



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

RANBY HOUSE SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Ranby House School

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------|
| Full Name of School | Ranby House School | | |
| DfE Number | 891/6010 | | |
| Registered Charity Number | 1103326 | | |
| Address | Ranby House School Ranby Retford Nottinghamshire DN22 8HX | | |
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| Email Address | office@ranbyhouseschool.co.uk | | |
| Headmaster | Mr David Sibson | | |
| Proprietor | Woodard Schools (Nottinghamshire) Ltd | | |
| Custos | Mr Colin Anderson | | |
| Age Range | 3 to 13 | | |
| Total Number of Pupils | 226 | | |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (118 boys; 108 girls) | | |
| Numbers by Age | 3-5 (EYFS): | 27 | 5-11: 128 |
| | 11-13 | 71 | |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: | 202 | Capacity for flexi-boarding: 24 |
| Number of Boarders | Total: | 24 | |
| | Full: | 24 | Weekly: 0 |
| Head of EYFS Setting | Mrs Pat Connor | | |
| EYFS Gender | Mixed | | |
| Inspection dates | 11 Oct 2011 to 12 Oct 2011 | | |
| | 9 Nov 2011 to 11 Nov 2011 | | |

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. The inspection consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2005.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010*. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

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

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

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

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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

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

The inspection of boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Ofsted report refers to an inspection in February 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding school.

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

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features

- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL | 1 |
| 2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL | 2 |
| (a) Main findings | 2 |
| (b) Action points | 3 |
| (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements | 3 |
| (ii) Recommendations for further improvement | 3 |
| 3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS | 4 |
| (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills | 4 |
| (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) | 5 |
| (c) The contribution of teaching | 6 |
| 4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT | 7 |
| (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils | 7 |
| (b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety | 8 |
| (c) The quality of boarding education | 8 |
| 5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 10 |
| (a) The quality of governance | 10 |
| (b) The quality of leadership and management | 10 |
| (c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians | 11 |
| 6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE | 13 |
| (a) The overall effectiveness of the early years provision – how well the school meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 13 |
| (b) The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 13 |
| (c) The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 13 |
| (d) Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 14 |
| INSPECTION EVIDENCE | 15 |

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Ranby House began as the junior school to Worksop College within the college grounds. It moved to its current site in 1948 on the purchase of a Georgian house in a rural setting between Retford and Worksop, to which a range of specialist teaching accommodation has been added. Ranby House, like Worksop College, is part of the Woodard Schools group, the two schools comprising Woodard Schools (Nottinghamshire) Ltd. The schools have the same governing body and chairman (the custos), and each school has a vice chair. In January 2011, it was announced that the two schools would be seen as one, Ranby House remaining an autonomous preparatory school with its own headmaster, and the headmaster of Worksop College being the executive head of the three to eighteen school. Three-quarters of the pupils continue to Worksop College. Pupils are also prepared for entry to other independent schools at the age of thirteen. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), comprising Nursery and Reception classes, is an integral part of the Pre-Prep department, which was opened in 1989 and also includes Years 1 and 2. The Prep School comprises Years 3 to 8.
- 1.2 Ranby House is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of three to thirteen. The phasing out of boarding and the discontinuation of lessons on Saturdays from September 2012 have recently been announced. Since the previous inspection, the school has undertaken a range of developments, including the refurbishment of the chapel.
- 1.3 The status as a Woodard school establishes the foundation of aims in the context of Christian values. The school seeks to develop the confidence and capability of the whole child, enabling pupils to be well equipped for the challenges of the wider community. It aims to provide a stimulating and wide-ranging curriculum which facilitates pupils' enjoyment of learning and achievement of potential as self-disciplined and inquiring learners who make informed choices and communicate effectively within a safe, caring and healthy environment. It sets out to enable pupils to build positive relationships and make a positive contribution to the community.
- 1.4 Entry to the school is largely non-selective. In addition to admission to the Pre-Prep and in Year 3, pupils join the school in Year 7, specifically with a view to gaining entry to Worksop College. A number of pupils leave at the end of Year 6 to go to independent and maintained senior schools. Results in standardised tests in verbal and non-verbal reasoning indicate that the ability profile of the school is slightly above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented.
- 1.5 At the time of inspection there were 226 pupils on roll, including 61 in the Pre-Prep, with almost equal numbers of boys and girls. Of the 27 children in the EYFS, the 16 in the Nursery attend part-time. Pupils are mainly of white British origin and come from a wide range of backgrounds. There are no pupils who have English as an additional language or a statement of special educational needs. Of the 41 pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 29 receive specialist learning support from the school.
- 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 Pupils' achievement is excellent. They are well educated, in accordance with the school's aims. Their attainment is well above expectations; they make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils' attitudes are outstanding. Curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent. Syllabuses and policies are consistent with the aims of the school, providing well for the development of values, confidence, and breadth of understanding and experience. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. Teaching is good; it supports the aims of the school in developing confident and well-equipped individuals with a sense of enquiry and an enjoyment of learning, and is effective in promoting progress. The impact of recent innovations to strengthen teaching is not yet consistent throughout. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed.
- 2.2 Personal development is excellent. At all ages pupils flourish in the school's supportive atmosphere. Contribution to chapel activities strengthens their spiritual development. They have keen moral and social awareness, and willingly take on responsibility. Their cultural understanding benefits from the emphasis placed on music, art and drama. Welfare, health and safety are excellent. Relationships in the school are strong. Effective procedures promote good behaviour, safeguard the pupils, guard against hazards and cater for pupils who are ill or injured. Pupils' boarding experience is excellent, contributing strongly to their education and welfare, and equipping them well for the challenges of the wider community. It enables them to build positive relationships, enjoy a wide range of pursuits and make a positive contribution to the community.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent. A single governing body for both schools has effective oversight and a thorough understanding of the school. Governors have breadth of experience and benefit from extensive induction and training. Excellent leadership and management are reflected in the outstanding teamwork between all staff and pupils. At all levels, management is effective in analysing the school's needs, setting and planning priorities, and putting decisions into practice. A systematic process of staff appraisal effectively identifies areas for development. Thorough arrangements are in place for safe recruitment. The quality of links with parents is outstanding. Parents are kept fully informed. They are able to be closely involved in school life and in the work and progress of their children. Consultation meetings and reports provide further useful information. The school handles parental concerns with due care.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school met 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. Develop further the recent initiatives in teaching and learning to ensure consistency in the new approaches in teaching throughout the curriculum.
 2. In the EYFS, improve planning for children to practise their information and communication technology (ICT) skills more regularly.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils are well educated, in accordance with the school's aims, and display high levels of confidence and well-rounded individuality. This is the result of a stimulating curriculum that provides considerable depth and breadth of experience and learning, and of an ethos that promotes community, relationships and responsibility. Pupils achieve high levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Levels of general knowledge are good and pupils are happy to share their opinions with others. Literacy skills develop strongly, enabling pupils to read well and write fluently in a range of styles, as seen in English work in several year groups. Pupils display considerable powers of reasoning, independent thinking and creativity. Achievement in mathematics, some of which is outstanding, covers a wide range. Pupils' achievement in sport is a strength, with considerable success in a wide variety of games and excellent levels of participation. Through the enrichment programme, pupils who are less interested in sport achieve well in a broad range of activities. Information and communication technology skills develop well. Pupils put them to very good use throughout the curriculum.
- 3.2 Pupils enjoy significant success in an extensive array of pursuits due to the considerable breadth of the curriculum and choice of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils achieve great success in art exhibitions, and in music, drama and poetry festivals and competitions. Accomplishment in chess is a particular strength; a high proportion of the pupils take part in internal tournaments and progress well in national competitions.
- 3.3 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed national norm but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. The school has an excellent record for pupils winning scholarships and entry both to Worksop College and elsewhere. In at least the last ten years all pupils have gained entry to the school of their first choice. Pupils regularly gain places in national choirs and orchestras, and selection to local and regional sports teams. Pupils have an excellent record of attainment in graded music examinations, a high proportion gaining distinctions.
- 3.4 At the previous inspection the school was recommended to raise levels of attainment. New approaches to assessment to identify gaps in pupils' understanding and to plan the next steps in learning, and new strategies to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils are increasingly well used. Combined with an excellent new system for tracking and profiling pupils' progress, enabling teachers to view each pupil's record and plan accordingly, these measures have ensured that the recommendations have been met.
- 3.5 Data from national standardised tests shows that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability, developing a wide range of skills and understanding. They undertake extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm, achieving considerable personal development and success. Pupils' attitudes are outstanding; both in and out of class they are courteous, confident and co-operative. They are highly motivated and show great care and concern for one another. Their sense of independence and engagement is excellent and strongly reflects the aims and ethos of the school.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent. The curriculum is highly effective in its coverage. Syllabuses and policies are consistent with the school's aims, providing well for the development of values, confidence, and breadth of understanding and experience. This is a particularly strong feature of the provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE). The curriculum strongly encourages pupils to think independently and ensures that they benefit from the process of learning across a broad range of topics. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities well and provides strong support for those who have SEND. Assessment of each pupil on joining the school provides excellent initial data, linking well to the learning support department's system of monitoring, its individual support lessons and the recently introduced scheme of tracking and profiling.
- 3.7 Curriculum planning is strong and reflects the aims of the school. The careful integration of ICT throughout the curriculum, and well-planned cross-curricular links, are strong features of the provision. The post Common Entrance examination programme in Year 8 is a strength, and enables pupils to participate in outward-bound activities and courses designed to prepare them for the future. The school has introduced plans to develop a seamless syllabus for pupils aged from 11 to 18; continuity is already promoted well through staff who also teach at Worksop College and through close liaison between departments in both schools, notably for science, games and Latin.
- 3.8 Pupils speak enthusiastically about the particularly good range of extra-curricular activities. Vibrant provision for drama and music ensures excellent standards of performance and levels of participation. Provision for art also makes an outstanding contribution throughout the school, within and beyond the curriculum. The extra-curricular programme as a whole is excellent, and is dynamically led. It includes many highly popular and successful clubs and a challenging programme of sports fixtures, facilitating widespread participation. Educational visits are a strong feature of the curriculum, as is the residential exchange trip to France.
- 3.9 The extra-curricular programme provides strong links with the local and wider community, as do the visits of outside speakers, the help provided by parents and the recruitment of external experts to offer training. Pupils benefit further from links with the community in providing entertainment for a local retired residents' tea and through the participation of pupils from local primary schools in the activities programme. Events such as the harvest distribution, links with local churches and the 'Woodard Pilgrimage', in which pupils visit Lincoln Cathedral, strengthen pupils' involvement.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.10 The contribution of teaching is good, maintaining the standards noted at the previous inspection. Teaching supports the aims of the school well in developing confident and well-equipped pupils who show a sense of enquiry and an enjoyment of learning. The previous inspection identified a concern relating to the lengthy changeover time between lessons. This has now been successfully resolved. Similarly, a recommendation to improve the quality of marking and assessment has been met, notably through the recent focus on new teaching and learning initiatives. In around 80 per cent of the lessons observed, teaching was at least good and much was excellent. In the best lessons, teaching was characterised by enthusiasm, in-depth subject knowledge and a high quality rapport with pupils. In the few lessons judged to be satisfactory, teaching engaged pupils less well. Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and benefits from a clear understanding of their aptitudes and personalities, a strength that ensures excellent behaviour and learning.
- 3.11 The recent introduction of the excellent system for the tracking and profiling of pupils' achievement, effort, attendance and discipline has strengthened the facility for teaching to be tailored to pupils' individual needs. This approach is further reinforced by the focused support provided by the learning support department. However, the impact of recent innovations to strengthen teaching is not yet consistently evident throughout. A further new initiative to identify and meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils more effectively is still in its infancy and is yet to have a significant effect.
- 3.12 Planning is a strength; lessons are structured well and time management is good. Teaching employs a wide range of successful approaches, ranging from more traditional methods in classics to the creative use of a toy in the Pre-Prep to signal whose turn it is to speak, and the effective mirroring technique to learn choreography in drama. Teaching benefits strongly from outstanding subject knowledge throughout the curriculum. It is excellently supported by an extensive range of well-used resources and attractive, stimulating displays in classrooms and corridors. The enthusiasm in teaching throughout the school succeeds in evoking a similar reaction from the pupils. Excellent questioning techniques encourage pupils to think for themselves and to offer intelligent answers. Pupils' responses to questions are consistently met with praise or further guidance. The successful encouragement of independent thought in practical work in science and the filming of performance tasks in music lessons enabled pupils to review and evaluate their work. Marking is up-to-date and supportive. It is beginning to show the impact of the recently introduced initiatives in its use of formative assessment and target setting. In discussions with pupils, however, it was clear that some have not yet gained a full understanding of how the setting of personal targets for improvement can help them to advance their learning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils' personal development is excellent and has been strengthened since the previous inspection. It reflects the Woodard core values and the school's aims and ethos, whereby an approach that embraces the values of courtesy, respect, behaviour and discipline encourages the pupils to aim high. Pupils are strongly motivated by the headmaster's commendation awards, which celebrate excellence and high achievement relative to their ability. Aspiring to achieve an award is a strong factor in their personal development.
- 4.2 The excellent spiritual development of pupils of all ages flourishes in the supportive atmosphere that permeates the school. From the earliest years they develop as confident, articulate individuals, well able to reflect on issues of relevance to them. They have excellent interpersonal skills, a genuine self-awareness and an empathy with others in their community and beyond. Their spiritual awareness benefits strongly from the school's Christian approach. It is strengthened through active participation in assemblies and activities taking place in, and inspired by, the school chapel. Pupils play a significant role in the weekly chapel worship and Saturday Eucharist, relishing the responsibility this brings. Pupils empathised sensitively as they reflected on the scale of sacrifice in war in a poignant act of remembrance during the inspection. Their awareness of other world faiths develops strongly through the curriculum and is enhanced by assemblies, displays and visitors to school.
- 4.3 Pupils have a keen moral awareness. Behaviour across the school is exemplary. Staff are outstanding role models and pupils have an acute sense of right and wrong, based on mutual and collaborative responsibility. They demonstrate genuine concern for those less fortunate than themselves. An extensive range of fund-raising and charitable activities, driven by the enthusiasm of the pupil school council, is evident, for example in the 'shoebox' collection, to provide Christmas gifts for disadvantaged children.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is excellent and is clearly promoted through a wide range of opportunities to take on responsibility. The group 'buddy' system is a particular strength, in which older pupils watch over and act as role models for a designated group of younger pupils. In the Pre-Prep, the 'friendship stop' is highly successful, engaging pupils eagerly in offering help and support to one another. The pupil school council ensures an excellent level of participation in decision making and enables pupils to develop an early understanding of the way society functions. Pupils are caring and responsible members of the school community. The highly successful 'eco' committee has had a marked impact across the school, with many pupils wishing to be involved, resulting in a heightened awareness of environmental issues; 'eco' monitors successfully take on special responsibility for encouraging their peers to be environmentally aware.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural development is outstanding. They benefit strongly from the emphasis placed on music, art and drama, and enjoy participating in a wide range of aesthetic and cultural performance at all levels. An appreciation of cultural traditions, both their own and those of others, is strengthened through the curriculum in, for example, African dance routines in music and an Indian role play area in the Pre-Prep.

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

- 4.6 The quality of welfare, health and safety is excellent, and has strengthened since the previous inspection. Staff provide the pupils with outstanding support, care and guidance, clearly meeting the school's aim to provide a safe, caring and healthy environment. The close monitoring of pupils' welfare needs is strongly enhanced by excellent use of electronic communication and recording. This ensures that staff are fully aware of welfare issues and contribute purposefully to discussions and courses of action. Pupils value their access to an independent listener. They commented that they are confident there is someone to turn to should they have a concern. Each Year 8 pupil looks after a small group of younger pupils, successfully supporting them pastorally, strengthening the bonds between age groups and ensuring strong relationships amongst pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are also strong; staff know the pupils well, enabling them to respond successfully to their needs.
- 4.7 The school has effective procedures to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying, which take due account of pupils with SEND. Chapel services, assemblies, circle time and PSHEE lessons are used well to reinforce accepted norms of behaviour and ensure that pupils learn about topics such as drugs awareness and the impact of bullying. Safeguarding measures are thorough and effective, ensuring that pupils enjoy a safe and secure environment and that adults who work with children have been appropriately checked for their suitability. All staff have undertaken appropriate child protection training.
- 4.8 The school has comprehensive and well-planned measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Equipment is tested regularly, staff have undertaken appropriate training, and evacuation drills are conducted efficiently and carefully evaluated. A health and safety committee monitors the work of the school closely and reports to the governing body. Well-qualified staff ensure that the school caters well for pupils who are ill or injured. An extensive portfolio of health policies provides particularly well for pupils' medical needs and ensures that staff are well briefed for both in-school and off-site activities. The school has detailed plans to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Through a range of curriculum topics, the extensive sports programme, extra-curricular activities such as gardening, and the support of catering staff, pupils develop a secure understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of regular exercise. Admission and attendance registers are completed in accordance with requirements. The school has attended appropriately to the recommendations of the previous inspection relating to risk assessments, minor repairs and signage.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.9 The quality of the pupils' boarding experience is excellent, marking an improvement since the previous inspection. Boarding contributes strongly to their education and welfare. This ensures that the school meets its aim to develop the confidence and capability of the whole child, enabling pupils to be well equipped for the challenges of the wider community, to build positive relationships and make a positive contribution to the community.
- 4.10 Relationships within boarding are particularly strong. Boarders relate exceptionally well with one another and with the dedicated boarding staff. Younger boarders are allocated a boarding 'big brother' or 'big sister' who supports them in their boarding life. This system strengthens the sense of responsibility and leadership of the older

boarders, helping them to develop key skills for later life. Boarders have a strong sense of belonging to the boarding community. A boarders' forum, which meets regularly, enables them to discuss boarding issues and concerns, and make a positive contribution to planning boarding life and activities.

- 4.11 Boarders have good access to an independent listener, and a governor with responsibility for boarding visits the house on a regular basis, gaining a good understanding of boarding life. Boarding staff undertake their role with warmth and commitment. The boarders' 'survival guide' is a form of self-assessment for new boarders, helping them to develop an understanding of procedures and routines.
- 4.12 Boarders thoroughly enjoy boarding and benefit from an extensive range of activities in the evening and at weekends, both on and off the school site, including barbecues and visits to the cinema, ice skating rink and local places of interest. Boarders benefit from comfortable accommodation and are able to personalise their own dormitory areas. They have excellent access to school facilities and use of a common room, shared by boys and girls, which also provides computers with safe and secure internet access, facilitating good communication with home as well as research and leisure activities.
- 4.13 The school has undertaken a very detailed audit of boarding in relation to boarding statutory requirements and reviewed it carefully in the light of recent revision to the legislation. The audit evaluates carefully the school's position in relation to each standard, identifying action for improvement, together with the staff responsible for this, and the timescale. The monitoring of the associated action plan records how the school has successfully met the recommendations of the previous boarding inspection, undertaken by Ofsted.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 Governance is excellent, enabling the school to meet its aims, maintain standards and plan for improvement. A single governing body oversees the work of both schools, ensuring effective oversight, a common purpose, and well-judged planning and investment. The board has a thorough understanding of the school; the custos is well supported by the two vice custodes, each with a particular interest in one of the schools. The move to a single committee structure for the two schools has provided a more efficient system with greater time for debate. Committee membership and particular responsibilities, such as safeguarding, health and safety, and boarding, ensure a high level of involvement from a body of governors who have a broad range of appropriate abilities and experience. Governors benefit from extensive training, much of it provided by the Woodard foundation, including an induction course. The governing body also provides new governors with an induction programme, including meetings, a tour and a detailed induction package. The national Woodard body provides strong support and monitors the efficiency of governance.
- 5.2 Governors gain an excellent insight into the working of the school through detailed reports from the headmaster and bursar, and from the information gained from committees. A designated child protection governor oversees safeguarding matters, conducts an annual review of the effectiveness of procedures and collaborates closely with the governor who holds a similar position at Worksop College. Governors develop their understanding of the school's successes and areas for development through spending days in school observing, attending school events and receiving presentations from members of staff on aspects of their work. Governors undertake a regular review of policy and of other matters recommended by the leadership. They are aware that there is currently no formal appraisal of the headmaster and are discussing plans to introduce this.
- 5.3 Governors are effective in undertaking their responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff, engaging professional advice when needed. They liaise closely with the bursar and review reports from the health and safety committee. A governor undertakes a termly review of the school's recruitment procedures.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 The excellent quality of leadership and management is reflected in the outstanding teamwork between staff and pupils, to ensure the well-being of every pupil. The core values of the school are at the heart of leadership and management, which have improved since the previous inspection, ensuring that the school's aims are met successfully. Leadership is strong. Its clear vision and the commitment of an enthusiastic, hard-working and vibrant senior leadership team are instrumental in encouraging and supporting pupils to reach their full potential, in line with the values and ethos of the school. Policies are updated regularly and clear, effective procedures promote the safeguarding of all pupils.
- 5.5 Leadership and management actively enable staff to contribute to the educational direction of the school. Staff are, therefore, fully conversant with current policies and ensure their effectiveness, and develop a sense of purpose and commitment to the

school's aims and development. The highly successful, comprehensive programme of PSHEE, wide-ranging post Common Entrance enrichment programme and excellent quality of pastoral leadership promote outstanding pupil achievement, personal development and care.

- 5.6 At all levels, management is effective in analysing the school's needs, setting and planning priorities, and putting decisions into practice. The recent development of the role of director for teaching and learning has provided the staff with excellent direction and clear guidance, resulting, in particular, in a significantly sharper focus on assessment. Heads of department have a clear understanding of their role and ensure that departmental schemes and plans are suited to the needs of each pupil. Regular collaboration between the Pre-Prep and the Prep School maintains continuity and consistency throughout the school.
- 5.7 A systematic process of staff appraisal effectively identifies areas for professional development, though there is currently no formal appraisal of the headmaster. Lesson observation, mutual peer observation and focused targets are used well to support individual staff and to ensure consistency in the school's practices and procedures. A high priority is given to staff professional development, which addresses the school's needs both educationally and in the areas of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Staff who attend training from outside agencies share information constructively at staff meetings.
- 5.8 Teaching and non-teaching staff support the ethos of the school strongly and make a significant contribution to the excellent community spirit that permeates the school. The outstanding premises and facilities are well maintained and available space is used to best advantage. The school's policies, procedures and risk assessments are effective and are reviewed regularly. Appropriate care is taken over all aspects of safeguarding, including undertaking and recording the required checks for staff appointments and the provision of a highly effective induction and training programme.

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

- 5.9 The quality of links with parents is outstanding. The school has built on the many strengths identified at the previous inspection. In replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents were highly complimentary about the education and support provided for their children. Only one concern was raised by a small number of parents, regarding the school's decision to discontinue boarding facilities.
- 5.10 Parents are kept fully abreast of events through regular newsletters and specific year group letters. In the Pre-Prep, notice boards outside each classroom give detailed information to parents about current events in school. In the Prep School, parents can consult notice boards and a scrolling computer display for information about events. The 'reading record book' and the 'group book' are very effective methods for sharing information specific to a particular pupil between home and school. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with required information about the school. The school has an informative website, which has been recently redeveloped. A secure area for parents ensures that they have access to relevant additional documents. The school has recently introduced a text messaging system to improve emergency communication with parents. An interesting school magazine provides further valuable information for parents.

- 5.11 Parents are able to be involved closely in school life and in the work and progress of their children. They are strongly encouraged to talk with the staff about any concerns they may have and staff are proactive in speaking with them if they have concerns. Parents commented at length in the questionnaires, praising in particular the school's promotion of worthwhile attitudes, pupils' ability to reason, boarding and good communication, including through the website.
- 5.12 Parents are welcome to attend events, concerts, matches and plays. Some are involved in running weekly activities, including the gardening club and 'hair and beauty'. Visits from parents to talk to pupils about their professions and their different faiths and traditions have encouraged pupils to be more aware of other backgrounds.
- 5.13 The school benefits from an active parents' association that holds regular coffee mornings and events such as barn dances and quizzes, and raises money for school initiatives. The popular adventure playground and the recently introduced video cameras for pupils' use were funded by the group.
- 5.14 The prospectus provides a good introduction to the school. Useful information packs for parents, provided just before their children begin in the Pre-Prep and the Prep School, include a wide range of informative leaflets covering the curriculum and practical details about being a pupil at the school. A similar handbook for parents of boarders provides them with useful practical information.
- 5.15 Regular consultation meetings enable parents to keep up-to-date with their children's progress. From the EYFS onwards, meetings with parents as pupils move to new sections of the school, and on to Worksop College, enable them to support their children in a smooth transfer. An informative written report is sent to parents twice yearly about their children's academic performance. It outlines what their children know, the progress they have made and what is needed to raise attainment further. The school handles parental concerns sensitively and with due care. Its complaints procedure meets requirements, is sent to parents in the initial information pack and is available on the website.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

6.1 The overall effectiveness of the setting is outstanding. Experienced teachers devise tasks that meet children's individual needs, encouraging confidence and an eagerness to learn. The warm, caring environment ensures a family atmosphere where all children have a happy, secure start to their education. Good progress since the previous Ofsted inspection, including improvements to outdoor facilities and better provision for awareness of diversity, demonstrates the setting's capacity to sustain high standards.

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

6.2 Leadership and management are outstanding. Clear willingness to discuss and put in place new ideas, including more effective assessment, demonstrates ambitious vision to improve further the quality of provision. Records, policies and strategies strongly support effective management, and procedures to ensure safeguarding, children's welfare and equality are outstanding. Parents are very supportive, as shown in the positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Parents and visitors give children valuable insights into the wider world, such as discussing Diwali and sharing a recipe for an Indian snack. Staff readily undertake training, share expertise and seek outside advice as needed. The good learning environment, both indoors and outside, is used well. Resources are of good quality and are used skilfully to promote learning.

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

6.3 The quality of the provision is outstanding. Teaching is highly effective. Children in Reception were enthralled while talking about and making a temporary outdoor booth to celebrate a Jewish harvest festival. Regular assessment ensures that staff have detailed knowledge of each child's stage of development. This is used skilfully to plan activities that focus on individual needs, and leads to very good progress. The curriculum is broad, with a well-judged balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. However, few opportunities are presented to ensure that children practise their ICT skills regularly, and learning is sometimes limited by an over-reliance on worksheets and workbooks. Excellent attention to children's safety and welfare is a strength of the EYFS; calm routines create an atmosphere in which children concentrate extremely well and are confident and happy. In the Nursery, for example, situations are created that enable children to make choices in a mature manner and to work independently at tasks.

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

- 6.4 Outcomes are outstanding. Throughout the EYFS children listen attentively, start to reason clearly, are enthusiastic about learning and are very well prepared for the next step in their education. They enjoy practising their early reading skills, and their free writing develops well, drawing strongly on their considerable phonic knowledge. Children count carefully and, in the Nursery, begin to understand the order of numbers through counting games. By the end of Reception, children order coins by value. Information and communication technology skills are sound. By the end of the EYFS, many children achieve the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning. Their social and communication skills are outstanding. Children start to understand clearly about being safe and the importance of hygiene and healthy eating, and those in Reception know about the effects of exercise on the body. Children form exceptionally happy relationships with staff and each other, and their behaviour is excellent.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the custos 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 boarding house and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr Christopher Sanderson | Reporting Inspector |
| Mr Andy Falconer | Headmaster, IAPS school |
| Miss Linda Hunter | Former Acting Head, GSA junior school |
| Mr Nigel Siddall | Senior Manager, IAPS school |
| Mrs Jenny Clayphan | Early Years Co-ordinating Inspector |