



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL JUNIOR SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Junior School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Junior School
DfE Number	384/6119
Registered Charity Number	529908
Address	Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Junior School 158 Northgate Wakefield West Yorkshire WF1 3QY
Telephone Number	01924 373821
Fax Number	01924 231604
Email Address	admissions@qegsjs.org.uk
Head	Mrs Louise Gray
Chair of Governors	Mr John McLeod
Age Range	4 to 11
Total Number of Pupils	375
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Numbers by Age	4-5 (EYFS): 39 5-11: 336
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Lynne Butler
EYFS Gender	Boys
Inspection Dates	10 Nov 2015 to 13 Nov 2015

PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI second cycle inspection was in November 2009.

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 children aged under two), 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 members of staff and with the chair of governors and the chairman of the general purposes committee for the two schools for boys within the Foundation, 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

Mr Graham Gorton	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Louise Lawrance	Team Inspector (Junior Head, GSA school)
Mr Andrew Rudkin	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mrs Bridget Forrest	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Junior School is an independent day school for boys between the ages of four and eleven years. It was established in 1910 and is located adjacent to the senior school, which was founded in 1591 by Royal Charter. It is one of four schools that together form Wakefield Grammar School Foundation, which offers boys and girls an education from 3 to 18 years. The school is governed by trustees of the Foundation. In September 2011 the school opened a pre-preparatory department, Centenary House, extending its lower age downwards from seven to four.
- 1.2 The school has its own specialist facilities for art, design technology (DT), including food technology, information and communication technology (ICT), music and science. It has close links with Wakefield Cathedral and provides choristers for the cathedral choir through a scheme of choral scholarships. The school has playing fields and a swimming pool that is available to other schools within the Foundation. The surrounding grounds include the Millennium Garden and a playground. The school uses the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the sports hall, the Elizabeth Theatre and dining hall in the senior school. It has recently leased nearby land which is intended to enable the boys to further experience new challenges and activities in an outdoor education programme.
- 1.3 The school shares the broad ethos and aims of the Foundation, adapted to meet the needs of this age group. It aims to foster an ethos where academic success is gained by valuing learning in an understanding and well-structured environment. It seeks to encourage pupils to practise the school principles, which are intended to promote respect, moral values and a sense of community. The school intends that by catering for the needs of a range of abilities, within a balanced curriculum, it can make each pupil feel valued, included and secure.
- 1.4 At the time of inspection the school had 375 boys on roll, of whom 39 were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Most join the school at the age of four from Mulberry House, the Foundation nursery school. There are 86 pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly from the Indian sub-continent, China and Africa. Most boys live within a 20-mile radius and come mainly from professional and business families. The ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.5 The school has identified 10 boys as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and a further 54 boys who receive additional learning support lessons. None has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school has no pupil who speaks English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is most successful in achieving its aims and provides an education of an extremely high quality for all its pupils. Pupils, including in the EYFS, achieve highly in all areas of the curriculum. The pupils' attainment is excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. Progress is good, and amongst the able and those with SEND, it is excellent, reflecting the support they receive. Pupils are also highly successful in areas such as sport, music and drama. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards learning are excellent and all show a desire to give of their best at all times. They work with great enthusiasm. The school offers excellent curricular and extra-curricular opportunities at all levels. The core curriculum, including in the EYFS, is strengthened through the addition of outdoor education and the use of woodland settings, which provide excellent opportunities to develop and foster skills such as teamwork, confidence building and independence. The extra-curricular provision is extensive, offering a wide range of exciting opportunities to engage and enthuse the pupils. Teaching throughout the school, including in the EYFS, is excellent. Lessons are often delivered with flair and pace which excite and fully engage the pupils. Strong subject knowledge is a key feature of teaching throughout the school. Teachers share their expertise with one another and there are thorough systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of learning. Marking and assessment information are now used well in planning lessons, thus fully meeting a recommendation from the previous inspection.
- 2.2 All pupils display high levels of personal development. They are confident and self-aware, and demonstrate a strong moral compass. Pupils take their social responsibilities seriously and contribute effectively to the life of their school and to the world beyond. They have a strong cultural awareness and show a natural respect and tolerance towards those from different religious and cultural backgrounds. The pastoral care of the pupils, including in the EYFS, is of high order. Excellent procedures are in place to ensure that the pupils feel happy, safe and secure. Pupils' concerns over the consistency with which staff give sanctions are supported by inspection evidence. There is ample opportunity for pupils' opinions to be heard through the school council, 'worry boxes' in classrooms and the open, relaxed relationships that exist between the pupils and the staff. Careful attention is paid to the welfare, health and safety of all pupils, reflected in areas such as safeguarding and in the safer recruitment of staff. The school keeps excellent, detailed records on all matters.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is excellent. The Foundation provides excellent oversight on all matters, and both support and challenge. The school's excellent leadership and management, including in the EYFS, are committed to ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met fully. They are most successful in providing a learning environment that focuses on ensuring that every pupil is the very best that he can be. An excellent development plan provides a vehicle through which the school's leaders and managers are forward looking in their pursuit of excellence. Throughout the school, parents are overwhelmingly supportive. They value the school's 'open-door' policy and the opportunities they have to be involved in their children's education. Parents greatly appreciate the fact that their children are treated with respect and as individuals, whilst receiving an excellent all-round education.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that there is consistency amongst staff in the giving of sanctions.

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' learning and achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The EYFS setting fulfils its aim of providing an enriching and challenging education within a supportive and caring environment. Children are happy, enthusiastic learners who make rapid progress from their starting points, with the vast majority reaching and some exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Children with particular needs benefit from intervention programmes, where they receive additional support. Children are confident and articulate. They count backwards from twenty and learn to count in twos, and by the end of the year they are able to use double numbers. They use a wide range of ICT, such as tablet computers, interactive whiteboards and programmable toys, independently and competently. When using programs to draw, they learn to use a fill and draw tool and change shades of colour. They read simple words and use them in sentences. By the end of the Reception year, children write sentences independently. They learn to think critically when problem solving, for example when investigating how to stop leaks in their water circuit play.
- 3.3 Throughout the school, pupils develop high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. This fully supports the school's aims to encourage high academic standards and an enthusiasm for learning. The quality of the pupils' learning and achievements has improved since the previous inspection.
- 3.4 In literacy, younger pupils show excellent levels of achievement when they write structured texts, applying spelling rules and punctuation with confidence. Their story-writing skills reflect their excellent subject knowledge and understanding. English skills are well developed as pupils move through the school. Older pupils write with clarity and purpose, successfully conveying meaning in a variety of genres. From a young age, pupils become accomplished readers. Pupils are excellent listeners and are able to successfully articulate their thoughts whilst listening respectfully to the views and opinions of others. Mathematical skills and concepts are understood and effectively applied to work in other subjects by pupils of all ages. Younger pupils understand the place value of numbers and can recognise patterns within groups of digits. Older pupils become accomplished mathematicians, which is reflected in their excellent problem-solving skills and in the high standards of their computational work. Pupils' skills in science enable them to predict, experiment and hypothesise successfully from an early age. Pupils demonstrate excellent skills, knowledge and competency in ICT. From a young age, they confidently use hand-held devices and programmable toys, whilst the oldest comfortably demonstrate their aptitude in computing, using animation programs. Pupils' physical development is strong across all age groups. Younger pupils develop co-ordination, stamina and strength through their lessons and play. Older pupils are accomplished in a wide range of sports and activities.
- 3.5 The pupils' strong academic progress is enhanced by their excellent achievement beyond the classroom. Success in music competitions, particularly the choir, and the high quality of drama productions reflect the pupils' well-developed creative skills. Pupils achieve highly in sporting events, as exemplified by the school's rugby and swimming teams, which have enjoyed considerable success at local, county and national levels. Excellent standards are reached in a wide range of other individual and team sports, including hockey, cross country and athletics. Pupils are also

successful in a range of other competitions and challenges of a cerebral nature, such as chess and mathematics. They make excellent progress as they move through the school, and most successfully transfer to the senior school, some with scholarships and awards.

- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment, as judged from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' written work and interviews with pupils, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability, and some make excellent progress. For example, those who are able, gifted or talented and those with SEND make excellent progress because they are extremely well supported by the school.
- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are a considerable strength of the school. Pupils have a distinct desire, enhanced by the strength of their relationships with teachers, to give of their best. They are keen and motivated from the outset, displaying high levels of enjoyment, and are inquisitive learners. Pupils' co-operative learning is a strength of the school; they work instinctively well together and share their ideas enthusiastically. They listen carefully and show a well-developed respect for the opinions of others.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The EYFS provides a broad, creative curriculum throughout every area of learning, enhanced by specialist teaching in music, French and swimming. Staff are highly skilled in delivering a curriculum particularly suitable for boys. They work as a very strong team that understand the needs of each child in its care. They plan an excellent balance of challenging child-initiated and adult-led activities, topics derived from the boys' interests and themed weeks within the stimulating and imaginative indoor and outdoor areas.
- 3.10 The curriculum throughout the rest of the school is of a high quality and successfully covers the required areas of learning. The curriculum does not undermine the key concepts of Britishness, such as respect for the law, democracy and individual freedom. It fully supports the aims of the school to deliver a stimulating range of boy-centred opportunities to excite and enthuse young boys and subsequently ignite a passion for discovery and the beginning of lifelong learning. It is suitable for all ages and abilities, and meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is broad, with a focus on English, mathematics and science. It is notably strong in the excellent opportunities provided for the personal development of pupils, including preparing them for life in modern British society. A comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) scheme of work is supported by an excellent outdoor education programme, which promotes life skills such as teamwork and communication. For younger pupils there is an emphasis on a creative curriculum to make learning interesting, relevant and meaningful. Pupils receive specialist teaching in music, art, physical education (PE), science, ICT and DT, which includes food technology. Older pupils in the school benefit from setting in classes by prior attainment in English and mathematics. The introduction of French from Reception has resulted in much greater competency in modern foreign languages. Curriculum planning is thorough, and schemes of work are detailed and effectively support

progression. The excellent curricular provision is underpinned by academic focus and the preparation of pupils for the next stage of their education.

- 3.11 Provision for pupils with SEND is excellent. The school has a thorough process to identify and track pupils. High quality support is given both in one-to-one sessions from specialist staff and through focused support within lessons. Staff are given clear and concise communications about the needs of all pupils in the school. These plans are reviewed and updated regularly, ensuring that the needs of the pupils are met fully. Excellent levels of challenge ensure that pupils identified as able, gifted and talented are provided for, and there are many extra opportunities for pupils to extend themselves through initiatives such as the QEGS Diploma, a range of challenges for Years 4, 5 and 6.
- 3.12 The experiences of the pupils are enriched through visits and visitors linked to the subjects and topics studied. Parents who have particular expertise are actively invited to talk to the pupils to broaden their educational experience. All age groups of pupils have access to a diverse number of clubs, visits and trips to venues such as local places of worship, galleries, museums and outdoor education centres. Many high quality residential trips support the curriculum and provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to experience new challenges away from the school and to extend their portfolio of skills.
- 3.13 Extra-curricular provision is excellent. The wide range of activities greatly enhances the physical, creative and thinking skills of the pupils. The pupils enjoy an excellent array of clubs, which provide extensive opportunities for sporting, cultural, academic and artistic interests to be followed. These include choir, golf, swimming, fencing, art, cookery, gardening, sewing and martial arts, with many opportunities for performances, competition and celebration. The pupils benefit from excellent links with the local community, such as attending workshops at local galleries and sculpture parks, as well as participating in a local outdoor education programme. Pupils benefit from excellent links with the cathedral in the city, particularly as the school provides a small number of choristers each year. The school has also created a strong link with local good causes, such as a children's charity, fund raising and organising special parties for them.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Staff in the EYFS have high expectations and a very secure understanding of how children learn. They plan exciting and challenging tasks to further individual learning and develop the children's investigative and imaginative skills. Planning and assessment are particular strengths of the setting. This results in high quality and often inspirational teaching.
- 3.16 Throughout other years, high quality teaching successfully promotes the aims of the school to provide a range of teaching and learning styles, enabling the progress of all pupils to be monitored and targets to be set for the future development of both individuals and year groups. Following a recommendation from the previous inspection, excellent practice is now widely shared to ensure that planning takes assessment and good quality marking into account in order to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities and needs. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection.

- 3.17 The teachers know their pupils extremely well and planning is based on a strong understanding of all the pupils' needs. All lessons are planned with an understanding of how boys learn best. Thorough planning takes account of pupils' previous learning, and target setting shows how progress can be best achieved. Encouraging and supportive marking across all subjects is suitably guided and in line with whole-school marking policies. The pupils understand the mark scheme and feel that it gives them a clear indication of how they can improve their work. Planning is monitored by subject co-ordinators, who, along with senior members of staff, carry out regular work scrutiny and planning reviews. The subject co-ordinators meet regularly on shared teaching aims, signalling any areas where extra support is required. Very constructive informal and formal assessments throughout the school pertinently inform future planning for progress. Learning objectives are clearly stated, and pupils particularly appreciate how their targets for improvement enable greater achievement and promote their self-esteem. Verbal feedback offers more valuable individual support and reinforcement.
- 3.18 The excellent teaching draws particularly on the teachers' strong subject knowledge and a very skilful engagement of the pupils' interest. The use of subject specialists has further enhanced levels of learning. Lessons are creative, exciting, inspiring and lively. The pace of lessons is excellent and pupils respond with a sense of fun and a genuine joy of learning. Lessons are well managed, with a mutual respect between staff and pupils. Time is skilfully planned for the application of knowledge and skills, consolidation and personal reflection. Extensive ICT resources are used effectively by teachers and are an integral part of lessons. This increases interaction with the pupils, and teaching is enhanced through these high quality resources. Teachers provide a vibrant learning environment, displaying information and celebrating pupils' work and achievements.
- 3.19 Enthusiastic teaching keeps pupils focused on their work, promoting excellent behaviour. The teaching is engaging, with good pace and content that challenges pupils of all abilities and encourages a willingness to learn and achieve. High quality teaching is skilfully delivered using a wide range of teaching styles that meet the needs of all pupils. As pupils move up the school, teaching ensures that they take increasing responsibility for their own progress, becoming more independent learners. Highly skilled teaching ensures that the needs of pupils who are able, or who have particular gifts and talents, are met fully through access to further challenges in every lesson and additional targeted programmes. Teaching meets fully the needs of those pupils with SEND, supported by a comprehensive learning support programme that includes, where appropriate, withdrawal from lessons for individual and group sessions with specialists, in-class support staff and targeted provision by the class teacher. The excellent use of teaching assistants plays a significant role in the nurturing of pupils' self-esteem and progress.
- 3.20 Teaching promotes tolerance and respect, and all teachers are careful to ensure that work and discussions on political issues are balanced and non-prejudicial. Skilful questioning and debate ensure that a balanced view is always presented.

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 In the EYFS, children learn to co-operate and take turns, for example when playing a mathematics game on the computer. They make decisions and choices during child-initiated sessions and when selecting snacks. British values are actively promoted throughout the setting. This was demonstrated as children respectfully stood still and observed a minute's silence on Armistice Day and understood the significance of poppies. Positive attitudes to diversity are fostered. Children learn to celebrate other cultures, for example when attending a Diwali workshop. They learn empathy for one another's feelings in their 'circle time' sessions. Children responded with gentleness as they sang and used instruments to accompany a lullaby during a nursery rhyme music lesson. They have many opportunities to be independent. They look after their own belongings and tidy up promptly. Children are very well prepared for the transition into the next stage of their education.
- 4.3 From Year 1, pupils have a thorough understanding of the principles that underpin life in modern Britain, which are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum and actively promoted through the school. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of shared cultural values are deepened through the school's focus and commitment to ensuring that they fully understand traditions and their role within society. They discuss key British historic events and explore different cultures throughout the world. This enables the pupils to be ready to engage with the wider world, with a tolerance and respect for all backgrounds and beliefs.
- 4.4 The pupils' spiritual awareness is strong. Their success at school enhances their sense of self-esteem, and they maintain a strong sense of empathy towards others. Pupils are emotionally mature, demonstrating clear self-awareness. Their personal development is further enhanced by the outdoor education opportunities, allowing them to build resilience and a strong sense of teamwork. They exhibit a great sense of pride in all aspects of their school life and often celebrate this together in assemblies or during class time. Pupils show a deep appreciation for non-material aspects of life through their involvement in areas such as music and art. Their spiritual awareness is further enhanced through singing of school songs with pride and the quiet reflection within the communal saying of prayers, and it is also successfully promoted across the curriculum.
- 4.5 The moral development and understanding of the pupils are excellent and are reflected in their good manners and high level of self-discipline. From the youngest year groups, pupils show strong moral awareness, evident in their clear understanding of the school rules. They demonstrate excellent behaviour and a mature sense of right and wrong. Their moral sense is heightened through learning to make good choices, which is promoted successfully in the PSHEE curriculum and evident throughout the school day. It is reinforced with frequent rewards, and pupils are encouraged to work and play within set guidelines. Praise is given for showing good character and pupils fully understand why it is received, strengthening their moral development. Pupils gain a knowledge of the law of England.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils are personable and keen to share their experiences with others, and a strong sense of community is evident throughout the school. Their social awareness is strengthened by responsibilities

given throughout the school to assist with daily routines: all pupils are given a range of monitor duties. The school council nominates a good cause to support, and charity days are held twice a year which increase the social awareness of the whole school. Thus, pupils demonstrate responsibility and care towards the society of the school and to the world beyond. Pupils' economic awareness is strengthened as they help to budget for fund-raising events.

- 4.7 Excellent cultural understanding is enhanced through the religious studies and PSHEE programmes, which focus on respect for others, and the school provides a balanced education on a range of faiths and cultures. The cultural awareness of the pupils is strengthened through celebrating events such as Diwali and Chinese New Year, and through visitors who come in to talk about different cultures and traditions. Classroom displays inform pupils about faiths, and trips are made to local places of worship, all promoting understanding of and respect for all cultures and for people's differences. Pupils appreciate the values and traditions of all backgrounds, including Western culture, and are able to talk freely, considering that they will be respected and appreciated.
- 4.8 The pupils demonstrate a broad knowledge of public institutions, for example through strong links with a local hospital and cathedral. Their understanding and respect for democracy are increased through events such as mock elections and general knowledge quizzes.
- 4.9 All pupils are fully prepared for the transition to secondary education, showing high levels of personal development. They are confident and independent, taking responsibility for their educational journey.

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

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 In the EYFS, identified key people develop strong and caring relationships with children, ensuring excellence in their pastoral care. Children learn about keeping safe; for example when using trowels to plant their bulbs. They understand the role of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Staff help them to develop good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands thoroughly and independently. They begin to understand healthy eating and enjoy the nutritious lunches and fruit snacks provided. Good manners are promoted within the calm, family atmosphere of the dining hall. Behaviour is exemplary because staff have high expectations and are excellent role models.
- 4.12 The excellent pastoral care structures throughout the rest of the school ensure that pupils receive outstanding care, support and guidance, in accordance with the school's aims, maintaining the high standards noted at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils feel happy and safe. They thrive in an environment in which they are known, valued and praised for their efforts. Assemblies, such as for 'rewards and awards', recognise achievement and effort. Any pastoral issues are communicated efficiently, with systems in place to ensure effective monitoring and comprehensive overview. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, are a strength of the school. The pupils' confident and friendly manner is a result of the high standard of pastoral support that they receive.
- 4.13 Pupils benefit from measures to promote a healthy lifestyle. Lunches are nutritious, well balanced and appetising, and pupils are encouraged to make healthy meal

choices. A full programme of PE, games, clubs and outdoor education, in addition to break times, enables pupils to develop healthy lifestyle habits. This is reinforced through the curriculum in PSHEE, food technology and science.

- 4.14 Standards of behaviour are high and the pupils are well mannered, self-disciplined and polite. The school's anti-bullying policy is implemented well. In questionnaire responses, pupils and parents said that there are few incidents of bullying and that they are confident, should they occur, that the school deals with them efficiently. The school has effective measures to guard against cyber-bullying and is successful in educating parents and pupils about e-safety. In response to their questionnaire, some pupils felt that sanctions are not fairly applied by all staff. Inspection identified some inconsistencies in the application of the school's systems.
- 4.15 The excellent relationship between pupils and staff creates opportunities for open dialogue, ensuring that the pupils' opinions are heard. Pupils also make their views known through the well-structured school council and in the many suggestion boxes around the school. For example, pupils were actively involved in the design of the renovation of the buildings and in a new lunch menu, showing the value that the school places on their opinions.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 Within the EYFS, safeguarding is rigorous and staff have been trained well in child protection and paediatric first aid. Staffing levels reflect requirements, and all staff understand what to do in the event of a concern. Children feel safe and happy at school. Staff recruitment procedures are suitable; all required checks and declarations have been conducted and recorded accurately. Children's attendance is regular and monitored. Risk assessments are rigorous and are undertaken regularly for indoor and outdoor activities and visits off site.
- 4.18 Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are up to date, comprehensive and fully implemented. They reflect the requirements of the national strategy to prevent radicalisation. The school works closely with a number of local safeguarding agencies, as pupils are from a wide area. Senior staff with responsibility for safeguarding have been trained at the appropriate level and regularly undertake update training. Other staff receive regular training from professionals outside the school, and there is comprehensive induction training for new staff. A leaflet is given to all who arrive to work on the school site, setting out basic safeguarding information. Careful attention is given to ensuring that all staff have undergone the required checks for safer employment, and comprehensive and accurate records of these are kept centrally.
- 4.19 A detailed fire policy and procedure, staff training and professional fire risk assessments are in place to reduce the risk from fire. Records cover regular drills and the maintenance of installations and equipment. Meticulous risk assessments support the safety of pupils in both activities on the school site and when they are on trips and visits out of school. Both the risk assessment policy and the health and safety policy show careful attention to the health and safety of all at the school and are supported by detailed records of a wide range of essential checks. The buildings and grounds are maintained to a very high standard. A comfortable and suitable medical room, staffed by a trained nurse, provides excellent facilities for the care of sick or injured pupils or those who have particular needs. All of the staff

have been trained as first aiders, including some at a higher level. The policy, which includes the EYFS, gives clear information about the administration of first aid.

- 4.20 The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance is strong in the EYFS and governors work with staff to keep abreast of regulatory requirements. A dedicated EYFS governor has recently been appointed in order to bring early years expertise to the board. Through the work of both the full board of the Foundation and the general purposes committee for the senior school, the governors provide highly effective oversight of the school, including in the EYFS. Reports from the head and members of the senior leadership team to all meetings provide detailed information to support the work of the governance of the school. Regular meetings at the school between the chair of governors and senior leaders, and visits to many areas of the school, ensure that monitoring by the board is effective and responsibilities for educational standards are fulfilled. Careful financial planning has ensured strong investment in staff, the accommodation of the school and resources. Long-term plans for the development of the school are prepared and successfully carried out, promoting future improvements in many areas.
- 5.3 Links between the general purposes committee and the school, especially with the head, ensure that the committee, backed by the board, is able to support and challenge the head and the senior leadership team, and is a source of stimulus for progress.
- 5.4 The governing body fully discharges its responsibilities for meeting statutory requirements, including undertaking the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements by the full board.

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 Leadership and management within the EYFS are excellent and a particular strength of the setting. Thorough policies, including safeguarding, reflect the latest statutory requirements and procedures are well implemented in practice. Children's safety is promoted within a welcoming and vibrant environment. Self-evaluation is a continuous practice central to the setting. Leaders share a fervent vision and strive for excellence. Educational programmes are well monitored; the regular professional supervision process helps staff to further their roles. They have many opportunities to attend courses and share new knowledge. This contributes positively to their teaching and to children's learning and development. Activities, displays and practice which actively promote equality, diversity and British values are prevalent throughout the setting.
- 5.7 At all levels, excellent leadership and management fully support the school's aims to establish a happy, caring and vibrant community that enables pupils to be appropriately equipped for the next stage of their education. The group meetings between the heads of the four schools in the Foundation provide valuable support for the junior school leaders in ensuring that the aims of the Foundation are fully realised. Leadership and management give a clear vision for the school's future and

- they demonstrate a strong determination for continuing improvement. The senior leadership team, drawn from across the school, is successfully supported by subject co-ordinators who carefully monitor the teaching and learning in their respective areas, providing great strength to the middle management within the school. Leadership and management are effective at all levels in discharging their delegated responsibilities, particularly in the area of safeguarding, which is given a high profile.
- 5.8 Throughout the school, self-evaluation is a strength. Leaders carry out regular reviews of all school documentation, including plans, policies and procedures. They understand the significance of self-review against a changing educational background. The excellent development plan, which fully supports the school's aims and ethos, is supported by linked subject and aspect plans that involve staff at every level of the process. The school has introduced many new initiatives since the previous inspection and their success is evaluated regularly to improve the outcomes for pupils. The leadership and management of the school are characterised by a high degree of enthusiasm and determination.
- 5.9 The school is successful in recruiting, retaining and developing well-qualified staff. Safer recruitment practices are followed. All staff are fully supported through an extensive professional development programme. Professional development needs are linked to the excellent staff appraisal programme, and clear targets for improvement are set. All staff are suitably trained for their roles, particularly in the area of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. In questionnaire responses, parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the leadership and management of the school.
- 5.10 The school enjoys strong links with parents, carers and guardians. In the EYFS, parents are highly pleased with the education their children receive and the many opportunities to be involved in this. They are given valuable information to help them support their children's learning and can participate in workshops to help them understand the EYFS curriculum. This helps to ensure that every child makes appropriate progress, including those children who are able or have SEND. Reports to parents are thorough and informative, and contain individual targets as well as children's comments about their own achievements.
- 5.11 In other year groups, the school's relationship with parents is very constructive and based on a depth of knowledge and genuine care for the pupils and their families, in accordance with the school's aims. Parents feel that staff know their children very well. They greatly appreciate the warm atmosphere of the school and the pastoral care that extends beyond the pupils to their families.
- 5.12 Any concerns, however minor, are handled promptly and carefully. Staff are easily accessible to parents, in person, or by telephone or email. Parents greatly appreciate the 'open-door' policy. Any complaints are handled according to the published complaints procedure.
- 5.13 Parents have many opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. They receive electronic bulletins and termly diaries, and have the opportunity to voice their opinions and views to support the development of the school. A range of other events such as information or subject evenings and 'dads and lads workshops' are greatly appreciated.
- 5.14 Parents are highly satisfied with the communication they have with the school. The parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school and are sent copies of the prospectus and parent handbook. In

addition, parents find the school's comprehensive website very useful. Reports to parents are clear and informative, and include targets for improvement. Parents said that every teacher makes them feel that their children are special and have particular strengths and talents. Throughout the school, in questionnaire responses and discussion, parents were overwhelmingly happy with the education and support provided for their children.

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



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School

The junior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School **Queen Elizabeth Grammar School**

DfE Number **384/6115**

Registered Charity Number **1088415**

Address **Queen Elizabeth Grammar School
154 Northgate
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
WF1 3QX**

Telephone Number **01924 373943**

Fax Number **01924 231603**

Email Address **mwood@qegsss.org.uk**

Head **Mr David Craig**

Chair of Governors **Mr John McLeod**

Age Range **11 to 18**

Total Number of Pupils **687**

Gender of Pupils **Boys**

Inspection Dates **10 Nov 2015 to 13 Nov 2015**

PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI second cycle inspection was in November 2009.

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 children aged under two), 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 members of staff and with the chair of governors and the chairman of the general purposes committee for the two schools for boys within the Foundation, 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 Gwen Caddock	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Christine Cunniffe	Team Inspector (Principal, Society of Heads/ISA school)
Mr Geoffrey Hill	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Mark Hoskins	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Anne Price	Team Inspector (Former Staff Development Co-ordinator, HMC school)
Mrs Lynne Renwick	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield is a day school educating boys between the ages of 11 and 18. The school was founded by Royal Charter in 1591 in the city centre. The school moved to its present site on Northgate in 1854 and forms part of the Wakefield Grammar School Foundation group of four schools, including the junior school. The school aims to enable every boy to fulfil his academic potential, to instil high standards of behaviour and to nourish a moral awareness, with qualities of tolerance, altruism and understanding of others, both within and outside the school. It seeks to encourage every pupil to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and through this to develop self-confidence and skills such as leadership.
- 1.2 The Foundation provides a central administration centre, and a single governing body has oversight of all the schools. A general purposes committee has specific responsibility for the two schools for boys. The Foundation is a charitable company limited by guarantee and all members of the governing body form the trustees. The school occupies the original purpose-built Victorian premises, which have been added to considerably over recent years with the development of specialist facilities including science laboratories, a sports hall, a theatre, a learning resource centre and a sixth-form centre. Extensive playing fields are a short walk away from the main school site.
- 1.3 The school has 687 pupils on roll, including 192 in the sixth form. The school selects pupils on the basis of ability. The ability profile of pupils in Years 7 to 11 is above the national average, with around one-third of pupils well above this average and few below it. In the sixth form the ability profile is above the national average; most pupils have ability that is at least above this average, with few below it. Pupils come from a wide Yorkshire catchment area including the towns of Wakefield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Huddersfield. They are drawn from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Sixty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and they receive specialist support. No pupil currently has an education, health and care plan, and none has English as an additional language.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Academic standards are excellent in all areas. Pupils are excellent learners, in both basic skills and in higher level independent learning and thinking. They excel in many extra-curricular pursuits and in sporting, musical, artistic and drama activities within the school, locally and up to national level. Older pupils run activities for both the younger boys at the school and at the junior school. The breadth of the curriculum and the flexible approach ensure that pupils are able to study a wide range of subjects, both at GCSE and A level. The development of the Queen Elizabeth Enrichment and Development (QED) programme, a Wednesday activities afternoon, has ensured that pupils experience many different opportunities, which they highly appreciate. Teaching is excellent; pace, variety of task and constant feedback are the hallmarks of successful lessons.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. Both this and the fundamental values that help to define Britain are actively promoted. Mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs are at the core of the school community. Pupils are mature, courteous and interested in others; they develop high moral standards, with a clear understanding of right and wrong, and are able to make their own choices and decisions. They are skilled charity fund raisers, and contribute in many ways to the local community. Older pupils expressed the view that equal recognition is not given to significant achievements across the range of extra-curricular activities. Social development is excellent; pupils relish taking on responsibility and are good citizens of the school. Within the diversity of the school population, pupils show respect for their own culture and the culture of others. Pastoral care is excellent. A strong framework of clear responsibilities and meetings, supported by highly effective communication, underpins dedicated care for pupils. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent, and all the required policies and procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and ensure high standards in this regard.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent; the governors fully discharge their legal responsibilities, including the annual review of safeguarding. They ensure careful financial management and offer both challenge and support to the senior management team in the school. They have long-term plans to further develop the school. The leadership and management of the school are excellent, and since the previous inspection standards of learning, achievement and teaching have improved significantly. The team has developed excellent relationships with parents. The governors and leadership and management of the school have ensured that all legal requirements have been met and that plans have been fully implemented. The school has met the recommendation of the previous inspection to address inconsistencies in the standards and thoroughness of marking. Assessment and marking have been a key focus for development; standards are now high.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Develop the rewards system for older pupils to include equal recognition of significant achievement in all areas of school life.

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 The school achieves its aim to fulfil all pupils' intellectual potential within an inspirational and distinctively boy-centred learning environment, and learning and achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- 3.3 Pupils show an excellent level of knowledge, understanding and skills at all levels. They strive for excellence, and achievement is significant in all areas of curricular and extra-curricular activities, within a highly competitive and supportive environment. Pupils achieve high standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing, independent thinking and physical education. Pupils are successful in achieving places at universities, including those with highly competitive entry standards.
- 3.4 The achievements of pupils in extra-curricular activities is excellent and in some cases, exceptional, most notably the under-fifteen rugby team reaching the finals in an external competition for three consecutive years and winning at Twickenham in March 2015. Pupils' sporting achievement extends to regularly winning county championships in hockey and representing England in a number of sports. Artwork displayed across the school shows sophistication and creativity, and the quality and complexity of repertoire delivered by the many ensembles offer challenge and obvious enjoyment to all musicians. Pupils benefit greatly from the QED programme, developing new interests and leadership skills.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparable statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been well above the national average for boys in maintained schools and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools. Almost all pupils have gained at least five GCSEs at grade C or above; 75% gained grades A* or A. Results in International GCSE (IGCSE) subjects have been higher than worldwide norms, and results in mathematics have been higher than UK norms. The 2015 results for GCSE and IGCSE, for which no national comparisons are yet available, are consistent with previous years. Results at A level have been well above the national average for boys in maintained schools and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools, showing slight improvement over the 2012 to 2014 period. More than 50% of pupils have gained grades A* or A, and over 80% grade B or better. The 2015 results for A level, for which no national comparisons are yet available, are consistent with previous years.
- 3.6 The level of attainment at GCSE and A level, and standardised measures of progress, in conjunction with the work seen during the inspection, indicate that pupils make excellent progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Demanding extension work ensures that the most able achieve their potential but all pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves. Pupils with SEND make exceptional progress because they receive carefully focused support and assessment information that enables them to understand what they must do to succeed. Gifted and talented pupils make excellent progress through the encouragement they receive to take all the opportunities open to them.
- 3.7 The pupils' attitudes are an outstanding feature of the school. They are effective independent learners, are well motivated and take great pride in their school.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum provides both depth and breadth in the requisite areas of learning, and fulfils the aims of the school to provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum that enables pupils to achieve their potential. Pupils develop intellectual curiosity and creativity, and become independent learners. The curriculum does not undermine fundamental British values. The school's provision through the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme, the work of many departments, assemblies and visits ensures that due prominence is given to concepts such as democracy, tolerance and the rule of law.
- 3.10 The curriculum is appropriate for pupils of all ages and abilities. In Year 7, pupils experience a broad curriculum, with three separate sciences and an introduction to Latin, drama and music. A second modern foreign language is added in Year 8 and these foundations allow pupils to play to their strengths at GCSE, able to choose a wide range of pathways. The school is successful in identifying and supporting at an early stage those pupils who have particular gifts or talents, and those who are particularly able, within the context of its selective admissions policy. This is also true for pupils with SEND, whose needs are identified quickly, and whose progress is carefully monitored.
- 3.11 In the sixth form, a wide range of subjects and flexibility of choice are extended by close links with the other Foundation senior school. Pupils' experience is enriched by the option of an A level in general studies, together with a programme of guest speakers and the Extended Project Qualification, which provides further academic challenge. Together with the many academic societies, these provide excellent preparation for pupils applying for the most competitive university courses.
- 3.12 The curriculum has been greatly extended by the introduction three years ago of the QED programme, which takes place within the timetable during the school day. Discussions with pupils and staff show this to be highly successful in fulfilling the aim of the school to develop pupils' creativity, resilience and leadership. Some pupils teach other pupils, and some establish and run activities. The Year 7 QED programme introduces the youngest pupils to the choice and experience available. From Years 8 to 13, in many options pupils work in mixed age groups, developing teamwork and communication skills, and strengthening the relationships of older and younger pupils. The programme provides an extensive range of nearly 100 activities, choices ranging from Mandarin Chinese to go-karting, and from baking to computer programming. The activities broaden pupils' experience and develop their learning and independence.
- 3.13 Excellent provision is made for pupils pursuing acting, artistic and musical interests, for example with numerous orchestras, concert and wind bands giving regular performances for different age groups. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme provides the opportunity for service in the community. Sport is also a key strength of the school, with regular regional and national titles gained in rugby. Hockey and cricket are also very strong, and participation rates in these sports and others is monitored. On a typical weekend, around half the pupils represent the school in matches. As highly competent learners, all pupils are encouraged to stretch themselves intellectually in many ways, including participation in a number of national competitions such as Olympiads in many disciplines; younger pupils are supported in these challenges by academic prefects.

- 3.14 The curriculum and extra-curricular activities are supported by numerous national and international visits and tours. Pupils feel that these opportunities enhance their learning and their personal skills. There are a growing number of pastoral and team-building visits to foster excellent relationships and further develop the outstanding attitudes that pupils have towards their education. Pupils are also involved in the local community and in charity work, which encourages them to think about the world outside the school. Every year group in the school organises its own fund-raising activities to support its chosen charity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 The contribution of teaching to promoting pupils' progress is excellent. The school thus realises its aim to fulfil individual pupils' intellectual potential within an inspirational and distinctively boy-centred learning environment.
- 3.17 Pupils benefit significantly from the development of an approach based on educational research into how boys learn best. Since the previous inspection, the school has developed a teaching strategy centred around transferable skills, frequent changes in pace and realisable challenges. This has proved very successful and is a distinctive feature of the school. The delivery of this initiative is scrupulously monitored by the senior management team and by departmental heads to ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school. The success of the scheme is realised in the pupils' attitude to their work: in all year groups they are attentive and highly motivated, showing obvious enjoyment in their lessons.
- 3.18 The highly experienced, knowledgeable staff provide a wide range of learning strategies to encourage pupils to engage fully in their work. Lessons are always well planned, with tasks to extend and challenge pupils of all abilities. In almost all cases, the pace is brisk, ensuring that the pupils are always focused and attentive. All, including the most able, are provided with a variety of suitable tasks to extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding. Those with particular needs receive sustained, sensitive support to help and encourage them with their studies. All pupils are treated as individuals and are given the attention needed to maximise their educational experience. The high expectations that the teachers have for each and every pupil instil an ethos of positivity and industry, encouraging all pupils to work hard, regardless of ability. Throughout the school, an integral aim of the teaching is to instil a secure knowledge of study skills and an understanding of the importance of self-reflection as a tool for academic progress. Teachers run clinics at lunchtime to allow pupils to reinforce their learning or catch up on missed work. This provision is much appreciated by pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring, underpinned by mutual respect. Pupils at all stages express their appreciation of the co-operative, supportive learning environment. They acknowledge that their notable achievement and progress reflect the inspirational help given to them by their teachers.
- 3.19 The school's assessment system is of an excellent quality. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, a well-structured and thorough monitoring system has been developed to secure greater consistency in marking. Consequently, teachers know their pupils very well, and are able to provide appropriate individual support. The setting of challenging but realistic targets is central to the ethos of the teaching. Success is based on individual improvement rather than a judgement of standards, encouraging pupils of all abilities to do their

best. Marking almost always includes a comment on what was successful as well as ways in which the work could be further improved. Teaching encourages pupils to be responsible for their own learning, for example by adding further annotations to their written work, formulating their own short-term targets or noting omissions. Peer marking is used effectively. Pupils spoke very highly of this system, claiming that it is instrumental to their excellent progress not only in their subjects but as learners; the attitude they have developed towards their work is exemplary.

- 3.20 Teaching positively promotes tolerance and respect, and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues.

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 school takes active steps to promote both the pupils' personal development and their understanding of the key values that characterise modern Britain. Recently, the democratic process has been fully explored in the context of Scottish devolution and the General Election, which resulted in pupils putting what they had learnt into practice in a mock election. Through lessons, discussions and visiting speakers, pupils learn about the rule of law and individual liberty. Groups of pupils visit a local magistrates' court and Parliament to see how national government works, and have had a tour around 10 Downing Street.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are self-confident and mature, and are sensitive to the needs and views of others. Pupils of all faiths and those of none benefit from opportunities to express their beliefs by leading or taking part in assemblies in a variety of ways. Pupils take every opportunity for reflection and debate on challenging issues, both in class and in the debating chamber.
- 4.4 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. They have an acute sense of right and wrong, and their exemplary behaviour around school is seen to underline this. They understand the reason for rules in school and the wider community. Pupils are consistently polite and courteous. They understand and respect English laws, as well as moral and ethical values.
- 4.5 Social development is excellent. The school strongly encourages interaction between all groups, and pupils pursue this naturally and openly. They relate extremely well to each other, across all ages and backgrounds. Pupils are also very respectful towards visitors to the school and members of staff. The pupils are proud of their school, and of each other's achievements and their own. They eagerly take on positions of responsibility, particularly in the sixth form as academic and form prefects. Roles of responsibility held by younger pupils include the Year 8 'buddy' scheme, helping new pupils in Year 7 and the role of library assistants. Pupils have a clear understanding of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves in society, and in year groups they organise charity fund-raising events throughout the year, with considerable success: Year 8 pupils recently completed their annual efforts and had raised over £1,600. Pupils also work in the local community as part of their service for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have a respect for each other regardless of their cultural background, or personal circumstances and characteristics. Cultural development is promoted in many curriculum areas, including music, art and drama. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss wide-ranging cultural issues, for example in PSHEE. In a history lesson, discussions showed their understanding of the current refugee situation in Europe. Pupils gain an appreciation of and respect for Western cultural traditions. They also have opportunities to extend further their awareness by participating in the numerous trips on offer to various countries.
- 4.7 Overall, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of personal development, which is a significant strength of the school. By the time they leave the school, they are well-rounded individuals who are mature, self-assured, articulate and confident.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Pastoral care is a strength of the school, with staff providing highly effective support and guidance to pupils of all ages, in line with the school's aims. The structure of form tutors, heads of year and section heads, supported by the deputy head, along with regular meetings and good communications support the pastoral work of the school effectively. The school environment and this support system are well suited to the needs of pupils, and staff work hard to ensure that pupils develop self-respect and respect for each other. Pupils are encouraged to make the most of the opportunities on offer.
- 4.10 Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils are mutually supportive, with sixth-form prefects acting as excellent role models in Year 7 form time. In responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils indicated that the school does not ask for their opinions. The inspection evidence did not support this view. The pupils are regularly consulted in the end-of-year self-review and QED questionnaire, which both inform future planning, for example giving pupils input into the QED activities offered. Pupils of all ages expressed their appreciation of the head's Wednesday morning 'open-door' policy; they are confident that they are welcome to talk to him directly.
- 4.11 Sport plays a prominent role in the life of the school. Importance is placed on nutrition, and the choice of well-balanced meals provided, combined with regular exercise, promotes a healthy lifestyle. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires indicated that the food could be improved. However, in discussions, pupils said that they enjoy the food on offer.
- 4.12 The school is highly successful in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. The policy and practices to prevent bullying are clear and carefully implemented; records scrutinised during the inspection show that the occasional bullying incidents are dealt with effectively. In response to the questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils and a few parents indicated that bullying is a concern. In discussions, pupils of all ages said that bullying was not an issue, and the records held by the school support this view. The school fully educates pupils about the anti-bullying policy and issues of cyber-bullying in PSHEE and assemblies, supported by an acceptable use contract signed by all pupils. In discussions, all pupils said that they feel very safe. Pupils know where to seek help and trust in staff to deal with issues effectively. Pupils in Year 7 appreciate their Year 8 'buddies'.
- 4.13 In response to the questionnaire a small minority of pupils felt that sanctions given by teachers are not always fair, and a few said that rewards are not given consistently. Inspection evidence did not fully substantiate these views; discussions and records showed that poor behaviour is fairly but effectively dealt with, in line with clear expectations, and that in most respects the school's reward systems are employed as intended. However, older pupils noted that significant achievements in extra-curricular activities are not recognised equally, and inspection evidence supported this view.
- 4.14 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are up to date, comprehensive and fully implemented. They fully reflect the requirements of the national strategy to prevent radicalisation. The school works closely with a number of local safeguarding agencies responsible for the areas in which pupils live. Senior staff with responsibility for safeguarding have been trained at the appropriate level and regularly undertake update training. They train the school staff and implement a comprehensive induction programme for new staff. This training is regularly supplemented by sessions provided by outside specialist trainers. A leaflet is given to all who arrive to work on the school site, setting out basic safeguarding information. Careful attention is given to ensuring that all newly appointed staff have undergone the required checks for safer employment, and comprehensive and accurate records of checks are kept.
- 4.17 A detailed fire policy and procedure, staff training and professional fire risk assessments are in place to reduce the risk from fire. Records cover regular drills and the maintenance of installations and equipment. Meticulous risk assessments support the safety of pupils in both activities on the school site and when they are on trips and visits out of school. Both the risk assessment policy and the health and safety policy show careful attention to the health and safety of all at the school and are supported by detailed records of a wide range of essential checks. The buildings and grounds are maintained to a very high standard. A comfortable and suitable medical room, staffed by a trained nurse, provides excellent facilities for the care of sick or injured pupils or those who have particular needs. Many of the staff have been trained as first aiders, and a policy gives clear information about the administration of first aid. The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and stored as required.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Through the work of both the full board of the Foundation and the general purposes committee for the school, the governors provide highly effective oversight of the school. Reports from the head and members of the senior management team to all meetings provide detailed information. Regular meetings at the school between the chair of governors and the head, and visits by governors to many areas of the school, ensure that monitoring by the board is effective and that responsibilities for educational standards are fulfilled. Careful financial planning has ensured strong investment in staff, the accommodation of the school and resources. Long-term plans for the development of the school are prepared and successfully carried out, promoting future improvements in many areas. Governance arrangements place great emphasis on matters of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.3 Strong links have been established between the general purposes committee and the school, especially between the chairman and the head. These links ensure that the committee, backed by the board, is able to support and challenge the head and the senior management team and is a source of stimulus for progress. The board has a procedure to ensure that any issues that occur across or between the Foundation's schools are dealt with in good time, being resolved and recorded efficiently in a consistent manner.
- 5.4 The governing body fully discharges its statutory responsibilities, including undertaking the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements, first at the level of the general purposes committee and then at full board level.

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 Leadership and management are highly successful in realising the aims they have set out for the school. They have developed a distinctive boy-centred educational regime that is successfully enabling pupils to fulfil their educational potential. The team has established a resilient working relationship with parents, and together they uphold high standards of behaviour and nurture a strong moral awareness and sense of responsibility for others. The development of the curriculum and timetable to include the QED programme has ensured that pupils participate in a varied range of extra-curricular activities and develop the personal qualities to which the school challenges them to aspire.
- 5.7 The senior management team, working with the staff of the Foundation, fully discharges its responsibilities for the development of appropriate policies and for their implementation, in particular those designed to safeguard pupils.
- 5.8 The management has set out a vision for boy-centred education, founded on knowledge of how boys learn best. Very well-executed development planning based on accurate self-assessment has created an innovative educational environment.

The team has succeeded in changing the culture and direction of teaching and learning in the school through consultation, training and the development of policies, and through adjusting the structure of the timetable and the curriculum. This has resulted in improvements in learning, achievement and teaching. Meticulous monitoring and clear communication with staff have resulted in steady improvement in educational standards and in the widespread use of teaching strategies that promote exciting and challenging lessons, ensuring that pupils learn in the most effective way. Within this environment, the personal development of the pupils is excellent and they relish their learning. Further plans are underway to extend, strengthen and develop this transformation.

- 5.9 Leadership has successfully built a dedicated and expert team of teachers and support staff who are highly respected and appreciated by both pupils and parents. The whole team has been appropriately trained in the safeguarding of pupils, including a full induction process for new staff, and staff have been trained in many other aspects of the life of the school to ensure high standards of welfare, health and safety for the pupils. Considerable work has been undertaken to address the inconsistencies in the standards and thoroughness of marking identified at the time of the previous inspection. Records of regular work scrutiny set up to monitor the standards and practice of marking show the steady development of a wide range of assessment practices that research has shown to be successful in motivating and raising standards of achievement with boys. Inspection evidence from work scrutiny, lessons and pupils' subject interviews confirms that this recommendation has been met and that the pupils are responding very positively to the careful assessment undertaken by their teachers.
- 5.10 In the overwhelming positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school's provision in all aspects of their children's education. Parents receive timely responses to their questions and any concerns are handled extremely well, and they would recommend the school to others.
- 5.11 The school has a clear and effective complaints policy that is available to all parents and is suitably implemented. The leadership actively seeks parents' views through a regular questionnaire, acts on suggestions and monitors satisfaction.
- 5.12 Parents are encouraged to be fully involved in the life of the school, and through the Parents' Association a wide range of social and fund-raising activities is on offer, such as a bowling night and antiques fair.
- 5.13 Extensive information about the school is provided to all parents, including those of prospective pupils, through the newly designed website, including the head's letters to parents and a fortnightly electronic newsletter. A school app and social media sites are also used to provide up-to-date information to parents. There are numerous opportunities for parents to be involved in the work and progress of their children, and they are extremely satisfied with the information provided in this respect. Parents receive regular reports about their children's work, provided in the form of a short or full written report or at a parents' evening. Through the recently introduced 'traffic light' system of reporting, parents can see at a glance if their children are on target, while pastoral managers effectively track performance and give support as needed.

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