



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

TEESSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Teesside High School

Full Name of School	Teesside High School
DfE Number	808/6001
Registered Charity Number	527386
Address	Teesside High School The Avenue Eaglescliffe Stockton-on-Tees Cleveland TS16 9AT
Telephone Number	01642 782095
Fax Number	01642 791207
Email Address	info@teessidehigh.co.uk
Head Teacher	Ms Deborah Duncan
Chair of Governors	Mr Christopher Neave
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	368
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (140 boys; 228 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 25 5-11: 99 11-18: 244
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Carolyn Williams
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	01 Oct to 04 Oct 2013

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 2007.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Jean Marsland	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Deborah Parkman	Team Inspector (Deputy Head of Junior School, HMC school)
Mr Andrew Selkirk	Team Inspector (Second Deputy Head - Academic Director), Society of Heads school)
Mr Gary Wright	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mrs Ann Pelech	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Teesside High School is a non-denominational day school for boys and girls aged 3 to 18, set in around 20 acres of wooded grounds on the banks of the River Tees, five miles southwest of Middlesbrough. Originally Cleveland School, the school has been on this site since 1945, merging in 1970 with Queen Victoria High School to form Teesside High School for Girls. In 2005, boys were admitted to the Preparatory School and in 2008, since the previous inspection, to the Senior School and the sixth form. The school uses the 'Diamond Model' of education: girls and boys are taught together up to Year 4, separately for most subjects from Year 5 to Year 11, and together in the sixth form. A new sixth-form centre is under construction, with completion due in January 2014. Since the previous inspection a new head teacher and a new director of the Preparatory School have been appointed, respectively in January 2012 and January 2013. The school is a registered charity and a limited company. A board of governors oversees the work of the school.
- 1.2 The school's over-arching aim is to support and develop each individual child in its care through providing a combination of rigorous academic challenge and nurturing support so that every boy and girl moves on to the next stage of their education as self-confident, inquiring, creative, tolerant, independent thinkers.
- 1.3 There are 368 pupils on roll, 228 girls and 140 boys, with boys in all year groups. One hundred and twenty-four pupils are in the Preparatory School for pupils aged 3 to 11, of whom 73 are girls and 51 boys. Of those, 25 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) for pupils aged three to five, nine of whom attend part-time. One hundred and ninety-two pupils aged 11 to 16 are in Senior School, 120 girls and 72 boys. Fifty-two pupils are in the sixth form, 35 girls and 17 boys. Pupils are mainly from professional and farming backgrounds; most are white British, the rest being from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Pupils come from the Teesside conurbation, from south Durham and North Yorkshire.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the Preparatory School and Senior School is above the national average overall, with a fairly wide spread of abilities and with variations between cohorts. In the sixth form, the ability profile is slightly above the national average overall, again with a fairly wide spread of abilities and variations between cohorts. The school has identified 84 pupils as having a special educational need or disability (SEND), 20 of whom receive specialist learning support. Twenty-seven pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), three of whom require additional support. Two pupils have statements of special educational need.
- 1.5 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 successfully achieves its aims. The pupils' achievement in their work is good, and in their activities excellent. In the EYFS, children's achievement is excellent. All pupils, throughout the school, make at least good progress, including those with SEND, EAL and those who are able, gifted and talented, because of the good support they receive. In the EYFS, as a result of the high-quality support they receive, the children make excellent progress. The pupils' achievements are well supported by their excellent attitudes to learning, by the excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision and by the good teaching they receive, characterised by a high level of support for each pupil. In line with the recommendation of the previous report, marking and assessment have improved. Recent initiatives to improve teaching and learning are becoming embedded. However, in those lessons where this is not the case, some pupils' learning and achievement is not fully supported.
- 2.2 At all stages, the pupils' personal development is excellent. Their spiritual and social development is excellent. They show a high degree of moral awareness and a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Their social development is characterised by their extremely high levels of mutual respect and support for one another. They willingly take on positions of responsibility and are keen to play their part in the life of the school and in the wider community. The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent and offer highly effective support and care to pupils of all ages. Throughout the school, the arrangements for pupils' welfare are excellent. Pupils' health and safety has a high priority in day to day practice, but the arrangements for the gas supply in laboratories do not meet current best practice guidelines.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent for all parts of the school. The governors are highly committed to the school and ambitious for its future success. They are aware of their responsibilities to monitor regulatory matters and have arrangements in place to do so. The quality of leadership and management throughout the school is excellent and includes strong links with parents, who express highly positive views about the school and its work. Leaders and managers at all levels work closely together to continually improve all that the school offers and to ensure high-quality support for pupils. Since the previous inspection improvements have been made in the curricular experience offered to pupils, in the quality of the pupils' personal development, in the contribution of welfare, health and safety and in the effectiveness of governance and leadership and management.

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. Ensure that the recently introduced initiatives to improve teaching and learning become established practice for all teachers.
2. Install gas isolating valves for emergency shut off in each laboratory, in accordance with the latest guidance.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. In the EYFS, children show excellent levels of achievement. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils show good levels of achievement in their work and excellent achievement in their activities. All pupils, including the youngest, are articulate and express themselves confidently and clearly. They are logical and independent thinkers. They listen effectively and read and write fluently. They have good mathematical skills which they apply confidently to their learning. Their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well-developed and used effectively. In the EYFS, Nursery children are beginning to count with confidence and Reception children enjoy the challenges of building number sentences and are starting to use phonics to help them in their reading and in writing simple sentences. At all stages, including in the EYFS, pupils' physical skills are good and they show high levels of imagination and creativity. Numerous pupils achieve at a high level across a wide spectrum of activities and sports, including representation at county and national level. Pupils also achieve success in a wide range of local and national competitions, in Young Enterprise, in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE), and in external music and speech and drama examinations. The achievements of pupils who have SEND, EAL and those who are able, gifted and talented are equally strong, reflecting the support that they receive throughout the school. When they leave school all pupils go on to further or higher education, with a large majority going to their first-choice university.
- 3.3 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Over this period, girls' performance at GCSE was above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and in 2010, their results were also similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. The small number of boys in these year groups makes it difficult to make firm comparisons with national data. Over the same three-year period, results at A level have been similar to the national average for maintained schools, and in 2010 were above the national average for maintained schools. Results in 2010 and 2012 have also been similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Boys' results at A level in 2010 were well above the national average for boys in maintained schools.
- 3.4 Pupils make good progress overall. Of those pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all said they are making good progress in their work. This is confirmed by work seen during the inspection. In the EYFS, children show excellent progress compared to their starting points and, by the end of Reception, many children exceed the expected levels of learning development. Pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 make good progress, as seen in their written work and in lessons. From Year 7 to Year 11, the level of attainment at GCSE indicates that all pupils are making good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The level of attainment at A level indicates that pupils make progress that is appropriate in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Evidence seen during the inspection, including discussion, indicates that sixth formers are making good progress overall. Throughout the school, inspection and other evidence indicates that pupils with SEND, EAL and the able, gifted and talented make good progress as a result of the good support they receive.

3.5 Pupils throughout the school, including in the EYFS, are excellent learners. They settle to work quickly, apply themselves well and enjoy their learning. They show good organisational skills, with many taking the initiative for their own learning. They behave well, are highly supportive of each other and work effectively in teams. Self-motivation is evident. Boys and girls of all abilities demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and they enjoy learning and applying new skills.

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 curriculum is highly effective in its coverage of different areas of learning, an improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum is very well planned, suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, including for those with SEND and EAL, and those who are able, gifted and talented. In this, it fully supports the aims of the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents said that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and experiences.

3.8 In the EYFS, the highly effective use of the indoor and outdoor areas, including the woodland learning environment, inspires creativity and problem solving and successfully promotes children's thinking and learning skills, enabling them to learn to manage risks and learn from their mistakes. A range of adult-led and child-initiated tasks enables children to develop very well as independent learners who can make decisions and organise themselves, and ensures they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

3.9 Pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 are offered a wide range of subjects, further enhanced by the well-planned integrated studies programme and by the many opportunities for learning offered by the woodland learning environment. In a number of subjects, including music and French, the use of specialist teaching enhances pupils' learning. Pupils in the Senior School benefit from a broad curriculum, including a wide range of choices at GCSE and A level. Pupils benefit from individualised programmes of study, including the provision of additional subjects outside normal lesson times, and from the wide range of subject clinics offering individual support to help pupils consolidate their learning. Throughout the school, provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is exemplary. Library provision is good and effectively supports pupils' learning. The introduction of tablets has provided excellent opportunities for pupils to further develop their ICT skills. Provision for careers education is strong. Pupils are helped to identify their strengths and interests, to learn about the world of work and to choose appropriate courses for when they leave the sixth form.

3.10 For pupils in Year 5 to Year 11, the learning needs of boys and girls are effectively catered for by the separate teaching provided. Throughout the school, the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL are identified and made known to staff; good provision is made to support them within the curriculum. Where appropriate, support is provided via additional teaching and via the functional skills programme. Pupils who are able, gifted and talented are identified and strong provision made; for example, the option of subjects such as GCSE Ancient Greek and initiatives such as the Friday-evening lecture series where pupils can explore ideas in depth.

3.11 Throughout the school an excellent range of extra-curricular activities is offered which fully supports the pupils' intellectual, aesthetic and physical development.

Responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents and a very large majority of pupils said that pupils can join in a good range of activities, which was confirmed by the published programme of activities and in discussions with pupils. Throughout the school, a wide range of trips is offered, including residential trips. For older pupils, trips further afield, for example to Borneo and Thailand, offer excellent opportunities for them to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils also have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities such as competitions and local events. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in activities such as the DofE and in Young Enterprise. The school has strong links with the community and welcomes many visitors to engage with the pupils on a wide range of matters. Links with local groups are strong and pupils are actively involved in the local community, for example in providing a party for local pensioners and in supporting a range of local charities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.12 The contribution of teaching is good.

3.13 Teaching throughout the school is successful in promoting pupils' learning and progress and in supporting the school's aims. Of those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all said their teachers help them to learn and a large majority said they are encouraged to think for themselves and work independently. At all stages, there are numerous examples of excellent teaching. Throughout the school, strengths of the teaching are the excellent quality of relationships between pupils and teachers and the extra time that teachers give to help pupils outside lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teaching is largely successful in fostering pupils' independence and interest, with most teaching employing a wide range of methods. In the sixth form in particular, emphasis is placed on developing critical thinking and independent research skills. Where boys and girls in Year 5 to Year 11 are taught separately, teaching methods are successfully adapted to suit differing learning styles.

3.14 In the EYFS, the children's learning needs are extremely well met. The staff's thorough understanding of the EYFS requirements ensures they are confident in helping children to learn and are successful in engaging and motivating the children. Throughout the rest of the school, the best teaching demonstrates high expectations and uses detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and abilities in planning. It provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and to consolidate their understanding. The pace of lessons is brisk and time is managed well. Effective questioning extends and challenges pupils' understanding. This excellent teaching is in fully in line with recent initiatives introduced across the school to improve the quality of teaching. In the small number of less successful lessons, the pace is undemanding, learning is often too teacher-directed, and opportunities for pupils to develop higher-order thinking skills and to support independent learning are more limited so that, in those lessons, pupils are not making the progress they could.

3.15 In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, and in line with recently introduced initiatives, good progress has been made in the quality of marking. The best marking gives detailed and constructive comments, successfully enabling pupils to understand what they have done well and how they can further improve. However, some inconsistency in the quality of marking remains within and across subjects: in those cases, pupils are not clear what they need to do to improve. Assessment is largely of a high quality and effectively used to enable pupils' specific needs to be met. In the EYFS, excellent continual assessments of

children's progress are used to plan the next steps in their learning. With older pupils, self-assessment is beginning to be used to good effect to enable them to develop a greater understanding of how they can improve their work and take more responsibility for their learning. Throughout the school, teaching makes good use of learning resources. Interactive technology is used well by teachers to access useful information and to engage pupils in their learning. Teaching makes good use of the library to support pupils' learning through promoting research skills and individual study.

- 3.16 Throughout the school, teaching is effective for pupils with SEND and ensures that they make good progress. Teaching successfully makes the provision set out for those pupils who have statements of special educational need. Pupils who have EAL and require help with their English receive effective teaching which supports their learning well and enables them to make good progress. Much of the teaching is highly successful in meeting the needs of the more able. In those lessons, teachers plan carefully to ensure that the more able pupils are sufficiently stretched and challenged.

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 Throughout the school, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent and fully supports the school's aims, an improvement since the previous inspection.
- 4.3 The quality of the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. At all ages, pupils show high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. At all stages, they are emotionally mature for their age and know that they are valued as individuals. They take full advantage of the opportunities offered to reflect on the non-material aspects of life, as demonstrated in their considered responses to questions in lessons and assemblies, and they appreciate having a room set aside where they can quietly reflect and pray. Children in the EYFS showed a sense of wonder as they explored the woodland learning environment and as they searched the school grounds looking for a "lost tiger cub".
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent throughout the school. At all ages, they behave well and have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, gaining understanding of ethical matters from discussions in lessons and from the school's system of rewards and sanctions, with the result that they have high levels of respect for the norms of good conduct. They are polite and courteous to all members of the school community. They understand the need to treat others well. They recognise bullying of any kind is wrong and are clear what action to take if any bullying occurs. Their appreciation of moral and ethical matters is excellent. For example, pupils in the Preparatory School demonstrated good awareness of the moral debate surrounding the importance of the measles vaccine and, on a trip to Normandy, they considered the question whether it is right to fight. Pupils understand the importance of their role as global citizens and appreciate that as individuals they can make a difference, as shown by their support for the school in gaining eco-school status.
- 4.5 Throughout the school, the pupils' social development is excellent. Relationships between pupils of all ages show an extremely high level of mutual support. In the EYFS, even the youngest children happily share resources and take turns. They are friendly, interact well, demonstrate a willingness to keep themselves and others safe and celebrate each other's successes. At all stages, pupils have a strong social conscience and are highly aware and considerate of the needs of others as shown by their commitment, including by children in the EYFS, to raising money to support those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils of all ages take on positions of responsibility with enthusiasm and commitment. Of the pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that they do not have the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibility and develop leadership skills; for example, as class representatives on the Preparatory School council, in Senior School in roles such as sports captains, as representatives to student voice and in mentoring younger pupils. As they progress through the school, pupils develop an excellent understanding of social, political and economic awareness from their lessons and from topics covered in the PSHE programme.

- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. At all ages, including in the EYFS, they are keen to learn about other cultures and traditions through, for example, their involvement in the school's international day and, in the Preparatory School, through working towards gaining the International Schools Award. Pupils of all ages gain an appreciation of their own and other cultures through their participation in musical and artistic activities and events such as the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, as well as through their study of art and literature. Pupils develop a good understanding of different faiths, traditions and cultures, including the Western tradition, via assemblies and lessons and from fellow pupils. Their respect for other faiths and cultures is clear and they have highly positive relationships with those from families different from their own.
- 4.7 Children in the EYFS are well prepared for the transition to Year 1. At the end of their time at the school, pupils leave with a high level of personal development and very well prepared to make positive contributions to society as a whole.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Throughout the school, pastoral support and guidance for pupils are excellent and fully support the school's aims. Staff know the pupils extremely well and excellent communication between staff ensures that any concerns are speedily identified. Should they have any concerns, pupils are confident they have someone they can talk with. The atmosphere throughout the school is purposeful yet relaxed, friendly and caring. In the EYFS, provision for children's well-being is excellent and children are extremely well cared for. Staff in the EYFS work together highly effectively to ensure a well-run, calm, orderly routine which creates a warm, welcoming atmosphere where children are spoken to positively and in which children feel safe and secure. Relationships between pupils and staff, including in the EYFS, are excellent and show an extremely high level of mutual support and respect between all members of the school community.
- 4.10 The benefits of healthy living and eating are clearly espoused. Pupils are provided with an excellent variety and quantity of good food, with hot, cold and healthy options available. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to take exercise both within the curriculum and in activities. In the EYFS, children are taught how to keep themselves safe and staff actively encourage them to choose healthy snacks and meals, be physically active and follow good hygiene routines. In all sections, the school is very successful in promoting good behaviour and children of all ages behave well. A small minority of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that teachers aren't always fair in giving sanctions. Inspection evidence indicates that the school expects high standards of behaviour and imposes appropriate sanctions in the case of any lapses. The school has highly effective arrangements in place to guard against harassment and bullying. Pupils spoken with are confident that, should any bullying occur, the school would respond quickly and effectively.
- 4.11 The school offers pupils many opportunities to give their views; for example through the Preparatory School council and Senior School's student voice. In their pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that the school does not ask for their opinions. Pupils spoken with could readily give examples of how the school had responded to their ideas; for example sixth formers have been consulted about facilities in their new building, pupils have been consulted on improvements to the

dining room and children in the EYFS are regularly involved in designing their area to fit in with their current topic. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.13 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare and their health and safety are meticulously undertaken. Well thought-through procedures successfully promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety. Of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority said that the school keeps their child safe. This is confirmed by inspection scrutiny of the welfare, health and safety arrangements and practice.
- 4.14 The arrangements to safeguard children are well understood by staff in all parts of the school and are carefully carried out. All required pre-appointment checks on staff are undertaken with great care and recorded accurately. In the past this has not always been the case and the school has made strenuous efforts to remedy shortcomings wherever possible. Throughout the school, child protection arrangements are thorough and well known to staff. All staff receive the required child protection training at the level appropriate to their roles and at the required time intervals. The child protection policy has been updated and now contains the most recent regulatory requirements.
- 4.15 Throughout the school, measures taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards are thorough. All staff receive training in fire awareness. Fire drills are carried out regularly: any necessary improvements are speedily implemented. The checking and servicing of all health and safety equipment is carried out and recorded meticulously. The arrangements for risk assessing activities are excellent. At present, the shut off for the gas supply to the laboratories is centralised and there is not a gas isolating valve in each laboratory. Very good provision is made for pupils of all ages who are ill, injured or who have SEND. A detailed and clear first aid policy is reflected in practice. First aid records are carefully kept. A high number of staff are trained in first aid including at the higher level and, for the EYFS, in paediatric first aid. The admission and attendance registers are carefully 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 excellent.
- 5.2 Governance provides excellent oversight of all parts of the school, an improvement since the previous inspection. Governors are highly committed to, and highly ambitious for, the continued success of the school and its pupils. They have excellent insight into all sections of the school, including the EYFS, which ensures that they are highly successful in providing support, challenge and stimulus for growth, and in helping the school to achieve its aims. They have worked closely with staff to draw up a detailed, highly-focused strategic plan; this is regularly evaluated to ensure that planned actions are implemented. The governance committees are highly effective in discharging their responsibilities for monitoring educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources.
- 5.3 Governors bring to their role a wide range of experience and expertise and undertake training to further support their roles. Biennially, they carry out an audit to ensure that the range of skills within the governing body is sufficient to fully support the school. Governors are a strong support for the head, regularly appraising her work both formally and informally. They are frequent visitors to the school. They observe lessons and day-to-day life in all parts of the school, including in the EYFS, talk with staff, pupils and parents, and, among other things, take part in productions and accompany trips.
- 5.4 Governors take seriously their responsibility for meeting statutory requirements, including undertaking an annual review of the effectiveness of the safeguarding and child protection arrangements. In the past, there were instances where the required staff pre-appointment checks were not always carried out with due care. In response, governors have instigated regular monitoring to ensure that all checks are now carried out correctly. Scrutiny of evidence prior to the inspection showed that, in a few cases, monitoring had not been sufficiently rigorous in ensuring that policies contained the most recent regulatory requirements. By the end of the inspection the identified shortcomings had been rectified so that all now comply with requirements.

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

- 5.5 Throughout the school the quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 This high-quality of leadership and management, including in the EYFS, is an improvement since the last inspection; it is evidenced by the good quality of the pupils' achievements and progress and by their excellent personal development. Members of the senior leadership team (SLT), almost all of whom have been appointed within the last two years, are united in their vision for the school. Over the last 18 months they have worked closely together to provide extremely clear educational direction for all parts of the school. Working closely with governors and staff, and in consultation with pupils and parents, they have undertaken a rigorous programme of self-evaluation for all sections of the school, accurately and successfully identifying and prioritising areas for improvement, and setting ambitious

and challenging targets. Throughout this process, they have ensured that staff, pupils and parents have been well supported.

- 5.7 As a result of this work, a great deal of progress has been made in the quality of many areas of the school's work, in particular in the quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision, in the quality of the pupils' personal development, in welfare, health and safety, in governance and in leadership and management. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection report, much work has been done to improve the quality of marking and assessment so that it now better supports the pupils' learning and achievement. The members of the SLT are fully aware that the progress in these areas now needs to be consolidated so that all that the school offers is of the highest standards and so that there is a firm base on which to develop the school further. At all levels of responsibility, leadership and management are highly effective in the discharging of their delegated responsibilities, including in the implementation of policies.
- 5.8 The members of the SLT work closely with and are very well supported by the highly effective team of middle managers who share their vision for the continuing development of the school. Communication between leaders and managers at all levels, and in all parts of the school, is excellent and ensures that any concerns are speedily identified and responded to. Management at all levels is highly successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high-quality staff. A thorough induction programme ensures that new staff, in all parts of the school, are very well prepared for their roles. The appraisal system is much appreciated by staff who welcome the opportunity it offers to reflect on their work and to identify areas for further development and training. In the EYFS, staff have the regular opportunities to raise any concerns and discuss solutions. All staff receive appropriate training for their roles in meeting the needs of pupils in safeguarding and in welfare, health and safety.
- 5.9 Links with parents are excellent. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show the vast majority of parents strongly support all aspects of the work of the school. At all stages, the school welcomes parents' involvement and many opportunities exist for them to be actively involved in school life. Throughout the school, parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and a variety of information evenings and workshops are arranged to facilitate this, outlining what is taught, how it is taught and how parents can help at home. Parents are invited to a rich selection of events throughout the year, including to assemblies and concerts. A strong and active parents' association organises a wide programme of social events including firework parties and the annual ball.
- 5.10 The school takes care to seek the views of parents of children of all ages and values their thoughts and opinions. The school recently undertook a questionnaire to discover what parents liked about the school and what they would like to see changed. A parents' forum meets termly to hear parents' views and parents have ready access to staff, including via email, should they wish to raise any concerns. In addition, the school has involved parents in the drawing up of policies and in the interviews for senior staff.
- 5.11 Current and prospective parents are provided with all the required information. The prospectus, and accompanying documentation, gives information relevant to parental needs. In each part of the school, well thought through handbooks help parents to know day-to-day functions and routines. Equally helpful handbooks support parents as pupils make choices of courses at GCSE and A level. Further

information about the school is available on the school website. The half-termly newsletter and the school magazine keep parents well informed about events and activities involving their children, as does the school's website which is kept up to date with reports of events and forthcoming arrangements. Parents can discuss their child's progress and achievements at both formal and informal meetings. Excellent, detailed and helpful reports are sent home twice a year. These give parents a clear indication of their child's progress, achievements and future targets. In the EYFS, staff meet formally with parents each term to report on their child's needs, progress and achievements, and frequently, informally, in between. The school has an appropriate procedure for dealing with parental complaints. Any complaints are handled in line with this procedure.

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