outdoor play and PE lessons taught by specialist teachers. Responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Pupils spoken with said that the school does take their views into account. For example, school councils meet regularly in the infant and junior schools and in the senior school. These give pupils an effective voice; for example, recently, in the design of play equipment for the infant and junior schools and in discussing changes to the senior school uniform.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 Throughout the school, arrangements to promote the pupils' welfare and their health and safety are carefully undertaken and supported by clear and well-thought through policies and procedures which are effectively implemented. In the EYFS, staff are fully aware of the procedures to promote the safety and welfare of children and follow those procedures diligently to ensure that children are kept safe from harm in a welcoming and secure environment. The need to safeguard children is taken seriously in all sections of the school. The required pre-appointment checks on staff are carried out and accurately recorded. In the past, on a few occasions, these checks have not been carried out sufficiently promptly nor all recorded efficiently. The school has remedied this and has made arrangements to ensure this does not happen in the future. Child protection arrangements are exemplary and staff are keenly aware of their responsibilities in this area. All staff receive the required child protection training at the level appropriate to their roles and at the required intervals. Staff with responsibility for child protection undertake additional specific training to further support their roles.
- 4.14 Measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards are highly effective. Staff receive training in fire awareness. Fire drills are held regularly in all parts of the school, both announced and unannounced. These are promptly reviewed and any necessary changes to arrangements quickly implemented. Health and safety equipment is checked and serviced regularly and detailed records kept. Extremely thorough risk assessments are carried out for appropriate areas of the school and for activities. Excellent provision is made for pupils of all ages who are ill, injured or who have SEND. First aid policies are detailed and clear, implemented highly effectively and careful records kept. A good number of staff are trained in first aid, including, for the EYFS, in paediatric first aid. The admission and attendance registers are kept efficiently and correctly stored for the required length of time.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body is fully committed to the school, and places the best interests of pupils of all ages at the heart of all that it does. It is clear in its aims and, overall, demonstrates a good oversight of all sections of the school, including of the EYFS. Governors regularly evaluate all that the school provides and this informs plans for continued development. They successfully discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources in all parts of the school through an effective committee structure, which reports regularly to the full governing body. The governors take care to include among their number members with a range of specific skills. They undertake appropriate training, including induction training for new governors, as well as training on a range of topics for existing governors.
- 5.3 Governors know the school well and provide astute vision for future development. They are fully aware of the importance of forward thinking, whilst at the same time striving to maintain the already high-quality provision and happy atmosphere that the school provides. Relationships between staff and the governing body are strong; governors are well known by members of all parts of the school community. Governors attend activities such as the junior school council meetings as well as special events throughout the school. The governor with responsibility for the EYFS visits the setting regularly and works closely with the head of EYFS, including carrying out her appraisal. The governing body is fully supportive of the leadership of all sections of the school. It regularly appraises the work of the headmistress and take seriously its role as critical friends.
- 5.4 Overall, the governing body has a good understanding of its statutory responsibilities, including those for child protection and safeguarding. Governors collectively carry out the required annual audit of safeguarding and have systems to monitor and review regulatory policies and procedures. In the past, these have not always been sufficiently rigorous to identify the few shortcomings in staff pre-appointment checks being carried out sufficiently promptly, and to ensure that the checks have always been recorded correctly.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 Strong and clear leadership is evident at all levels of responsibility and fully supports the school's aims and ethos. The EYFS has exemplary leadership and management with an excellent knowledge of the EYFS requirements and a clear desire to succeed at the highest levels. Senior leaders and managers, throughout the school, are effective in the discharge of their delegated responsibilities, including in policy implementation and in the arrangements for safe-guarding pupils.
- 5.7 Leadership and management at all stages provide extremely clear educational direction and purpose, as seen throughout the school in the excellence of the pupils'

achievements and in their excellent personal development. The members of the senior management team (SMT) work closely together to fulfil the school's aims. Leadership and management roles at all levels are clear and well defined, and reviewed regularly to promote further the success of the school. The quality of relationships between the members of the SMT is excellent and provides a high degree of mutual support and challenge. This collaboration strengthens the leadership and management of both pastoral care and teaching and learning; the care and concern shown for the pupils is clear.

- 5.8 Those with leadership and management roles are highly effective in self-evaluation, in setting priorities and ensuring they are achieved. In the EYFS, self-evaluation is rigorous; senior staff in the EYFS place importance on continual improvement with the already high-quality provision. Throughout the school, the roles of middle leaders are helpfully and clearly defined; staff are successful in leading and taking responsibility for their areas. Departmental development planning is regularly reviewed to guide the whole-school strategic direction. The use of assessment data in directing strategic planning is meticulous and ensures that the process is cohesive and in line with the whole-school vision. Within departments, assessment is used well to monitor pupils' progress and to inform planning. This ensures that the all-round well-being and development of the pupils is a high priority and that, at all levels, the high quality care of and provision for pupils is paramount. In the EYFS, in response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the use of data is now exemplary.
- 5.9 The school is successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high quality and dedicated staff who are supported by a comprehensive, professional development programme. Regular lesson observations and peer assessments form part of the thorough teacher evaluation process. Teachers share best practice and work together to undertake excellent peer reviews, all of which are carefully recorded in departmental handbooks. The appraisal system offers opportunities for staff to reflect and to be supported in ensuring that areas of further development and training are identified and form part of the whole-school strategic plan. In addition to the formal appraisal system, staff in the EYFS have regular opportunities to talk with management about their practice and about the children in their care. Induction training in all parts of the school is thorough; professional development opportunities are robust and all staff receive regular and effective training to ensure that they carry out their roles effectively to meet the needs of all children, in welfare, safeguarding and health and safety. In the EYFS, staff recognise the importance of, when necessary, working with external agencies, along with professionals from other settings that the children might attend, in order to ensure that appropriate strategies are adopted to best meet the needs of children and families.
- 5.10 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has taken considerable steps to ensure that there are now extremely close links between the infant and junior schools and the senior school; transition between phases is closely monitored. There are now many opportunities for staff to have links across the various sections of the school, including curricular links, and for pupils to experience the next educational stage, in order to ensure that their progress is well supported as they move up through the school. This includes liaison with the boys' school for pupils who are to transfer there. Also in response to the previous inspection, the school has ensured there is now wide use of ICT in pupils' regular work.

- 5.11 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. Starting in the EYFS, highly constructive relationships are forged between the school and parents; for example, parents of EYFS children have the opportunity to 'stay and play' in the days before their child starts school. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and parents of children in the EYFS spoken with, show a high level of support for all aspects of the work of the school. The school actively encourages parental involvement and offers a variety of ways in which this can happen, including in the active parents' association which supports the school with many fundraising initiatives such as the second-hand uniform shop and an annual craft fair as well as a wide range of social events. In addition, the school organises informative open evenings, induction days and new-parents' evenings. Parents are also regularly invited to share in a rich selection of very varied events throughout the year, including concerts and special assemblies.
- 5.12 All the required information is provided for the parents of both current and prospective pupils. Of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all said that information about the school is readily available. In all parts of the school, parents have easy access to staff and contact with parents is maintained via the internet where parents have easy access to information. Regular newsletters and a yearly magazine are part of a plethora of information the school shares with parents. An excellent package of information is sent to all new parents, in each section of the school, to help them become familiar with day-to-day arrangements and routines, and, in the senior school, to explain subject choices at key points.
- 5.13 Regular parents' evenings are held where parents can discuss their child's progress. In the EYFS, the sharing of information about children's progress is particularly strong, with frequent opportunities, both formal and informal, for parents to talk with staff about their child's progress and to share targets. They can also share family news with the school via their children's 'talk books'. Parents of children in the EYFS are provided with informative reports that explain how children learn and outline achievement. School reports, issued twice a year, are excellent. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, senior school reports now contain a sharp focus on subject-specific comment and guidance and, in the infant and junior schools, specific targets to help pupils improve. In addition, opportunity for parental and pupil input is offered. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure; any complaints are handled in line with the procedure.

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