



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

PINEWOOD SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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Pinewood School

Full Name of School	Pinewood School
DfE Number	931/6080
Registered Charity Number	309642
Address	Pinewood School Bourton Swindon Wiltshire SN6 8HZ
Telephone Number	01793 782205
Fax Number	01793 783476
Email Address	ph@pinewoodschool.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Philip Hoyland
Chairman of Governors	Mr David Williamson
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	365
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (188 boys; 177 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 246 3-5 (EYFS): 51 11-18: 68
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 329
Number of Boarders	Total: 36 Full: 3 Weekly: 33
Head of EYFS Setting	Ms Ruth Hall
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	06 Mar 2012 to 09 Mar 2012

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 March 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 through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

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

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and disability).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning 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.

Under Government arrangements, the inspection of boarding became an integrated part of ISI inspections from 1 September 2011. This inspection contains 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, personal development and welfare. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in June 2008 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, 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.

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 chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses 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

Mr David Horn	Reporting Inspector
Mr Richard Green	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Susan Hulmes	Team Inspector (Senior Manager, IAPS school)
Mr Simon Whittle	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Ian Rowe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Miss Mary Regan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Pinewood School is a co-educational, independent boarding and day school which provides education for pupils aged 3 to 13. It is located in and around a large, extended house set in 84 acres of countryside near the village of Bourton, on the Oxfordshire and Wiltshire border. The school was first established in 1875 in Farnborough, Hampshire and moved to its present site, as a boys' school, in 1946. The school became co-educational in 1976 and, in 1993, began to accept children from the age of three in a separate Pre-Prep department, which encompasses the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Years 1 and 2. The school aims to release the potential of pupils by developing character, curiosity, learning and skills through a variety of opportunities that present themselves within the academic, sporting, musical, dramatic and artistic arenas, as well as through its activity and adventure programmes. In 1938 the school became a charitable educational trust and company limited by guarantee, and is currently overseen by a council of governors.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has updated its science laboratories and information and communication technology (ICT). New facilities also include a performing arts centre, converted from the old gymnasium, and a changing block. In addition, new school management systems have recently been developed to include whole-school self-evaluation, assessment procedures and a modified appraisal system.
- 1.3 Currently, the school has 365 pupils: 188 boys and 177 girls. In the EYFS there are a total of 51 children, some of whom attend part-time in the Nursery. These children are housed in discrete accommodation in classrooms that have direct access to a separate EYFS playground. Of the 246 pupils aged 5 to 11, 65 pupils in Years 1 and 2 occupy classrooms adjacent to the EYFS. The Prep School comprises Years 3 to 13. Of the 36 pupils who board, 3 are full boarders and 33 board weekly. In addition, a further 80 flexi-boarders can stay on any single night during the week. Boarders are accommodated in a single boarding house with a separate supervised boys' and girls' wing.
- 1.4 Pupils are drawn mainly from the surrounding area and the majority are from a white British background. There is no formal entrance examination or interview for pupils joining the school but an initial assessment is undertaken by the school to determine each pupil's specific needs. Those who join the school in Year 3 have 'taster' days and are assessed informally prior to entry. The pupils have a fairly wide range of abilities; their ability profile is above the national average. Pupils are not assessed using national tests. About a fifth of all pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 69 of whom receive specialist support from a team of teachers under the guidance of a special educational needs co-ordinator. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. One pupil requires support in using English as an additional language (EAL), and eleven other pupils use another language at home.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pinewood School is highly successful in meeting its aim of releasing the potential of pupils by developing character, curiosity, learning and skills. Pupils achieve excellent standards throughout the school, including the EYFS, which have become more consistent in quality since the previous inspection. Pupils' success is largely a result of good teaching, a broad curriculum, and their own positive attitudes and relationships, enthusiasm and excellent behaviour. The curriculum is enhanced by the provision of an extensive range of opportunities for outdoor education, very well supported by the excellent quality and breadth of extra-curricular activities. Support in the classroom for pupils with SEND or EAL is inconsistent and has not improved significantly in quality since the previous inspection. Provision for the gifted and talented is excellent across a wide range of activities. Teaching throughout the school, including the EYFS, is good overall, and has improved in quality since the previous inspection. Since that time, excellent progress has been made in using assessment information to plan future work.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development from the EYFS onwards is excellent. Pupils combine self-confidence with genuine warmth and humility. They are confident, respect each other and have a constructive and open outlook towards their school community. Excellent social development means that they are quick to help others and there are good opportunities to take on responsibility. Pupils speak highly of the excellent pastoral care they receive from staff, and the school has comprehensive arrangements for pupils' welfare and highly efficient health and safety procedures. Meals are excellent and the substantial programme of physical education (PE) and games supports fitness very well. Boarders enjoy comfortable surroundings, underpinned by supportive relationships with each other, and are looked after by staff who have specific boarding responsibilities and receive training to support their role.
- 2.3 Clear and decisive leadership by both governors and senior staff has enabled the school to maintain its identity, ethos and sense of purpose. A well-balanced structure for governance effectively meets the school's needs. The school development plan is an effective and useful document that reflects the school's needs and priorities. Leadership and management are highly successful in enabling the school's aims to be fulfilled. School policies are generally applied effectively, although certain inconsistencies occur, for example in the implementation of the marking policy. Since the previous inspection, all aspects of the management of the school have been improved significantly, and clearly defined structures are now in place. The school has an excellent relationship with its parents, reflected in the strong responses to the parents' pre-inspection questionnaire. In particular, parents said that their children are happy at school and are looked after very well by the staff, and that they would be pleased to recommend the school to another parent.

2.(b) Action points**(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Re-evaluate the provision and support for pupils with SEND or EAL.
 2. Provide different, appropriately challenging work for all pupils in the classroom.
 3. Ensure that marking sets out clear targets for improvement and follows the school's marking policy.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 During their time at school, pupils advance their knowledge and understanding. They work well, both independently and collaboratively. They read intelligently and write fluently for a variety of purposes and audiences. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are of a high quality for their ages. They are extremely articulate, expressing themselves clearly in both oral and written tasks, and listen carefully to their teachers and to one another in lessons. Older pupils work well in groups to solve investigations in science and mathematics. They have good skills in ICT. Achievements in PE and games are excellent and this has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The quality of pupils' work in art, extra-curricular music and drama is of an exceptional standard.
- 3.3 Outcomes for children in the EYFS are excellent. From a wide range of starting points children make very good progress so that by the end of the Reception year most are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the Nursery year many children recognise numbers to 20, and are developing an awareness of letters and their sounds; the most able begin to read simple words. In Reception, children can repeat lines of a prayer accurately and with meaning. Children enjoy making decisions and start each morning choosing from a wide range of activities; increasingly, they seek independence. Children are provided with excellent opportunities for independent learning.
- 3.4 Pupils perform extremely well throughout the school across a range of academic and non-academic activities, including music, sport, art and drama. The school recently won a regional award for Learning Outside the Classroom, where it was identified as providing pupils with exceptional exploratory learning opportunities. The school celebrates a number of achievements in sports by individuals and groups. These include champions and medallists in national competitions, for example in riding, where the school team won the national cross-country championships in 2011. Pupils achieve places in county sports teams. A large number of pupils have been successful in graded music examinations and frequently win awards and prizes at the Devizes Eisteddfod. Recent scholarships to senior schools have included several academic, art, music, drama and sports awards.
- 3.5 The 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 above national age-related expectations. Most pupils attain high standards in all curriculum areas. However, those with SEND or EAL in the Prep School attain satisfactory levels. In Years 7 and 8, the pupils perform very successfully in Common Entrance examinations. Throughout the school, most pupils' progress is excellent in relation to those of similar abilities. This can be seen in the school's nationally standardised assessment data and arises from excellent personal support and understanding, which reinforce the good teaching. Pupils with SEND or EAL in the Prep School demonstrate satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. The more able pupils are consistently challenged through the school's excellent enrichment and Kaleidoscope lecture programmes, where they have many opportunities to develop, achieve and flourish through an excellent range of alternative activities.

- 3.6 Pupils' success in academic work and other areas of the curriculum owes much to their excellent, positive attitudes to their schoolwork. Behaviour is consistently excellent, both in the classroom and around the school. The pupils take enormous pride in their school, as well as in their own achievements and the accomplishments of others. They sustain high levels of concentration and motivation during lessons, making the most of the challenges set. Homework is completed punctiliously and written tasks are clearly set out and well presented.

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

- 3.7 The school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 This provision fully supports the school's aim of releasing potential by developing character, curiosity, learning and skills. The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of learning. All pupils also learn French from Year 1 and Latin from Year 5; in addition, some scholars learn Greek in Years 7 and 8. Significant improvements have been achieved since the previous inspection, in particular within mathematics and science, where the curriculum now provides excellent opportunities for investigation and problem solving, and in physical education. Schemes of work in other subjects have been reviewed, allowing pupils to enjoy a more creative and stimulating approach to learning. This is further enhanced by the school's commitment to outdoor learning and by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities.
- 3.9 The overall effectiveness of the Early Years provision is excellent. The curriculum is extremely well suited to the needs of the individual, and teachers provide a secure and nurturing environment in which children achieve high standards in their learning and development. Class timetables provide a good balance and coverage of the Early Learning Goals, as well as an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by children.
- 3.10 The curriculum in the Pre-Prep and Prep School is broad, varied and well balanced, and planning takes account of a variety of links across a range of subjects. The curriculum is appropriate to the age and needs of all pupils. Setting is used from Year 3 to allow for an appropriate pace of learning. The Learning Skills department supports pupils with SEND well, producing detailed individual educational plans and summaries, which supply classroom teachers with valuable information on pupils' needs. However, teachers are over-dependent on this specialist provision and, as a consequence, do not always take into account sufficiently the individual needs and abilities of pupils in the classroom. Inspectors found limited evidence of support for the small number of pupils with EAL. The most able pupils are challenged by stimulating opportunities to extend their learning. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship provision is strong, and careful planning ensures that this is embedded discreetly across the curriculum. The provision of ICT has improved since the previous inspection and supports pupils' learning successfully.
- 3.11 Pupils benefit particularly from a recently introduced programme of additional activities, designed to inspire a love of learning and to deepen their understanding. This provides a bridge between pupils' curricular and extra-curricular experiences, for example through subject-linked break-time clubs and participation in a variety of events and challenges. Pupils also enjoy an exceptional range of opportunities for out-of-school visits and to welcome visitors into their school. They are fully aware of the relevance of these experiences to their classroom learning, for example by relating a recent visit to a synagogue to work in religious studies. During the

inspection, the school hosted an Auschwitz survivor who spoke to the older pupils, and Year 2 pupils held a costumed Florence Nightingale day. These events allow pupils of all abilities to develop an interest in the wider world and are often held in the plentifully stocked and very well-managed library.

- 3.12 Extra-curricular provision is outstanding, and is enhanced by the school's spacious and striking grounds. Pupils enjoy an extensive range of activities and are actively involved in a variety of sporting pursuits. Opportunities for music and the performing arts add significantly to pupils' personal development. An extra challenge is provided by a popular adventure programme in which all pupils in the Prep School participate on an annual basis.
- 3.13 The school offers excellent links with the local community, in particular through its Science in the Community and sports outreach programmes, which have established welcome connections with local primary schools. Pupils are also encouraged to feel part of the international community through the school's support of charitable initiatives in Africa. Pupils speak positively about the Shonda Project in Kenya, for which the school raises funds. This project has encouraged pupils to empathise with children from a very different situation and to appreciate the value of the many outstanding opportunities available to them.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.15 In the EYFS and Pre-Prep, the quality of teaching is excellent. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide many exciting learning experiences for them, both within and outside the classroom. Teachers make very good use of the exceptional outside learning environment and plan exciting creative activities. Their ongoing observation and thorough assessment of pupils are used to inform planning and to determine the next steps in learning.
- 3.16 In the Prep School teaching is good. It promotes high standards and fulfils the aims of the school. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively, as demonstrated in the high quality investigative work undertaken in both mathematics and science. In subjects such as English, good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their work, which has a significant impact on improving their oral communication as well as their self-confidence. Praise and encouragement help the pupils to enjoy the subjects studied, and an emphasis is placed on group work and co-operative learning.
- 3.17 Teachers demonstrate that they have a good understanding of the needs of their pupils. This enables a large majority of pupils to make excellent progress. Teachers benefit from good training regarding pupils with SEND or EAL, though a small minority of teaching is less successful in matching work to the individual needs of the pupil. In classes where there is a wide range of abilities, pupils are not consistently provided with work that meets their individual capabilities. More able pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of additional activities that very effectively complement the curriculum. Displays around the school cover a wide range of the pupils' work and exhibit a high standard of individuality and creativity.
- 3.18 Overall, teachers' planning is meticulous and concise, though it sometimes lacks sufficient depth of detail. In a small number of cases, it is not clear how work undertaken in the classroom relates to subject schemes of work. Teachers show a

good depth of knowledge and love of their subject; this was especially evident in PE, music, art and science lessons.

- 3.19 Self-assessment and clear target setting at the beginning of lessons encourage pupils to take ownership of and responsibility for their learning. This element has improved since the previous inspection. Assessment data is recorded and tracked in great detail throughout the school, meeting a recommendation from the previous report. Results from standardised tests in reading, spelling, mathematics and English, as well as commercially available tests and the school's own internal examinations, are available to staff. These provide a valuable means of identifying and checking pupils' abilities and progress throughout the school. Data is discussed and analysed by senior staff, who disseminate the necessary information to classroom teachers through regular meetings. The overall quality of marking is good but lacks consistency between subjects and year groups. When it is most effective it relates directly to the policy, sets clear targets for further development and is positive in tone.
- 3.20 Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent, and a warm and friendly atmosphere pervades lessons. Excellent questioning by teachers is used to confirm the pupils' understanding and extend their knowledge. Resources throughout the school are of excellent quality and they are used effectively to support learning. Classrooms are very well equipped with whiteboards and these are beginning to be used effectively by teachers. The use of ICT in the classroom has increased since the previous inspection, both in ICT lessons across all age groups and throughout the curriculum as a whole.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the school, including the EYFS, is excellent.
- 4.2 This quality builds on the findings of the previous inspection. The ethos of the school and its Christian values are held in high regard by pupils, parents and staff. By the time pupils leave the school, they are mature, confident and thoughtful, due to the great care and attention the school gives to their personal development. A strong supportive ethos, together with staff who set an excellent example, ensures that pupils are respected and valued. Within this climate they grow in self-belief and self-esteem. Pupils' self-confidence and maturity are demonstrated in the great pride and enthusiasm with which they described their school.
- 4.3 Pupils have a well-developed spiritual awareness. Assemblies provide the opportunity for the school to come together to reinforce its spirituality. In lessons pupils learn about other faiths and religions. The pupils take responsibility and pride in their achievements, through musical and drama performances, scholarships and sporting successes. In an English lesson pupils showed how they could empathise with the feelings and emotions of other characters, an example of the strength of the friendship they show towards each other.
- 4.4 The provision for moral development is outstanding; pupils have a strong moral code, which is upheld by the staff and permeates the daily life of the school. Through class and tutor periods, the staff instil confidence and self-belief so that pupils learn to value themselves whilst showing tolerance and respect for others. As they move up the school pupils develop the skills to think through the consequences of their own actions. They have opportunities to discuss, debate and challenge moral issues. The school has a clear code of conduct, which pupils understand and to which they adhere. An effective reward system supports pupils' progress. Pupils show great respect for their school environment; the school has worked hard to develop the beauty of its natural surroundings.
- 4.5 The level of social awareness, understanding, tolerance and harmony throughout the school is outstanding. Behaviour within lessons and outside the classroom is of a consistently high standard. There is a relaxed yet respectful relationship between pupils and staff. Older pupils show consideration for younger ones, and pupils help each other. The strong sense of community is further enhanced by an effectively organised house system. Charity events continue throughout the year, in both the Pre-Prep and the Prep School. Through assemblies and PSHE, pupils gain an understanding of public institutions and services in the wider community.
- 4.6 Pupils' understanding and appreciation of their own culture and those of others are further enhanced by the range of nationalities amongst their number. The general knowledge programme and the current affairs assemblies engender a genuine understanding and respect for the wider world. A breadth of opportunities for learning is available to the pupils, whilst making a significant contribution to their excellent personal development.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 This contributes positively to pupils' very strong personal development. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Both in lessons and around the school they show courtesy to their peers and adults. They have excellent self-discipline, showing genuine consideration for others. In the EYFS, children feel happy, safe and secure at school and respond positively to their teachers.
- 4.9 The excellent pastoral care arrangements, including the strong support and guidance that pupils receive from their teachers, help current pupils and those new to the school to settle quickly to school routines. The youngest pupils have a designated key person to whom they are encouraged to speak if they have any concerns. The older pupils have form tutors, but in practice all teachers and ancillary staff are deeply committed to providing strong support for the pupils. Qualified nurses are part of this key team. During interviews with inspectors, pupils spoke about how well everyone gets on at school and they were confident that staff would listen to them and sort out any difficulty. Excellent relationships exist between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils. The school community is a vibrant and welcoming place where pupils feel secure and valued.
- 4.10 Throughout the school, pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating and the need to take regular exercise. These messages are reinforced through the PSHE programme and lessons planned by PE staff. The excellent school meal service offers an extensive daily menu that always includes a salad bar and fresh fruit. Pupils also benefit from healthy snacks throughout the day. In the EYFS, children are encouraged to make sensible and healthy choices within safe parameters, so developing their skills for the future. They thoroughly enjoy their healthy snacks and school dinners. Their physical skills are highly developed as a direct result of the excellent opportunities they have for dance, judo, sport and play on large apparatus. They are aware of the importance of keeping safe, and co-operate, share and show respect for each other.
- 4.11 The school's anti-bullying policy is excellent and complies with requirements. Pupils feel that bullying is not an issue in school and were confident that staff would deal with any incidents immediately. The school's anti-bullying charter is signed by all pupils each term. The school is mindful of the need to include disabled access both to and within its buildings, and has an appropriate accessibility plan. The school councils, which represent pupils throughout the school, meet twice each term and are seen by staff as a key vehicle for pupils to have a voice and put forward their suggestions. Several ideas discussed at these meetings have been taken up by the school.

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

- 4.12 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.13 Policies are robust and helpful in all the required areas of welfare, health and safety, having appropriate regard to government guidelines. Clear and well-constructed risk assessments have been developed for every aspect of school life to ensure that pupils, staff and visitors in the school environment are safe. All staff are encouraged to look out for health and safety issues on a daily basis and any that arise are dealt with quickly by the maintenance staff. The safeguarding of pupils is thorough and all staff receive child protection training in line with current statutory guidance. The safe recruitment of staff is undertaken meticulously, and the induction of teaching and non-teaching staff is carried out with regular re-instruction built into the programme of in-service training.
- 4.14 Electrical equipment is tested annually and any necessary emergency repairs are swiftly addressed. All staff are trained in first aid and have a good knowledge of the specific needs of individual pupils, for example those with SEND, asthma or nut allergies. The matrons provide excellent care in the surgery for accidents and ailments; records are kept of medicines dispensed each day and entered onto each pupil's file. Measures have been taken to minimise the risk of fire and other hazards, and regular fire practices take place, sometimes with a route blocked to simulate a real fire. All staff receive regular fire training. The school's admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and suitably archived for the previous three years.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.15 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.16 This provision results in an outstanding experience for the boarders, which enables them to participate fully in the educational and social life of the school. Boarding staff are highly professional and caring. Boarders are confident, make decisions for themselves and show a high level of respect to each other. This creates an ambience that is harmonious, eventful and industrious. The boarding environment is safe and caring; all boarders speak proudly of the experience of being part of the boarding community and frequently refer to it as 'a family'. Boarders have a good understanding of the communal and life skills they are gaining from this experience and are able to relate this to the next stage in their lives at their future schools. Boarders develop independence and achieve their potential, thus fulfilling the school's aims. The boarding house has very few rules, but boarders clearly know what is right and wrong and have a mutual respect for staff and each other. The boarders appreciate that their views are listened to and acted upon. They have an excellent awareness of current events through newspapers and televised news. Boarders are always sensitive to the needs of their peers. As a consequence, excellent behaviour is the norm throughout the boarding house. Older boarders enjoy the responsibility of helping younger and newer boarders, and offer support when it is needed. They regard boarding as great fun and appreciate the support and guidance provided by the staff.
- 4.17 Pastoral arrangements for boarders are excellent. Boarding staff take a genuine interest in the boarders' welfare. All new boarders are given comprehensive induction and guidance, which gives them the support to become fully integrated into the boarding community. The individual needs of all boarders are met fully, and they

are positive, cheerful, observant and healthy. A wide variety of supervised evening activities is on offer, though freedom of choice and self-directed time are always available. Weekend excursions, activities and trips are enjoyable, educational and well planned. The popular cooking club run by kitchen staff enables some boarders to make biscuits and cakes for parents after sporting fixtures. The boarding accommodation is tidy, comfortable, well maintained and secure. It is respected by the boarders, who take great pride in personalising their own areas by making them homely. The school maintains regular contact with parents, carers and guardians in a number of ways and boarders said that there is no difficulty in contacting home during the day or evening. All boarders spoke extremely highly of the food, which is nutritious, plentiful and varied. Mealtimes are well-ordered social occasions which are eagerly anticipated. Requests from parents for particular recipes have been tried out by the catering staff and the Special Supper is a keenly anticipated occasion. Those boarders with, for example, nut allergies are catered for with individual diets. The arrangements and amenities for unwell or injured boarders are excellent, and the boarders' medical centre is staffed by well-qualified nurses who take time and pride in their work. The school has a swift and efficient system for laundering boarders' clothes and bed linen. All staff are entirely dedicated to improving the quality of boarding provision and care, and work together very effectively as a team.

- 4.18 The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of boarders are excellent. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive, and the school has efficient recruitment processes that meet all the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for boarding. Safeguarding training of house staff is up to date, and boarding staff understand that the safety of the boarders is paramount. Appropriate numbers of well-qualified and experienced staff supervise boarders after school and at weekends. Boarders know where to turn if they need advice or help from a member of staff during the day and at night. Risk assessments are all carefully planned, reviewed and acted upon, and boarders take responsibility for monitoring their own health and safety. Fire practices are recorded accurately and held at least every half term in boarding time; both boarders and staff are aware of evacuation procedures. The school has all the relevant and required policies covering the safeguarding and supervision of boarders and these are well known by boarding staff. Boarders understand that bullying will not be tolerated, but report that such incidences are rare because the caring relationship they have with the boarding staff ensures that any concerns are dealt with discreetly and sensitively.
- 4.19 The excellent leadership and management of boarding enable the school to fulfil its boarding aims and ethos. The effective organisation, positive relationships and congenial atmosphere of the boarding house help boarders to excel in their personal development. Boarders are enthusiastic about their experiences in the boarding house and refer to it as their home. Care plans are carefully formulated and applied. Links between academic and residential staff are strong and supportive, enabling a seamless transition between daytime and evening activities. Boarding staff give their time willingly, listening to boarders read and assisting with homework when required. Leadership ensures that job descriptions are well defined; the effective appraisal system sets targets and aids the further development of staff. The boarding house runs exceptionally well and all staff are encouraged to consider ways of improving systems through practical, imaginative and forward thinking. Staffing levels are consistently well maintained, and boarders understand where staff are to be found after school and in the evening. Formalised staff boarding meetings are held regularly. At these, staff consider potential improvements in the

arrangements and focus on meeting the emotional and academic needs of individual boarders. Strong relationships between boarders and staff enable the views of boarders to be considered sympathetically through regular boarding council meetings. In their responses to the questionnaires, parents were unanimously appreciative of the care and support provided by the boarding staff. The school has responded to all of the recommendations regarding the National Minimum Standards since the previous inspection.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Highly effective governance enables the school to meet its aims, maintain standards and plan for additional improvements. The governing council oversees the work of the school, ensuring effective oversight, a common resolve, and well-judged planning and investment. The council brings to its work a broad range of relevant professional expertise from fields including finance and education. Particular responsibilities, such as safeguarding, EYFS and learning support, ensure a high level of involvement. The structures of governance are clear, and four parent governors provide strong ties to the school community. Meetings of the full board and committees are regular and clearly minuted. The leadership of the EYFS is extremely well supported by a governor with designated responsibility for the setting, and both were actively involved in the development of the spacious new Nursery extension and the stimulating and exciting outside learning environment.
- 5.3 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 the committees. Governors attend both formal occasions and special events, which has enhanced their understanding of the school's particular needs. The governing council was advised to include ICT expertise, develop a more rigorous process of strategic planning and increase governor attendance at school through an initiative for the tracking of pupils and a governors' 'away day'. These recommendations have now been implemented.
- 5.4 The governing council assiduously monitors development planning, which is perceptive and realistic, making every effort to ensure the best use of the school's excellent site and resources. Governors benefit from training, including an induction course for new governors that includes meetings, a tour and a detailed induction package. The headmaster is appraised periodically by the governing body and an external assessor. Governors are well aware of their legal responsibilities for child protection, welfare, and health and safety, and fulfil them carefully. Policy documents are subject to a programme of annual review.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership, management and links with parents is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership and management of the school are significantly stronger than at the time of the previous inspection and have enabled the school to build on the existing excellent quality of education and of pastoral care. Leadership and management successfully promote and support the school's aim to ensure that pupils realise their full potential through a variety of opportunities within the academic and wider world. Pupils' excellent personal development is supported by dedicated staff, who are led with care and consideration, and a commitment to achieve increasingly higher standards of teaching and learning.
- 5.7 Effective educational direction is established by the school leadership team, whose members give the school a very clear sense of purpose and resolve. Lines of

responsibility are organised through clearly set out job descriptions and the leadership takes overall accountability for all aspects of the school's work. It is highly effective in overseeing the day-to-day management and monitoring of policies and procedures. The whole-school development plan provides a comprehensive and detailed framework for the future of the school, set out over a five-year period. Staff meetings are a key and effective part of school life and provide the opportunity for the senior leadership and management teams to evaluate and reflect upon the work of the school. Issues arising are discussed openly and solutions effectively promulgated amongst other members of staff.

- 5.8 The senior management has created strong links between the different sections of the school. Senior managers work closely together, and the teaching staff are extremely well supported through effective monitoring and a rigorous appraisal system that identifies areas for professional development. A small number of staff have pursued Advanced Skills Teacher status, supported by the school. Parents say how well the school is led and managed.
- 5.9 Heads of department provide effective leadership of their subjects and they communicate regularly with their colleagues, supporting the good quality of teaching. Policies and procedures are well known by staff who are suitably trained for their roles. Subject heads have carried out departmental reviews and are leading their teams forward to ensure that the quality of education continues to be of a high standard. This has led to an improved awareness of the effect of assessment on planning, enabling teachers and pupils to identify next steps for learning. However, the quality of marking remains inconsistent across subjects in the Prep School.
- 5.10 The school has recruited high quality staff and has robust procedures for their appointment. Excellent measures are in place for the induction and support of new staff, who receive appropriate training in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety procedures. The central register of appointments is completed accurately and fully. The friendly and positive atmosphere which is created by the senior leadership team is enhanced by the efficient work of non-teaching staff who play an active role in supporting pupils.
- 5.11 Leadership and management are excellent at all levels in the EYFS. Senior staff demonstrate highly effective leadership skills. There is a clear commitment to continuous and sustained improvement, and the recent self-evaluation reveals a clear vision for future developments. Resources for both indoors and outdoors are of very high quality and are accessible to the children. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and thorough risk assessments are in place. All staff are suitably qualified and effectively deployed. Teachers successfully implement policies that provide invaluable guidance, promote equality and eliminate discrimination.
- 5.12 The excellent relationship between the school and parents strongly supports pupils' achievements and their personal development, in accordance with the school's aims. There were no areas of significant concern noted from the parent questionnaires. In their responses, parents were overwhelmingly pleased with the range and breadth of subjects on offer and with the variety of extra-curricular activities available. A large majority said that their children are happy at school and are looked after by the staff. Almost all parents said that they receive timely responses to their questions and that they would recommend the school to another parent. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They are actively encouraged to visit the school at mutually agreed times to discuss their children's progress and other matters. Parents are regularly invited to attend

concerts, sports matches and social occasions, or as guest speakers to address the pupils about aspects of their professional work. During the inspection, a good number of parents came to support hockey matches and enjoyed the tea afterwards with the players and staff.

- 5.13 Regular forums are held in order to seek parents' views, and any suggestions are genuinely considered. The termly calendar enables parents to plan ahead, and information on forthcoming events is available to parents through the school's website. Specific messages are usefully communicated through a recently introduced information texting service. Parents are also able to communicate directly with individual teachers by email if they need information or have a concern. Members of the active Friends of Pinewood group organise a variety of events for the whole parent body, including a bonfire night, Christmas fair and quiz evening. They raise considerable sums of money for charity and the school. Items recently acquired include the Tree Tops play area. Parents are invited to attend the Kaleidoscope lecture programme on Saturday mornings at which guest speakers talk on a range of topics. In the EYFS, a very positive partnership has been established with parents and they are actively encouraged to be fully involved in the life of the school. In the recent questionnaire parents expressed their strong support of the setting.
- 5.14 Regular parent consultation evenings allow parents to meet more formally with the staff. Detailed written reports keep parents fully informed about the progress of their children. For older pupils, these include grades for effort and achievement, as well as an indication of how pupils are progressing and guidance on how they can improve their performance in the future. Homework diaries enable pupils to record work to be undertaken at home and record books for younger pupils are used productively to aid the learning of spellings and times tables.
- 5.15 The clear and detailed website and colourful annual magazine provide parents of current and prospective pupils with the information they require about the school. Procedures for dealing with parental complaints are clear and any concerns are dealt with sensitively, in line with the school policy, though the majority of concerns or queries are dealt with informally.

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