



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
WELLINGTON PREP SCHOOL**

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Wellington Prep School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Wellington Prep School
DfE Number	933/6178
Registered Charity Number	310268
Address	Wellington Prep School South Street Wellington Somerset TA21 8NT
Telephone Number	01823 668700
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Email Address	prep@wellington-school.org.uk
Head	Mr Adam Gibson
Chair of Governors	Mr Phil Nunnerley
Age Range	3 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	221
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (122 boys; 99 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 39 5-11: 182
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 221
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Nickie Reed
EYFS Gender	(Mixed)
Inspection Dates	11 to 14 Nov 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 November 2011.

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 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

Mr Graham Gorton

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Mr Michael McKaughan

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Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS School)

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Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The school was founded in 1999 as a junior school for Wellington School. It is governed, along with the senior school, by an educational trust, whose board of trustees hold proprietorial responsibility. The transfer age between the junior and senior schools was changed in 2010 from ten to eleven. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, known as the 'Prep Years', have some of their lessons in the senior school. In September 2014 the name of the school was changed to become Wellington Prep School.
- 1.2 The school aims to give pupils an excellent all-round education that nurtures the spirit and talents of the individual child and stimulates intellectual curiosity. It seeks to provide a disciplined and mutually respectful environment, based on Christian values, encouraging pupils to be responsible citizens. Its aims are summed up in its motto: 'Learning for Life'.
- 1.3 The school occupies its own purpose-built building which houses classes from Nursery to Year 4, and the Year 5 and 6 classes are grouped together in a nearby classroom block. The school has access to a dedicated science block with specialist laboratories, art, design and technology workshops, a theatre, the sports complex, the home economics facilities and the playing fields and artificial grass surfaces at the senior school.
- 1.4 The school has 221 day pupils, of whom 39 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which comprises Nursery and Reception. Children start in the Nursery at the age of three. Pupils are drawn mainly from professional families based predominantly in Wellington and the surrounding towns and villages. Standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.5 The school has identified 24 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and they receive specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. One pupil is learning English as an additional language (EAL) and receives support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in providing a stimulating and challenging environment where pupils come readily to learn and develop skills that will prepare them to meet the challenges in the next stage of their education. The school successfully meets its overarching aim of 'Learning for Life'. The quality of the learning and achievements of pupils is excellent. From a young age, in the EYFS, children meet and often exceed the Early Learning Goals. Pupils develop strong understanding in literacy and numeracy, as well as in other areas of the curriculum, from the outset and this is successfully built upon as the pupils move through the school. The school's curriculum is excellent, as is the range and quality of extra-curricular activities. A restructuring of the timetable means that the recommendation from the previous inspection, to ensure maximum learning from the time available, is fully met. Excellent teaching ensures that the needs of all the pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and those identified as being able, gifted or talented, are realised most successfully. More able pupils are challenged appropriately ensuring that a recommendation from the previous inspection has been met. Pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. They accept challenge and are ready to take risks and to learn from this process. They are active learners with a strong desire to succeed.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development, including in the EYFS, is of the highest order. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and they develop a wide portfolio of personal qualities that make them ideal citizens with a clear understanding of British values. Excellent levels of pastoral care mean that pupils feel safe and secure in a nurturing environment that values the contributions of all its members. Mutual respect and support are cornerstones of the school's pastoral systems. Sound provision for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils pays excellent attention to the safeguarding arrangements for the pupils. However, insufficient attention is given to certain aspects of health and safety, including that of regular fire practices early in each school year in senior school buildings used by prep school pupils.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is good. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and they provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support. Links between the governance and leadership of the school are strong. Governors are generally effective in their oversight of all policies and their implementation although insufficient attention has been given to certain aspects of health and safety. Excellent, inclusive leadership and management provide the school with clear educational direction and a strong sense of identity. The excellent feeling of community that exists at the school is based on mutual respect which permeates from the leadership team. The school maintains excellent links with its parents, guardians and carers and they are overwhelmingly supportive of most areas of school life.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- take steps to comply fully with regulations relating to the safety of the school site [Part 5, paragraph 23C., under Premises and Accommodation]

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that fire evacuation practices are conducted in all areas used by older prep school pupils early in each new school year.
2. Ensure that all feedback provides clear information and guidance on how pupils can improve the quality of their work.

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 Pupils at the school are well-educated and the school achieves its aims in ensuring that every child reaches their potential in all areas of school life. The school is successful in its pursuit of excellence and in preparing them for the next stage of their education.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS make rapid progress in relation to their starting points and their abilities. Children in the Nursery are eager to speak and proud to recognise a growing number of sounds and they know whether they are short or long sounds. Several count to ten and recognise the numerals. In Reception children speak with increasing fluency, start to build short words and the most able children start to write short sentences using their phonic knowledge. They recognise three dimensional shapes and are confident to order numbers beyond 15. By the end of the Reception year, most children attain all the Early Learning Goals and some exceed them in many areas of learning.
- 3.4 From Year 1 onwards, there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. Pupils demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge, understanding and skills, and this is developed as they move through the school. In literacy, younger pupils read with increasing fluency and intonation and their early writing skills show correct letter formation and the use of an extended vocabulary to improve and develop the content of their sentences. Pupils speak confidently and coherently and listen carefully to instructions. These literacy skills become well-developed as the pupils move through the school. By the time they leave at the age of 11 they demonstrate excellent levels of achievement in their English work. Their extended creative and factual writing is mature, insightful and reflects a love of the written word. The pupils develop strong oral skills in areas such as debating and reasoning. In mathematics early number skills provide a firm basis for the further development and extension of skills. High order thinking and reasoning skills become a feature of their problem solving and computational work. Pupils' excellent scientific understanding allows them to experiment, analyse and hypothesise successfully. In computing and in information and communication technology (ICT) work the pupils achieve to a high level and the skills that they develop successfully support other areas of the curriculum. Pupils display high achievement in physical activity. From an early age their physical development is excellent and this develops as they mature in both age and physical prowess. This is reflected in the pupils' significant achievement in sporting activities at both individual and team level. There is a high level of success in music examinations as well as in speech, drama and dance, both inside and outside of the school day.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, but on the evidence available it is judged to be high. This represents good progress in relation to the pupils' starting points, based upon lesson observations, scrutiny of work, discussions and the school's own records. The achievements of pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent supported by high quality individual and class teaching. Detailed individual education plans (IEPs) ensure that staff support the pupils in achieving to the best of their ability. Pupils who are identified as able, gifted or talented make rapid progress because of the support they receive from their teachers.

- 3.6 Pupils demonstrate an excellent work ethic at all times. They are always keen to give of their best and to involve themselves fully in the learning process. Children in both Nursery and Reception classes are happy, confident and curious, and they concentrate for increasing periods. Throughout the school pupils are active learners and the high level of participation and interest in all aspects of school work is a significant strength of the school. The school promotes learning skills that prepare the pupils for life and this is evident in many aspects of the school day. Pupils are encouraged to take risks and to learn from them and this culture is evident in every facet of school life. The pupils' learning skills are excellent, and this, coupled with the high quality of teaching, ensures that good progress is made by all pupils.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 In accordance with the school's aims, children are given experience in a wide range of subjects and activities. The school has responded to the recommendation from the previous inspection by identifying areas for improvement in the time allocation on the timetable. This has resulted in more time given to English and mathematics, and extending the length of periods for top prep years, both initiatives successfully providing more productive time for staff and pupils. In addition, the school has maintained cross-school subject specialist teaching, which is effective in providing access to a challenging and varied curriculum.
- 3.9 In the EYFS, the detailed programmes build on the children's interests and a wealth of enriching experiences that enable children of all abilities to progress well. Resources indoors and outside are of good quality and are used imaginatively. Skilled adults have high expectations and encourage a judicious balance between activities led by children and those initiated by staff so providing both a springboard and a support for learning which intrigue and inspire the children. Opportunities for children to use technology are good and children in Reception prove adept at programming toys to move in given directions and through narrow spaces. Children in the EYFS make excellent use of a woodland learning environment.
- 3.10 The curriculum for older pupils is suitable for all ages, learning needs and abilities. It provides all the required aspects of learning and presents excellent opportunities through which pupils develop intellectual curiosity. A high proportion of lessons involve group work at one point or another and the children display a highly co-operative approach in these situations, being prepared to listen to their classmates and offering suggestions of their own.
- 3.11 The curriculum carefully supports the needs of those of different abilities and ages and enables good and often rapid progress for pupils with SEND, EAL and who have been identified as able, gifted or talented. Pupils with SEND and EAL also receive highly effective individual support. The extensive provision of materials to suit the individual needs of pupils is deployed on a frequent basis across the curriculum and in all year groups. In Years 5 and 6 the programme to promote action, communication, exploration and development of the self (ACES) has been successfully introduced to support the breadth of learning and experiences among the children by helping them to understand the life skills they need. During discussion pupils expressed their appreciation for the programme.
- 3.12 The school's range of extra-curricular activities is excellent, providing a wide range of sporting activities such as swimming, badminton and climbing. Additionally it

offers an extensive and varied choice of other activities or hobbies that encourage pupils' creativity and capture their general interest. Through activities such as cook and create, brain training, music activities and a Dr Who Club the pupils broaden their educational experience. They appreciate the activities provided for them and the high take-up each term demonstrates the value given to the extra-curricular life of the school.

- 3.13 An excellent programme of trips and visits is organised, which supports topics within the curriculum and enriches the pupils' learning. A very wide range of residential excursions make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development through fostering leadership skills, team spirit, personal and group awareness and respect for one another's capabilities. Day trips to more local venues are also excellent complements to what is being presented in the classroom.
- 3.14 The curriculum is further enhanced by strong links with the community. Pupils take a full part in these initiatives and their involvement is excellent. For the French Café, for example, each house was expected to decide their stall's focus product, deal with production, carry out a cost analysis, and order the necessary quantities to cover costs and generate a profit that would then be donated to the chosen school charity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The quality of teaching in the school is excellent.
- 3.16 Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school. The school has maintained the excellent standards of teaching noted in the previous inspection and high-quality teaching continues to be a strength of the school.
- 3.17 In the EYFS the adults are experienced and highly skilled, and use their knowledge of the requirements of the curriculum to provide a carefully planned mix of challenge and support for all children. Planning and assessment arrangements are fully in place and plans are adapted in the light of constant assessment. Systems to monitor the work of the setting have been recently reviewed but their effectiveness is not yet sufficiently monitored.
- 3.18 Across the school, teaching is planned thoroughly. Teachers know their pupils well, promote a harmonious and purposeful working atmosphere and take into account the personal and academic needs of their pupils when planning lessons. Lessons are planned very carefully with clear objectives to use a variety of methods and ensure detailed coverage of the curriculum.
- 3.19 Teachers skilfully use a variety of informal and formal methods to assess the knowledge, skills and understanding of the pupils and to monitor and track their progress. Observation, questioning and dialogue, tests and standardised assessments are used thoroughly, and pupils are encouraged to self-evaluate their work. Insights derived from these processes are used effectively to set individual targets for further progress, and to enable teachers to modify their planning to meet the needs of the pupils. The school is currently developing its assessment system to ensure that the best use is made of the data available.
- 3.20 While much marking in books and folders provides clear guidance on how pupils can further improve their work, some provides insufficient direction or clarity to enable pupils to review their work and understand how they can improve in future. Most teachers give excellent oral feedback during lessons, successfully guiding pupils to

improve future tasks, and pupils readily express their appreciation for this assistance.

- 3.21 Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge, and specialist teaching in some subjects, particularly in Years 5 and 6, enables pupils to achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skill. Use of time is excellent and lessons are carefully structured and executed at a suitably brisk pace, ensuring that pupils remain engaged and inspired. Teachers use an excellent variety of teaching methods to ensure pupil progress and encourage them to take risks and thereby develop the confidence to learn from their mistakes. The stimulation and variety provided by the extensive use of ICT, drama and role play, outdoor learning, investigative work in science and practical work in maths engage pupils fully and help them to achieve excellent standards of work.
- 3.22 The school is very well resourced, and teachers make excellent use of the equipment available, particularly in practical subjects, such as science, art and design and technology (DT). Use of ICT for learning is incorporated very effectively across the curriculum and excellent use is made of the resources provided, including a well-equipped ICT room and interactive whiteboards in most classrooms. Throughout the school, exceptionally attractive and colourful displays demonstrate the range and quality of teaching across the curriculum.
- 3.23 Teaching successfully fosters skills in both independent and collaborative working. For example, pupils collaborated very successfully to create outstanding art displays. A variety of suitably challenging work is set for pupils of different abilities, and the highly skilled assistant staff are deployed very effectively, to allow all to progress at their own pace. In addition to their challenging classroom work, very able pupils benefit from enrichment activities outside class and their learning is thereby promoted, in line with the recommendation from the previous inspection to extend practice so that highly able pupils are consistently challenged. Educational support for pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, is excellent.

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 education of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is successful in promoting the pupils' personal development and awareness and supports the aims of the school. The school has maintained the excellent standards reported in the previous inspection.
- 4.3 Children in the EYFS form close relationships with the adults who care for them and also with each other. Their personal and emotional development is excellent and their behaviour is impeccable. Children happily share and from an early age they understand and respect one another. They have numerous opportunities to visit other classes and to become confident about moving to the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 Pupils' excellent spiritual development is successfully supported by the school's Christian values and practices. Pupils are self-assured and confident, developing positive self-esteem as they move through the school. Pupils' strong spiritual development is also developed through non-religious means and they show a mature appreciation for some of the non-material aspects of life. They demonstrate an excellent appreciation of art and music and value the sense of well-being afforded by such experiences. Pupils' emotional maturity is of a high order.
- 4.5 The moral development of the pupils is strong. Pupils have a highly-developed awareness of right and wrong and demonstrate excellent courtesy and manners, working and playing harmoniously. Behaviour is outstanding and the older pupils are excellent role models. Moral values are established through high expectations, assemblies, class discussion and the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. During the inspection, pupils responded attentively to an anti-bullying assembly, demonstrated deep understanding and appreciation of empathy in a house assembly, and discussed the concept of loyalty with great maturity in an English lesson.
- 4.6 The social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils successfully work in pairs or groups, and older pupils develop in maturity and leadership through service in many ways, often through positions of responsibility. Social development is nurtured through extensive charitable work with local, national and international groups being supported through a variety of school activities. The school council enables further social awareness and development. Strongly supported by the school leadership, it has been successful in introducing many new resources and practices for the benefit of the school. The numerous sports fixtures promote teamwork and mutual endeavour and residential trips help the pupils to develop social skills and confidence. Pupils develop mature social, political and economic awareness through debates and visits to civic institutions and from visitors to the school. As a result, they have a good knowledge of the public institutions and services in England.
- 4.7 The well-developed cultural education of the pupils raises awareness of their own and other ways of life. Pupils understand and respect the achievements of those from other faiths and cultures, as well as those of the Western cultural tradition. Their strong cultural understanding and appreciation is supported by the school's extensive range of trips and excursions and through assemblies and lessons, such

as religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE). They display tolerance and harmony in their relationships. Pupils are taught to recognise the importance of fundamental British values, relating to the rule of law and to individual liberty, as observed during an assembly on the impact of war.

- 4.8 All pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school, in accordance with the school's aim to establish learning for life.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.10 Staff provide effective support and guidance, which is much appreciated by pupils, and reflects the aims and ethos of the school. Every child is very well known by staff who help them to thrive individually and as members of the community. The pupils feel happy, safe and confident at school.
- 4.11 The excellent relationships between staff and pupils and the strong sense of community that stems from this are based on very strong feelings of mutual respect. As a result, the pupils believe that they will be listened to should they approach any member of staff with any concern. Pupils speak highly of their school and the support available to them.
- 4.12 In the EYFS, each child has a key person who ensures that their needs are met. The key people are skilled and experienced, providing excellent role models in kindness and in making close relationships based on mutual trust and thoughtfulness. They have high expectations of good behaviour. All adults ensure that children understand the importance of staying safe, that physical exercise is good for them and in the principles of good hygiene. There is a strong emphasis on eating healthily.
- 4.13 Pupils enjoy nourishing and well-balanced meals. They are given the opportunity to discuss healthy eating and balanced exercise in PSHE, science and physical education lessons. They enjoy the play equipment in the school playground and younger pupils are afforded the freedom to explore an eight-acre area of woodland as part of their learning, where they build shelters, cook and take a degree of risk. It is a highly popular activity, much looked forward to by the pupils. The varied activities employed on the site allow the pupils to experience the process of decision-making, whilst also developing a sense of independence and teamwork.
- 4.14 The school has established a very positive and supporting ethos where pupils readily display a sense of place, showing appropriate behaviour around school. It has very effective procedures in place for promoting good behaviour and dealing with any misdemeanours.
- 4.15 In pupil questionnaires a very small minority expressed concern about the system and fairness of rewards and sanctions. However, during interviews pupils were clear that systems were fair and they acknowledged the need for knowing where their boundaries lay. A few pupils also commented that they felt that their opinions were not acted upon. Inspectors found that the views of the pupils are carefully sought through the school council, which meets on a number of occasions each term. Minutes are taken and these are scrutinised by the senior leadership of the school, and action is taken accordingly.

- 4.16 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, which is constantly reviewed and reflects the care afforded to all members of the school community.

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

- 4.17 The contribution of welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.18 The school's safeguarding arrangements, including in the EYFS, reflect official guidance, are of a high quality and key personnel carry out their duties with thought, care and due diligence, successfully meeting all legal requirements. The most recent changes to requirements have been implemented successfully. All staff receive regular training in accordance with statutory regulations and are clear about all safeguarding arrangements. This area is a strength of the school.
- 4.19 In the EYFS leadership ensures that staff understand thoroughly the safety and welfare requirements so that children feel safe in a friendly, secure environment. Policies have been updated and are well implemented. The leadership ensures that staff receive training in child protection and health and safety procedures.
- 4.20 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk from fire with alarms being regularly tested and fire safety and evacuation notices being displayed in all key areas. The main prep school buildings have undertaken regular, full fire evacuation practices at key points each term. However, pupils from the prep school using parts of the senior school have not taken part in practised evacuations from them. The inspection has identified one issue relating to the safety of the school site that requires further work.
- 4.21 The provision for pupils who are ill is of a high quality. The school has its own designated sick room which is comfortable and has its own amenities. The provision is further enhanced by the fully staffed sanatorium in the neighbouring senior school. The school makes excellent provision for those pupils who may have SEND. All parts of the main buildings of the prep school are easily accessible and there is a lift to the first floor. Wheelchair access is available at all key entry and exit points.
- 4.22 The school's admission and attendance registers are properly maintained, and correctly stored for the previous three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors have a clear oversight of the school and ensure that it fully meets its aims. They demonstrate a love for the school and this is reflected in their strong level of involvement. Nominated governors, including for the EYFS, are effective in providing a link between the board and the school. They ensure that all board members are kept abreast of all matters relating to areas such as early years provision, educational standards, staffing and school development. A recent working party initiative had a focus on pupil attainment and tracking and the findings made a positive impact on the educational provision for the pupils. Strong governance ensures that the school accommodation is of an extremely high standard and that there are adequate resources to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum and extra-curricular programme.
- 5.3 The governing body has excellent links with the leadership and management of the prep school. Governors carry out their roles as monitors of the leadership and as a source for challenge, innovation and support. They are regular visitors to the school in many different capacities. Governors are directly involved in the observations of the teaching staff and the staff, in turn, appreciate the support and guidance that is given by such close liaison. Equally, informal visits by governors during the school day ensures that staff know governors well. Governors play a valuable part in maintaining the strong sense of community that exists at the school. Attendance at key events, such as concerts, sports days and services further strengthen these links.
- 5.4 The governing body is generally effective in discharging its responsibilities in relation to ensuring that the school meets regulatory requirements, particularly in relation to safeguarding, but some aspects of health and safety relating to fire safety and the school site need attention. The full governing body carries out an extensive annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures, although the brevity of mention in the minutes does not reflect this high level of oversight.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.6 School leaders have a positive impact on the high levels of pupils' academic achievement and in their excellent personal development. Mutual respect and appreciation are at the core of success in this area of school life. The leadership and management of the school ensures that the school's aims are fully met. They are effective in ensuring that all required policies relating to the prep school are in place and are fully implemented, including those relating to pupil safeguarding. However, insufficient rigour is shown to whole school procedures, particularly in the area of welfare, health and safety. Safeguarding is given extremely high prominence by all members of the prep school community and this reflects the high levels of concern for the well-being of every pupil.

- 5.7 In the EYFS regular, well organised staff meetings ensure that priorities are clarified and areas for improvement are identified. The EYFS development plan is detailed and appropriate. Staff value the opportunities to discuss their professional development with management and ideas are shared following attendance at courses. Arrangements for the monitoring of the work in the setting requires further strengthening. Supervision is carried out carefully including discussing issues in the supportive atmosphere of staff meetings.
- 5.8 School leaders and managers are successful in implementing the process of self-evaluation and readily seek input from both within and outside the prep school team. The views of, and input from, governors, parents, staff and senior school leaders are valued and play an important role in ensuring that the school continues to build on its strong foundations. Critical self-evaluation contributes to forward planning most effectively.
- 5.9 The school has a detailed school development plan which provides clear educational direction and staff members speak enthusiastically about the positive part they all can play in constantly looking to improve all aspects of school life. Change and development are welcomed and encouraged; mediocrity and stagnation are challenged at every level of school leadership. New initiatives are embraced by the staff and pupils and school leaders evaluate their success carefully and are always keen to improve. Recent developments in areas such as computing, mathematics and timetable restructuring have greatly improved the outcomes for all the pupils.
- 5.10 The school is successful in recruiting and retaining suitable staff. All required checks are carried out and recorded, covering staff, governors and volunteers. Staff are well-qualified for the roles that they undertake and receive appropriate training in safeguarding, welfare and health and safety. An extensive range of professional development opportunities ensures that they are kept up to date with current educational practice as well as being able to develop their personal career interests. An excellent appraisal and review system, coupled with a high-quality peer observation programme, ensures that all staff have ample formal opportunity to share and learn from the excellent practice that exists within the school.
- 5.11 The school maintains excellent links with parents who are highly appreciative of all the adults in the school and what is done for their children. The pre-inspection parents' questionnaire revealed high levels of satisfaction with the way the school fulfils its aim to bring out the best of every child in all areas of school life. In the EYFS, parents are pleased with all that the school offers. The setting maintains a close partnership with parents, and external agencies give valued support when needed.
- 5.12 Parents, including in the EYFS, value the quality and ease of the numerous methods of communication between them and the school. For example, parents of younger children have daily opportunities to meet teachers, whilst those with older pupils have teachers' email addresses for ease of communication.
- 5.13 Parents receive clear information about their child's work and progress through parents' evenings and written reports. In addition to receiving two detailed reports a year, parents of older pupils receive regular effort grades which keep them informed of how well their children are progressing. The school provides all required information for the parents of current and prospective pupils.
- 5.14 Parents are able to participate as fully as possible in school life. There is a flourishing parents' association which organises events to raise funds and promote

social interaction. Parental involvement in the life of the school also benefits the pupils directly through activities such as hearing children read, helping in sessions in the outdoor woodland learning environment, after school activities and trips.

- 5.15 Parents are encouraged to talk to the school if a problem arises and there is a clear policy on handling complaints. The school investigates concerns in line with published procedures should the need arise.

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