



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

THE LADY ELEANOR HOLLES SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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The Lady Eleanor Holles School

Full Name of School	The Lady Eleanor Holles School
DfE Number	318/6002
Registered Charity Number	312493
Address	The Lady Eleanor Holles School Hanworth Road Hampton Middlesex TW12 3HF
Telephone Number	020 89791601
Fax Number	020 89418291
Email Address	office@lehs.org.uk
Head Mistress	Mrs Gillian Low
Chair of Governors	Mr Christopher Stokes
Age Range	7 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	871
Gender of Pupils	Girls
Numbers by Age	7-11: 188 11-18 683
Inspection dates	12th November 2013 to 15th November 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 September 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.

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior and other members of staff and with the chair of governors and another governor, 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

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Ms Charlotte Avery	Team Inspector, Head, GSA school
Mrs Loraine Cavanagh	Team Inspector, former Head, IAPS school
Ms Linda Glithro	Team Inspector, former Deputy Head of Junior School, GSA school
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Mrs Susan Jones	Team Inspector, former Deputy Head, GSA school
Mrs Caroline Pellereau	Team Inspector, Head of Lower College, GSA school
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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Lady Eleanor Holles School is a day school for girls aged 7 to 18, established in 1710 when a trust for its endowment was set up using the overplus from the will of Lady Eleanor Holles, daughter of the second Earl of Clare. Originally in the Barbican area of the City of London, in 1937 the school moved to its present 24 acre site, to the west of London. A range of specialist accommodation has since been added; most recently a purpose-built arts centre. The school is a registered charity and a limited company. A board of governors oversees its work.
- 1.2 The school has a Christian foundation, welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. It aims to develop well-rounded individuals while striving for academic excellence. Alongside that, it aims to provide opportunities for wide-ranging achievement, to encourage each girl to develop her values, individuality and talents and her strength of character and purpose so that she may gain personal fulfilment whilst being a responsible member of society, leaving the school well prepared for adult life, possessed of a joy in learning and in the opportunities life offers and a belief in the values of education, civilisation, humanity and community.
- 1.3 There are 871 pupils on roll; 188 in the junior department for pupils aged 7 to 11, and 683 in the senior department for pupils aged 11 to 18, of whom 178 are in the sixth form. Pupils come from a wide catchment area, from as far as Ealing, Woking, Wimbledon and Ascot, and mainly from business and professional backgrounds. Around two-thirds come from white British backgrounds; the remaining third from a mix of ethnic backgrounds.
- 1.4 Evidence from standardised tests indicates that the ability profile of pupils in the junior department is above the national average with around a third of pupils having ability that is well-above the national average, and very few pupils of less than above average ability. In the senior department, the ability profile in Year 7 is well above the national average with almost two-thirds of pupils being of well-above average ability, and almost all pupils of at least above average ability. In Year 10, the ability range is above the national average with almost one-third of pupils well above average ability, and few pupils of less than above average ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is above the national average with a slightly wider spread than in the rest of the senior department; most pupils are of above average ability, and around a fifth of well-above average ability. The school has identified 105 pupils as having a special educational need or disability (SEND), 54 of whom receive specialist learning support. One hundred and fifty-eight pupils have been identified as having English as an additional language (EAL), seven of whom receive additional support. No pupil has a statement of special educational need.

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

Junior Department

School	NC name
Form One	Year 3
Upper One	Year 4
Lower Two	Year 5
Upper Two	Year 6

Senior Department

School	NC name
Third Form	Year 7
Lower Four	Year 8
Upper Four	Year 9
Lower Five	Year 10
Upper Five	Year 11
Lower Six	Year 12
Upper Six	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its aims. At all ages, pupils' achievements are exceptional both in their academic work and in their activities. All pupils make excellent progress, including those with SEND or EAL and those who are able, gifted and talented. The exceptional achievement is well supported by their extremely positive attitudes to learning, by the excellent curricular and extra-curricular provision and by the excellent teaching they receive. In line with the recommendations of the previous inspection report, teachers' information and communication technology (ICT) skills have been developed successfully; teachers exploit these to enhance learning, and are developing full interactive working.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, personal development is excellent. Spiritual development is strong and, at all ages, pupils show a high degree of moral awareness and a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Their social development is excellent and characterised by their outstanding support for one another and other members of the school community and beyond. Pupils are keen to make a difference and more than willingly take on positions of responsibility. At all ages, their cultural awareness is well developed. They show an excellent appreciation of all that is offered by their own and other cultures. Pastoral care is excellent and is highly effective in supporting the pupils' well-being, further enhanced by the excellent arrangements to promote their welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. Governors are highly committed to supporting the school in achieving its aims. They provide highly effective oversight of all aspects of the work of the school and pay rigorous attention to their responsibility to monitor regulatory matters. The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, is excellent. Throughout the school, senior staff work together highly effectively to continually enhance the already high-quality provision and support for pupils. The school has responded successfully to all the recommendations of the previous inspection.

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) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Ensure that teaching exploits to the full the interactive learning opportunities of ICT.

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 exceptional.
- 3.2 At all stages, pupils show exceptional levels of achievement both in their work and in their activities, amply fulfilling the school's aim of academic excellence. They are highly articulate, expressing themselves confidently and clearly. They are logical and independent thinkers who listen extremely well. They read and write fluently. They have excellent mathematical skills which they apply confidently to their learning across the curriculum. Their ICT skills are well developed and used very effectively. Their physical skills are excellent and they show extremely high levels of creativity. The achievements of those pupils who have SEND, EAL and those who are able, gifted and talented are equally strong, reflecting the excellent support they receive. Many pupils achieve at a very high level across an extremely wide range of activities and competitions, including many at national level. Amongst many other successes, over the last three years, 20 pupils have been selected for national music groups; in 2010 the school was named BBC Youth Choir of the Year; around 30 pupils represent their country in sport, with numerous successes at national level for rowing, lacrosse, netball and swimming. Significant numbers achieve success in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Almost all pupils go on to higher education; most go to their first-choice of university, a number achieving scholarships.
- 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 currently available. Over that period, results in national tests at age eleven have been exceptional in comparison to the national average for maintained primary schools. Also over that period, GCSE results have been exceptional in relation to the national average for girls in maintained secondary schools and have also been above average for girls in maintained selective schools. The GCSE results in 2012 were slightly lower than in the previous two years although still well above the national average. The school's GCSE results in 2013 returned to levels similar to those in 2010 and 2011. The IGCSE results in English and mathematics, over the same period, have been higher than worldwide and UK norms. Over the same time scale, A-level results have been exceptional in relation to national average for girls in maintained schools and well above that for girls in maintained selective schools. Pupils' excellent achievements continue in the high numbers taking the Extended Project Qualification, with 55% gaining A* grades in 2013. The majority of pupils taking the AQA Baccalaureate gain a distinction.
- 3.4 The level of attainment in national tests at the age of eleven indicates that pupils in the junior department make progress that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The level of attainment at GCSE and A level, and nationally standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils in the senior department, including in the sixth form, make progress that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Of those pupils who responded to the questionnaire, almost all said that they feel they are making good progress. Throughout the school, inspection and other evidence indicates that all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and those who are able, gifted and talented, make excellent progress.
- 3.5 In both the junior and senior departments, pupils bring an overwhelmingly positive and exemplary approach to their work and activities and are highly efficient learners.

They enjoy their work and are keen to give of their best. They work very enthusiastically in lessons, both as individuals and in groups. They communicate highly effectively, expressing their own opinions clearly and listening attentively to those of others.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.7 The curricular and extra-curricular provision is wide-ranging, demanding, enriching and inspiring, fully in line with the school's aims. Of those responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of parents said that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and a good range of extra-curricular activities and almost all pupils said they can join in with a good range of activities. This is confirmed by the school's programmes of study and activities and by discussions with pupils.
- 3.8 The curriculum is very well planned and suitable for all ages, abilities and needs, including for those pupils with SEND, EAL and who are able, gifted and talented. In the junior department, pupils are offered a wide range of subjects, enhanced by specialist teaching in subjects such as music, science and physical education (PE). The introduction of philosophy encourages pupils at this level to be more reflective learners. In Years 7 to 9, in addition to the wide range of subjects offered, the curricular programme provides for pupils to develop the skills to work independently and to take responsibility for their own learning. At GCSE, a wide range of subjects is offered, including Ancient Greek and Spanish as additional languages. In the sixth form, a wide range of A-level subjects, AQA baccalaureate and Extended Project Qualification courses is available, enhanced by the addition of subjects such as economics, philosophy, politics and psychology. At both GCSE and A level, flexible timetabling allows choice and enables virtually all pupils to follow their chosen programmes. Throughout the school, identification of, and provision for, the needs of pupils with SEND or EAL are excellent and include both individual and classroom support. The needs of those who are able, gifted and talented are equally well met.
- 3.9 In the junior department, library provision provides good support for the pupils' learning. In the senior department, learning is greatly enhanced by facilities within the learning resource centre and the sixth form library. The programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is of high quality at all stages. The careers programme is outstanding; pupils say they greatly appreciate the support they receive in considering subject choices and in making decisions about university applications and career options. The provision for a wide variety of sports is excellent. The recently-opened arts centre provides outstanding opportunities for pupils in drama, music and art.
- 3.10 Since the last inspection the school has developed further ways for pupils to acquire higher level ICT skills and to integrate these into the curriculum as an analytical tool to support learning. Pupils now take externally-assessed courses in ICT, including at an advanced level. In addition, a Web-based learning resource to extend learning beyond the classroom has been introduced, providing excellent opportunities for independent work.
- 3.11 The school offers an extremely wide range of activities and clubs, ranging from Latin and tennis in the junior department to creative writing and Model United Nations in

the senior department and to a wide range of house events. These, along with the house system introduced since the previous inspection, provide many opportunities for leadership and personal development, as well as challenge. Learning is enhanced by the wide-ranging programme of visits both locally and further afield. The school has developed many excellent links with the local and wider community. For example: visitors from the local area come into school to give talks; pupils undertake a variety of community service; pupils are involved in running inspiring programmes for local Year 5 students; and the school has links with others in Uganda and Zambia.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.12 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.13 Throughout the school teaching successfully fulfils the school's aim to provide an education which is both challenging and stimulating. In both the junior and senior departments, including in the sixth form, lessons are well planned with clear focus and aims. Starter activities are used well to stimulate discussion and ensure that pupils quickly become engaged in the lesson. Active listening is actively promoted. Both effort and progress are frequently praised. Pupils are helped to develop a secure understanding of the subject and to make excellent progress. Throughout the school, teaching makes effective use of teachers' enthusiasm for and excellent knowledge of their subjects to promote learning. Good, varied learning resources are used effectively to support learning and pupils benefit from a well-planned mix of activities. Teaching is successful in engaging pupils' interest; pupils are fully engaged and almost always actively involved at every stage of a lesson. Pupils spoken with expressed their appreciation of the additional time that teachers give them outside of lesson time to give them one-to-one support.
- 3.14 Excellent relationships exist between pupils and teachers; the warm and purposeful atmosphere is conducive to learning. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to take risks with their learning and open questions are used well to provide challenge and promote discussion. Teaching meets the needs of individual pupils and their different learning styles very well indeed. The requirements of SEND and EAL pupils are met in excellent fashion; activities to provide additional stretch and challenge are almost always provided for the most able. In a very small number of lessons, teaching is predominantly teacher-led or there is an over-reliance on worksheets.
- 3.15 Since the last inspection, the teachers' own ICT skills have been successfully developed. There are many examples of good practice in using ICT to promote learning, with the benefits of full interactive working starting to be seen. Of those pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, an overwhelming majority say they are encouraged to think for themselves and to work independently. Teaching successfully promotes this by encouraging pupils to undertake and then present research, and to think round a problem rather than being told the solution. Throughout the school, visual and written stimuli are used effectively to promote active and independent thinking and learning. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a few pupils said they felt that teachers do not ensure they have the right amount of work to do. However, this was not raised as a concern by pupils during discussions; scrutiny of inspection evidence shows that work-loads are monitored regularly.
- 3.16 Assessment is excellent. Teaching makes excellent use of pupil-tracking data to guide the planning of work. The school records levels of attainment over time and

uses this information to set targets to aid improvement. Progress towards these targets is then monitored. Pupils also play an active part in monitoring their performance through self-assessment. Teachers give valuable oral feedback, both in lessons and during discussions at other times; this is valued by the pupils. Much of the marking is frequent and of the highest quality, identifying clearly the strengths but also areas for development, including guidance in how pupils might improve their work in future.

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 the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. They are self-confident and self-aware, demonstrating a high level of emotional maturity for their age; for example in the junior department, pupils' performances in their poetry competition showed their poise and aplomb. Pupils' responses in subjects such as drama, music and religious studies illustrate their growing sensitivity and appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. For example, pupils in the senior department were moved to reflect when contemplating the work of a modern-day Christian healing ministry.
- 4.3 Moral development is excellent throughout the school. Pupils understand clearly the difference between right and wrong. Pupils rigorously follow the expectations in the school code of conduct. Their behaviour and courtesy are outstanding. Pupils are strongly aware of the need to treat others well and understand that bullying of any kind is wrong. They say they appreciate that they are privileged to have the wealth of opportunities open to them and commented that their part was to apply themselves to the best of their ability, both in and out of the classroom. Pupils have a strong awareness of ethical matters, as seen in the whole of the senior department debate on whether poverty could be used as a criminal defence, and in the junior department where pupils have considered cruelty to animals.
- 4.4 Throughout the school, social development is outstanding. Relationships between pupils and with staff show extremely high levels of mutual respect and care. Pupils have the opportunity to take on many positions of responsibility. In the senior department, these are as varied as traditional head girl and house captain roles, to cyber mentors. In the junior department, pupils can take on positions such as being a representative on school council; in Year 6 every pupil holds a position of responsibility. Very successful "buddy" systems operate in both parts of the school. Throughout the school, pupils take on these roles with great enthusiasm and commitment. Pupils show high levels of economic, political and ethical awareness, with very active pupil participation in a variety of human-rights and relief organisations. Pupils also show a well-developed sense of social responsibility for those less fortunate. They raise considerable sums of money for charity through extensive and imaginative charity-fundraising events, many run by the pupils themselves, and show high levels of commitment to a wide range of community-service projects.
- 4.5 At all ages, cultural development is excellent. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of their own and other cultures through their curriculum studies, extra-curricular activities, from visitors to the school and trips, including to Europe and beyond. Pupils' cultural development is further extended through their work in art, music and drama and related trips to galleries, concerts and theatres. Throughout the school, pupils develop an excellent understanding of different faiths, cultures and traditions, including the Western tradition, from assemblies, from lessons and from events and trips. For example, from the junior department's African-themed week and from the school's links with schools in Zambia and Uganda. Pupils show a high degree of respect for those of other faiths and have very positive relationships with those from families different from their own.

- 4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils have reached an excellent standard of personal development, and are poised to make their mark in the wider world, successfully reflecting the school's long-standing ethos of its pupils becoming young women of grace and integrity.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Throughout the school, excellent provision for pastoral care fully supports the school's aims. The vast majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their daughters are happy and feel safe at school, which inspection evidence and discussions with pupils confirm. Staff know their pupils very well. Relationships between the staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are excellent; a high level of mutual respect and support is evident throughout. The recently-restructured pastoral team in the senior department has strengthened the quality of pastoral care, providing greater continuity as pupils move through the school. Pupils spoken with know they have people they can go to should they need guidance or support; they appreciate the school's provision of a counselling service should they need it.
- 4.9 The school is successful in promoting very high standards of behaviour and is effective in guarding against harassment and bullying. Pupils are clear about the expected standards of behaviour and respond very positively. The vast majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. Inspection scrutiny of records of the very few bullying incidents shows that the school takes bullying seriously and imposes appropriate sanctions in the case of any incidents. Pupils spoken with are confident that, should any bullying occur, it would be dealt with immediately and effectively.
- 4.10 The school is very successful in promoting the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise for all. A nutritious and varied range of hot and cold meals is provided, including healthy options. The wide-ranging sports programme provides many opportunities for pupils to be active and healthy. Of the pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority said the school does not seek their opinions or respond to them. However, inspection evidence indicates that pupils' suggestions are frequently sought; for example, via the two school councils, through which, pupils in the senior department were involved in the design of the new dining room, and in the junior department, the design of the playground. An appropriate plan is in place to continue to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.11 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.12 The school takes great care to promote the welfare, health and safety of all members of the school community. Staff at all levels take their responsibilities for welfare, health and safety seriously. Extremely thorough records are kept and staff take swift and supportive action when they identify a need. The school pays extremely close attention to the safeguarding of pupils. All the required pre-appointment checks on staff are correctly carried out and carefully recorded. All staff receive training in child protection at the appropriate level for their roles and at the required intervals; in addition, the school ensures staff have more frequent updates. The school maintains excellent relationships with outside agencies. The

recent introduction of sixth-form “cyber mentors” provides support for pupils in staying safe on the Internet.

- 4.13 Risk assessments covering all areas of school life are detailed and carefully thought through, including rigorous procedures for visits beyond the school site. The health and safety committee meets regularly and is highly effective in monitoring welfare, health and safety and in responding to any matters brought to its attention. All the required policies relating to welfare, health and safety are in place, implemented and regularly reviewed. Care is taken to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Regulations regarding fire safety are followed and appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire. Fire drills are regularly held and carefully recorded; any points arising are speedily followed up. Excellent arrangements are in place to provide for pupils who are ill, injured or have SEND. Many staff are trained in first aid. Detailed and clear first aid policies are carefully implemented. The admission and attendance registers are maintained correctly and kept for the required length of time.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors are highly committed to the school and support it fully in achieving its aims. They are very effective in discharging their responsibilities for maintaining educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. Governors have an excellent insight into the school, gained from the frequent and very detailed reports they receive from the head mistress, from their visits to school, including visiting lessons, and from regular presentations from staff on a wide variety of topics; for example, on the admission procedure and on pastoral care. This in-depth knowledge of the school, coupled with the outcomes from their annual strategy days, held jointly with the school's senior leaders, enables them to be highly successful in providing excellent levels of support and challenge, and stimulus for growth and improvement. Governors provide strong support for the head mistress and regularly appraise her work.
- 5.3 Governors take seriously their responsibilities for monitoring regulatory matters. They check policies and procedures and their implementation, including a thorough annual review by the whole governing body of the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They ensure that all the necessary pre-appointment checks on staff are carefully carried out and recorded accurately. Governors bring to the school a wide range of experience and expertise. They regularly review the composition of the governing body and are alert to the need for succession planning to provide on-going, wide-ranging and high-quality support for the school. New governors undergo thorough induction training and existing governors are conscientious in undertaking further training to support their roles.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.5 Throughout the school, the leadership and management are highly successful in providing clear vision and an outstanding quality of educational direction. At every level, they demonstrate a strong spirit of shared endeavour and the aspiration to engage critically with, and reflect on, all aspects of the school's work, its character, ethos and values. The senior management team (SMT), which includes the head mistress, deputy head, head of junior department and other senior staff, is forward looking and open to new ideas. Working closely with the governors, the SMT is highly effective in evaluating previous objectives, in setting annual priorities in all areas and in ensuring they are achieved. This is evident in the excellent quality of the pupils' education and the excellent standard of their personal development. At all levels of responsibility, leadership and management are highly effective in the discharge of their delegated responsibilities, including in the implementation of policies. The required pre-appointment checks on staff are carried out with due care and recorded efficiently. The school has responded successfully to all the recommendations of the previous inspection.

- 5.6 The partially restructured SMT has quickly established a highly-cohesive pattern of working, characterised by excellent communication and open and highly-supportive relationships across the junior and senior departments. This has built on the notably consultative approach commended in the previous inspection and includes working successfully with strong departmental and year group teams. The re-structuring of the SMT has provided successfully for greater continuity of pastoral care within the senior department. The head mistress' twice-yearly reviews with senior department heads of subject complement more frequent meetings between relevant members of SMT and subject co-ordinators throughout the school to discuss matters pertaining to pupils' learning and progress, to the curriculum and to teaching. The senior department's academic committee acts as a forum and think-tank regarding educational direction, and as a conduit effectively reporting to the SMT and across individual subject areas. Working parties in both the junior and senior departments regularly review key strategic areas; for example: assessment and marking; teaching and learning; provision for pupils who are able, gifted and talented and training for staff.
- 5.7 The school's self-evaluation is highly effective at every level, enabling it to identify areas needing improvement, to set ambitious and challenging targets and to ensure these are achieved. For example, via the production of the annual school development plan as well as an additional annual focus for the SMT; last year all teachers were observed teaching; this year pupils are being shadowed to ascertain their experience of learning. An annual review at departmental level successfully feeds into strategic planning; similarly, pastoral care is reviewed regularly at year-team meetings and by the SMT. In all this the two sections of the school work well together: for example, staff from the junior department observe Year 7 to gain understanding of the process and arrangements for transfer from the junior to the senior department. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has introduced a highly effective programme of tracking pupils' progress; staff make excellent use of these data to inform planning and to monitor the progress of individual pupils.
- 5.8 Management at all levels is highly successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high-quality staff. New staff follow a comprehensive induction programme, including regular review meetings. The appraisal system is thorough and is appreciated by staff spoken with who find it helpful in reflecting on their work and in identifying areas for further development and training.
- 5.9 The school has developed excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. Those parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed a high level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the work of the school. Throughout the school parents are given many opportunities to be involved in the activities and the work and progress of their children. They receive invitations to many events such as the carol service, concerts and productions and, in the junior department, to family assemblies. In addition, parents are invited to indicate their willingness to be involved with the school; for example, by giving careers talks. A strong and active parents' association organizes a wide programme of events, including such occasions as Vegas Night and the Christmas Bazaar, which add to the opportunities for parents to be involved with the life of the school.
- 5.10 Parents of current pupils and of prospective pupils are provided with all the required information about the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents said that information about the school, and its policies, was readily available, which was confirmed by inspection scrutiny of documentation

provided by the school. A series of excellent handbooks and curriculum booklets provide parents with a clear overview of all aspects and areas of their child's school life and day-to-day routines. The prospectus and accompanying documentation gives very helpful information to prospective parents. A great deal of information is available on the school website; informative weekly emailed newsletters, detailed termly newsletters and regular academic supplements keep parents well informed about events and activities involving their children.

- 5.11 Parent information evenings are held at key stages; for example, when options choices are to be made. In addition, regular parent forums are held on a variety of pastoral topics as well as information evenings on different aspects of the curriculum. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents said they were dissatisfied with the information they receive on their child's progress. However, scrutiny of inspection evidence indicates that parents receive regular and comprehensive reports about their children's work and progress which give clear indications of achievements and future targets. These, along with parents' evenings keep parents informed about their child's progress and attainment. The school has an appropriate complaints procedure in place. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents stated that they feel the school does not handle complaints well. However, inspection scrutiny of records of complaints indicates that the school takes parental complaints seriously. Any complaints are handled in line with the procedure.

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