



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**QUEEN'S COLLEGE LONDON**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Queen's College London

Full Name of School	<b>Queen's College London</b>		
DfE Number	<b>213/6036</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>312726</b>		
Address	<b>Queen's College (Senior School) 43-49 Harley Street London. W1G 8BT</b>		
	<b>Queen's College Preparatory School 61 Portland Place London. W1B 1QP</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>0207 291 7000 (Senior School) 0207 291 0660 (Preparatory School)</b>		
Fax Number	<b>020 72917090</b>		
Email Address	<b>queens@qcl.org.uk</b>		
Principal	<b>Dr Frances Ramsey (Senior School)</b>		
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Annie Dempsey (Preparatory School)</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Mike Sharman</b>		
Age Range	<b>4 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>515</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>153</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>34</b>	11-18: <b>328</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>515</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Miss Sarah Hennessey</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Girls</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>19 Mar 2013 to 22 Mar 2013</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2008.

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](http://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 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 Elaine Brook	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Ms Linda Glithro	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Neil Hudson	Team Inspector (Director of Continuing Professional Development, ISA school)
Mr Robert Lilley	Team Inspector (Head of Junior School, IAPS school)
Dr Pam Hillier	Team Inspector (Former Head of Science, GSA school)
Mr Anthony Franklin Nelson	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, Society of Heads school)
Mr Gary Wright	Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Gillian Bilbo	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Queen's College London is an independent day school for girls aged from four to eighteen. Established in 1848 on its present site in Harley Street, it was the first institution in the country to provide academic qualifications for girls, receiving a royal charter from Queen Victoria in 1853. The school is a registered charity, administered by a governing council.
- 1.2 The senior school occupies four adjacent buildings, which have been substantially extended and altered over the years. The preparatory school opened in 2002 in nearby Portland Place. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is an integral part of the preparatory school and accepts children in the year in which they become five. This represents a change from the previous inspection, when the school accepted pupils from the age of three.
- 1.3 The senior and preparatory schools operate independently on a day-to-day basis. Their shared aims include the pursuit of academic excellence, measured by the success of a pupil's individual progress, teaching that inspires intellectual curiosity and the development of self-reliance, discipline and courage in pupils. On leaving the preparatory school, pupils transfer to a wide range of day and boarding schools, with approximately half joining the senior school. At the end of Year 11, the majority of pupils move into the sixth form and a number of pupils new to the school are accepted. Some transfer to maintained or independent senior schools. Following this, pupils proceed to a wide range of universities, with a small number choosing to take a gap year.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 187 pupils on roll in the preparatory school, of which 34 pupils were in the reception classes and followed the EYFS. In the senior school, there were 257 pupils in Years 7 to 11 and 71 in the sixth form. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils live within a twenty mile radius of the school and come from a wide range of backgrounds, with most of the parents engaged in professional and business occupations.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school as a whole is above the national average, with very few pupils of below average ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly below the national average, with around one quarter of pupils having ability that is above the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The preparatory school has identified 26 pupils who require varying degrees of support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) but who do not require specialist provision. The senior school has identified 85 pupils who require learning support, of whom 24 receive specialist tuition. In the preparatory school, 25 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and all receive additional support. In the senior school, two pupils require support with written and spoken English.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

**Preparatory School**

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 1
Form 2	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6

**Senior School**

School	NC name
Class 3	Year 7
Class 2	Year 8
Class 1	Year 9
I Juniors	Year 10
II Juniors	Year 11
I Seniors	Year 12
II Seniors	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is excellent. Pupils attain high standards and are extremely well educated, fully achieving the school's aim to enable pupils to know how to think, rather than what to think. From the EYFS onwards, pupils have very good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in all their subjects and activities. Teaching provides outstanding support and guidance so that pupils of all ages, including those with SEND or EAL, make rapid progress and benefit from a wide and varied programme of curricular and extra-curricular activities. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The teaching of languages is a particular strength, with French being taught in the EYFS by a specialist teacher, supplemented by Latin in the preparatory school and increased to two ancient and four modern languages in the senior school. Provision for those pupils identified as gifted and talented is excellent, with lessons providing work very well suited to the abilities of the pupils. The quality of marking is variable, however, and does not always clearly indicate how the pupil can improve the standard of her work.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. The city location is well used to enrich and stimulate pupils' spiritual development through a varied programme of cultural visits to theatres, museums and galleries. Pastoral care is outstanding. Pupils thrive in the established family atmosphere, where mutual courtesy and consideration of the feelings of others is the norm. Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of right and wrong and understand the principles of democracy and good citizenship through participation in the preparatory school council or senior school parliament. Pupils are given very good opportunities to take on leadership roles appropriate to their ages. Good safeguarding arrangements are in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils.
- 2.3 The preparatory and senior school share the same governing council, who exercise good governance throughout. A significant number of governors are newly appointed and bring a wide range of expertise to their role. They are highly committed to the furtherance of the school's aims and have developed an excellent strategic plan for future development but do not monitor policies sufficiently rigorously. Sub-committees to oversee educational matters, finance, strategic development and human resources are in place but links within the school are not fully active. Leadership and management of both the preparatory school, including EYFS, and the senior school are excellent at all levels. Strong leadership has resulted in the appointment of management teams who are working energetically and effectively to further school improvement. Links with parents are excellent and support for the school is strong.

## **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. Further improve governance by monitoring robustly all aspects of the school's work.
2. Improve the quality of marking so that pupils can see clearly how to improve their work.
3. In the EYFS, expand the appraisal process to include teaching assistants.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are extremely well educated, in line with the school's aims to achieve academic excellence, to think independently and to make informed judgements. In the EYFS, overall achievement and learning are also excellent. Most children achieve, and many exceed, the Early Learning Goals. Children are active learners, able to work independently, think critically and be creative. In literacy and numeracy their knowledge and skills are exceptionally well developed. Children have a good grasp of initial letter sounds and words and many are well able to do simple sums. The standard of their creative work is very high because children are guided to evaluate their work, consider options and make choices to effect improvement.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils have excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in all their curricular activities. They listen carefully and are extremely articulate. They can express their views with confidence and clarity. Pupils read at an advanced level, with good expression. They write well, both factually and imaginatively and take pride in the presentation of their work. A revised approach to mathematics since the previous inspection has resulted in greater pupil understanding and consequent achievement in this subject.
- 3.4 As pupils progress through the senior school and into the sixth form, these high standards of achievement are maintained. Pupils are able to think logically and creatively. They are able to research independently to a high level and work cooperatively towards a group objective.
- 3.5 Pupils who show particular gifts and talents as well as those with SEND are effectively supported to achieve success in all areas of school life. Pupils of all ages, including in the EYFS, are highly competent users of ICT across a range of subjects. Their physical abilities in a wide range of sports are excellent. They achieve highly in individual and team games, regularly and successfully representing their school in athletics, netball and lacrosse. They also achieve well in music examinations, ballet and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. In 2011-12, eight pupils gained places in the National Youth Choir and pupils took part in gymnastics, lacrosse, running and fencing at club or regional level.
- 3.6 In the preparatory school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests. Based on observed performance in relation to national targets and a scrutiny of completed work, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age related expectations. Pupils follow a demanding curriculum, with advanced work in English and mathematics. The majority of pupils gain a place in their first choice senior school, with a significant number gaining all-round or academic scholarships, as well as art and music awards.
- 3.7 In the senior school, pupils' attainment in public examinations has improved over the period from 2009 to 2011, the most recent three years for which comparative data is available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to those from maintained selective schools. In IGCSE subjects, results are higher than worldwide averages and in mathematics are also higher than the UK average. At A level, results have also been above the national average for maintained schools.

- 3.8 Children in the EYFS make excellent progress in relation to their starting points, consistently achieving levels well above the national average. From Year 1 through to sixth form, based on observed lessons, nationally standardised measures and a scrutiny of work, the level of attainment of all pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, confirms that they make progress that is high in relation to pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.9 Pupils of all ages, including children in the EYFS, have overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards their work, which supports their achievements. They enjoy their school life and are skilled learners, gaining much satisfaction from working both independently and cooperatively to produce a very high standard.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The curriculum is broad and flexible, covering the requisite areas of learning and providing an effective educational experience much valued by pupils and parents. The school fully achieves its aim to bring out the best in its pupils, enabling them to grow as learners.
- 3.12 The quality and provision of the curriculum for the EYFS are excellent and cover all areas of learning. Planning is of high quality; a rich mixture of activities is imaginatively matched to current topics and provides opportunities for children to make independent choices. Role play is a firm favourite and the hallway adjoining the classroom abounds with shopping expeditions, outings for the twin baby dolls and appointments at the doctor's surgery. The stimulating environment ensures that children are excited and challenged by the learning experiences provided.
- 3.13 The focus of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is on literacy and numeracy, which contributes greatly to the pupils' achievements as they mature. This solid foundation encompasses the humanities, creative subjects and sports activities and is enhanced by specialist teaching in French, art, music, dance and physical education. The growing use of cross-curricular links extends pupils' understanding of periods in history. By Year 6, most subjects are taught by specialist teachers, which strongly supports the deepening of pupils' understanding and knowledge, offering challenge to all pupils according to their abilities.
- 3.14 Pupils in the senior school benefit from a broad curriculum, which includes an excellent range of subject choices at GCSE. The school is justifiably proud that pupils have an unrestricted choice of options to complement the compulsory core subjects at GCSE, and a similar choice from twenty four subjects available at A level. Provision for the teaching of foreign languages is excellent, with two ancient and five modern languages offered. The language taster sessions in Year 8 provide an effective way in which each pupil can make an informed choice to suit her ability and interests.
- 3.15 Pupils from the EYFS onwards are given excellent opportunities to participate in a wide variety of sporting activities. Children in the EYFS are taken out to play in the nearby private garden, which offers well supervised opportunities to explore the environment and develop physical skills. Appropriately equipped gymnasiums are well used by both preparatory and senior pupils and excellent use is made of nearby facilities to ensure that provision includes a good range of sports. Pupils engage competitively with other local schools in a wide variety of sporting activities which

include football, fencing, netball, lacrosse, tennis, gymnastics, athletics and swimming.

- 3.16 In the preparatory school, there is a good range of extra-curricular activities in art, drama, craft, music and sport which aids the intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of the pupils. In the senior school the main curriculum is supplemented by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities available mostly at lunchtime, but also before and after school. These exploit the opportunities offered by the city location to enhance sports provision, cultural and educational pursuits. Links with the community are extensive. Pupils have ample opportunity to contribute to charitable endeavours such as the Children's Society and to participate in local events such as the Mini Marathon or to engage with elderly residents through the annual tea party held in the senior school.
- 3.17 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities available to pupils of all ages.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 The excellent quality of the teaching fully supports the aims of the preparatory and senior school, including the EYFS, and leads to an ethos of high aspirations and achievements for the pupils, who want to do their best, each according to her ability, because that is the expectation. All lessons observed were of good quality with almost two-thirds judged as excellent. No lessons were unsatisfactory. This is an improvement on the quality of teaching observed at the previous inspection.
- 3.20 In the EYFS, staff use their secure knowledge of the requirements of the EYFS curriculum to plan exciting and imaginative activities to effectively deliver the areas of learning. Planning by key staff is adapted to reflect the carefully assessed progress of each child so that it matches their needs and incorporates their special interests. From Year 1, the excellent quality of the teaching successfully enables the pupils to make excellent progress in line with their ages and abilities. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and lessons are well paced, interesting and use internet resources effectively to stimulate pupils' curiosity and widen their understanding. Small classes enable very successful support of girls with SEND and their progress is carefully monitored. The required provision for any pupils with a statement of special educational needs is fully met. An informal conversation club for girls whose first language is not English is a very helpful initiative to extend vocabulary and use of idiom.
- 3.21 In the sixth form, a high proportion of lesson time is given over to discussion and independent research, fully supporting the school's aim to encourage independence of mind and the determination to outstrip expectations. The pace of lessons is brisk and time is managed well. Effective questioning, which is well suited to the abilities of the pupils, extends and challenges their understanding of topics being covered in the lesson.
- 3.22 Overall, the quality of the marking is inconsistent. Some very detailed and constructive comments are used well, enabling pupils to see how they can improve their work. Pupils appreciate the carefully annotated marking of work and feel that it really helps them to improve their general standard. In a small number of subjects,

however, much of the work is only marked with a tick so that it is not possible for pupils to see what they need to do in order to improve.

- 3.23 Pupils' progress is assessed regularly, including using a range of standardised tests; these results are shared with staff and used effectively to plan future lessons, with the outcome that the needs of pupils of all abilities are met. Pupils demonstrate intellectual curiosity and a real zest for, and growing independence in, their learning.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils, including those in the EYFS, show highly developed personal skills, fully meeting the school's ambitious aims. Pupils hold strong values; they have a well developed sense of self worth and great respect for the rights of others. They show confidence when debating, for example, the conflicting beliefs embodied in spirituality and humanism, clearly demonstrating the impact of the school's aim to enable girls to know how to think, rather than what to think.
- 4.3 The development of the pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Pupils from the EYFS onwards engage with the non-material aspects of life through assemblies, religious education lessons and the celebration of creativity through visits to museums, art galleries and theatres. Younger pupils learn how to appreciate the natural world through nature walks and outdoor exploring during daily visits to the nearby private garden.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral awareness is extremely strong. They have a well established sense of right and wrong combined with a natural courtesy and helpfulness. Pupils in the preparatory school, including those in the EYFS, understand the importance of their code of conduct in maintaining an ordered environment. Senior pupils understand what it means to be a good citizen in the society of school. Their strong views on injustice and fairness were discussed maturely in interviews. By the time pupils leave the school, they have a clear set of values to guide them through adult life.
- 4.5 Pupils of all ages demonstrate an excellent social commitment to accepting responsibility for supporting one another as well as those less fortunate than themselves. Cooperation in classes is strongly evident, with pupils readily helping all members of the group to achieve the set task. This is particularly noticeable in the EYFS, where pupils share equipment and cooperate on joint tasks so that they learn to respect the contribution of all members of the group. In the preparatory school, pupils are enthusiastically taking up the opportunity to have a democratic impact on the way the school reflects on and improves existing systems and practices through the recently established school council. The senior school has a very well established school parliament, which enables pupils to understand the democratic process by defining and debating issues in a public forum and then voting for improvement. Pupils take on age-appropriate responsibilities with enthusiasm. Senior pupils act as mentors to younger pupils and sixth form pupils contribute to the extra-curricular programme by planning, organising and leading activities. All pupils fully engage with and support a wide number of charities both locally and internationally.
- 4.6 The cultural awareness of the pupils is strong. From the EYFS onwards, tolerance and harmony are strong features of the school community. Pupils appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity of others. They learn much from each other through the informal interaction between the different cultures represented by pupils. The openness with which they can happily discuss their own varied backgrounds is excellent. In the senior school, the *Athena Society*, established to widen pupils' cultural experiences, extends their understanding of many different cultural practices, through a varied programme of lectures by external speakers and visits to places of interest. In the preparatory school, a programme of events and activities

such as the introduction of African marimbas into the music curriculum develop pupils' understanding of the diversity of people's traditions and interests.

- 4.7 Throughout the preparatory and senior school, pupils' personal development is excellent. They are friendly, exceptionally confident and happy; they have developed a strong social awareness of the needs of others and a clear understanding of personal responsibility for their own actions.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 In the preparatory and senior school, including the EYFS, staff offer highly effective support and guidance to pupils, fully achieving the school's aim to value personal integrity and to develop in pupils the discernment to deal responsibly with the world in which they live.
- 4.10 A staff handbook, specific to each school, sets out clear guidance and expectations for pastoral behaviour. Pastoral meetings are held regularly in both schools to ensure that any issues of concern are communicated efficiently and appropriate support planned, implemented and reviewed.
- 4.11 Relationships between staff and pupils of all ages and amongst the pupils themselves are warm and caring. Pupils feel that staff know them very well and offer a high level of support and guidance. Good behaviour is the norm, and should the pupils be experiencing difficulties either academically or socially, they are confident about whom to approach for a speedy resolution. In conversation with both pupils and staff, the family atmosphere was appreciated.
- 4.12 Pupils' physical needs are very well met; they are offered excellent opportunities to participate in sports activities and understand the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating. At lunch the food is both nutritious and plentiful, with a relaxed but courteous atmosphere being much in evidence. Children in the EYFS are enabled to manage their personal hygiene independently. They know that they must wash their hands before snack or lunch. Meat or vegetarian options are provided but choice is very limited and children are not sufficiently encouraged to try unfamiliar food. In the preparatory school, the weekly menu is varied, but offers a limited choice on a daily basis. In the senior school, the choice of menu is outstanding.
- 4.13 Clear systems for encouraging good behaviour and preventing bullying are in place. A small proportion of pupils and parents felt that the school did not handle well their concerns about bullying. In interviews, pupils felt that incidences of bullying were rare and dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The inspection judgement is that bullying is dealt with appropriately and any concerns are sensitively handled. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.14 Good systems are in place to seek the views of pupils, who feel that their opinions are valued and acted upon.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good.

- 4.16 The school has effective arrangements to safeguard all pupils, including those in the EYFS, which are implemented with care. Appropriate staff training in child protection is undertaken on a regular basis and procedures are fully understood by all members of staff. Checks required to ensure the suitability of staff are carried out thoroughly and appropriately recorded. Arrangements for the supervision of pupils whilst on site are very good, and the movement of pupils between classrooms is carefully monitored.
- 4.17 Welfare responsibilities are taken very seriously, ensuring compliance with statutory regulations. Health and safety policies have been recently revised and include all necessary details. Good management systems to ensure that buildings are well maintained and comply with all relevant health and safety legislation are well supported by the use of external professional agencies
- 4.18 The school has a newly implemented fire policy which draws together the important information associated with fire risks. Concise and efficient arrangements are in place and staff have appropriate training to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire practices are held; the timings of evacuation are noted and comments on the speed and efficiency are carefully recorded.
- 4.19 Pupils who are ill or injured are well looked after. In the preparatory school, including EYFS, a good number of staff receive appropriate training in first aid so that pupils who are unwell are cared for appropriately and sympathetically. In the senior school, the school's medical team sensitively oversees all arrangements for pupils who are unwell. Attendance registers are kept carefully and conform to statutory regulations. Arrangements to maintain and store admissions registers have been recently revised; new procedures are much more rigorous and comply with current regulations.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The preparatory and senior schools share one governing council, who provide effective oversight of all sections, including the EYFS, in line with their shared aims. A significant number of the governing council have been newly appointed. They bring to their role a wide range of experience and expertise, which has enabled the school to formulate an excellent strategic plan to clearly identify and prioritise plans for future development. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
- 5.3 Members of the council have a great commitment to the school and offer strong support for senior leaders. They know the school well, attend school functions and are very supportive of the school's aims. Four sub-committees with specific responsibility for overseeing educational matters, finance, strategic development and human resources have been created but links within the school are not yet actively established. Review of policies and procedures to ensure that governors are fully effective in discharging their monitoring responsibilities is insufficiently rigorous.
- 5.4 The governing council has good oversight of the arrangements for the safeguarding and protection of children in both schools and has a named governor who has specific responsibility for this. The specific needs of children in EYFS are carefully overseen by a governor who has a special interest in this stage. Safeguarding policies are reviewed annually and the necessary pre-appointment checks on staff are carried out scrupulously. The central register of staff is thoroughly maintained, with all appropriate checks undertaken assiduously. In all areas, including health and safety, governors have a good insight into the work of the school.

### **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 The leadership and management at all levels, including EYFS, has significantly improved since the previous inspection, with the appointment of new leadership teams, who work very closely and effectively together to ensure that overall there is a clear and shared educational direction. This has resulted in improved outcomes for pupils in terms of academic achievement and personal development. Senior leaders have created and implemented a comprehensive school development plan, specific to the preparatory and senior school, which includes the EYFS, and clearly demonstrates that management understands the school's strengths and has practical strategies to deal with areas in need of development.
- 5.7 The vision, energy and enthusiasm of senior leaders ensure the continuance of high standards of expectation and achievement. They know the individual strengths of their pupils very well indeed and have been successful in the appointment of senior managers who are equally committed to the promotion of high standards.

- 5.8 Management at all levels has ensured that appropriate policies and effective systems, common to both the preparatory and senior school or differentiated as appropriate, ensure the safeguarding of children, the quality of educational provision and the health and safety of all staff and pupils. Most are well established and understood but are not all sufficiently rigorously monitored.
- 5.9 The quality of leadership and management in EYFS is excellent. All staff contribute to the development plan which sets realistic targets for continued improvement against measurable success criteria. Senior managers are regularly appraised and offered appropriate training and development opportunities in order to ensure the continuance of high standards in this setting. However, teaching assistants are not included in the appraisal process and so are not offered the formal opportunity to celebrate their achievements or request further training opportunities.
- 5.10 In the preparatory school, the senior leadership team is very well established and highly effective. Their roles are clearly defined and they take their responsibilities to ensure high standards in all areas of school life very seriously, setting priorities and overseeing agreed initiatives energetically and enthusiastically. All curriculum subjects are led by coordinators who have clearly defined responsibilities in overseeing their subject. They have ensured that comprehensive handbooks are in place which define the programme of study to be followed. They regularly assess and report on the effectiveness of subject teaching but do not monitor the quality of marking sufficiently.
- 5.11 In the senior school, the strong leadership empowers and motivates staff, who feel enabled to contribute ideas and initiatives which they know will be given serious consideration. Following a recent change in the management leadership, the responsibility for overseeing the pastoral care and academic progress of pupils is no longer shared between managers. As a result, it has not been possible for rigorous monitoring of academic departments to take place. However, a senior manager has been appointed for September, who will have responsibility for the oversight of academic standards and for the further development of the newly implemented systems to track progress. A good middle management structure is responsible for implementing pastoral strategies. This has been very effective in resolving issues such as inappropriate use of mobile phones and imposing sanctions for non-completion of homework. Year tutors meet weekly with their head of section to ensure a united and cohesive approach to discipline.
- 5.12 Good strategies for the induction of new staff are in place. The administration of the school is efficient. Financial management is careful and thorough. Staff appointments follow clear procedures to choose high quality staff and to ensure their suitability to work with children.
- 5.13 The overwhelming majority of parents are highly satisfied with the education and support provided for their children. The *open door* policy in the preparatory school, supported by homework diaries, regular newsletters and information on the school website ensures that parents are well informed about school activities. In the senior school, staff can be contacted by email and any concerns addressed by the most appropriate person.
- 5.14 The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents and handles any concerns in accordance with the procedures published on the school website. A few parents expressed concern about their children's progress, the support for those who need additional help and for the most able and the amount of homework set.

The inspection judgement is that pupils make excellent progress, which meets the needs of all pupils and that the amount of homework is appropriate. The school endeavours to resolve parental concerns quickly and courteously and has good systems in place to do so.

- 5.15 A good relationship is established when parents meet the schools' leaders as part of the admissions procedure. New pupils enjoy coming to tea at the end of the summer term and younger pupils, including those entering the EYFS, appreciate the gift of a QCPS teddy bear, which helps to provide a link between home and school. Information booklets and year group meetings at the beginning of each academic year contain valuable curriculum information, and a clear outline of the routines of school life is given on the website.
- 5.16 Parents receive clear and useful verbal and written reports about their children's work and progress. In the preparatory school, parents are given detailed information about their daughter's progress through two written reports and two parent consultation meetings. EYFS parents are invited to contribute to their daughter's profile during a meeting in the summer term and they may then make an appointment to discuss the profile results with the form teacher. Children's progress is monitored against the requirements of the EYFS and the next steps in their learning are discussed with parents. In the senior school, half-termly grade cards offer regular updates on effort and attainment, providing additional information to the two written reports and consultation evenings.

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