



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST JOHN'S SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Full Name of School	St John's School
DfE Number	878/6018
EYFS Number	EY308608
Address	St John's School Broadway Sidmouth Devon EX10 8RG
Telephone Number	01395 513984
Fax Number	01395 514539
Email Address	info@stjohnsdevon.co.uk
Acting Head	Mr Michael Burgess
Proprietor	St John's International School Limited
Age Range	2 to 16
Total Number of Pupils	185
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (93 boys; 92 girls)
Numbers by Age	2-3 (EYFS): 11 5-11: 69 3-5 (EYFS): 25 11-16: 80
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 141
Number of Boarders	Total: 44 Full: 44 Weekly: 0
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Rebecca Colwill
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	20 Nov 2012 to 23 Nov 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 November 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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

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

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

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

inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with a director, 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

Mrs Jan Preece

Mrs Susan O'Riordan

Mr John Shackleton

Ms Anne Longton

Mrs Eithne Webster

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	4
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	4
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d) The quality of boarding	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
(a) The quality of governance	14
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	14
6 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE	17
(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	17
(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being	17
(c) The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision	18
(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision	18

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St John's School is situated on the outskirts of Sidmouth. It was founded in 1912 as the Convent of the Assumption School for Girls and in 1976 it became a lay co-educational preparatory school. In 2007 it was acquired by International Education Systems (IES), which has oversight of eight schools in England and overseas. It has subsequently developed as an international school, overseen by a board of trustees. In September 2012 the school became wholly owned by IES as St John's International School Limited and is now administered by three directors, two of whom were previously trustees, who act as the board of governors.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the age range has been extended each year so that there are now two distinct departments on the same site: the junior school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and the senior school. Co-educational day and boarding education for pupils from the ages of 2 to 16 is now provided. Within the school's grounds, there is a main building that accommodates most teaching facilities and the boarding house, together with playing fields, hard courts, an outside pool and sports hall. The Nursery is housed in a separate building whilst Reception is sited in the main school. Since the previous inspection, a programme of enhancement to buildings and facilities has been established and new programmes of study have also been introduced. The deputy head currently leads the school, pending the arrival of a new headmaster in January 2013.
- 1.3 The overall mission of IES is to provide excellence in education within an international perspective. The school aims to promote the development of young people who will have the capacity to contribute proactively towards a better world. It seeks to develop leaders for the future who are collaborative, communicative, enquiring, respectful and creative individuals with a passion for lifelong learning. The school sets out to encourage pupils to integrate effectively in the local, national and international communities through diverse opportunities afforded to them.
- 1.4 Most day pupils come from local professional, commercial or agricultural backgrounds. The school takes full-time pupils from overseas, as well as others who come for a term only. Admission to the EYFS is not selective and pupils have a wide range of ability on entry. Pupils joining from Year 5 are assessed for their academic suitability. Overall, the ability profile of the school is above the national average.
- 1.5 The school has 185 full-time pupils on roll from the ages of 2 to 16. The EYFS has 36 pupils, 31 of whom attend on a part-time basis. There are 80 pupils in the senior school and 69 in Years 1 to 6 of the junior school, in almost equal numbers of boys and girls. The 44 full-time boarders on roll are aged between 11 and 16. The school is also able to accommodate younger boarders within the boarding house. Currently, 12 pupils who are taking a short course of studies attend from overseas in the senior school.
- 1.6 Twenty-five pupils receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional help in school; no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is 41 and reflects the international ethos of the school. Boarders from overseas come from a range of countries including Hong Kong, Russia, Kazakhstan, Spain and Mexico. Thirty-four of these pupils receive additional language support.

- 1.7 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used by the school for pupils from the age of three and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The school refers to its youngest Nursery class as Early Birds.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in meeting its aims. Throughout the school, the pupils' overall achievement is good both in relation to their academic work and their extra-curricular activities. The good results achieved in national tests, together with work observed during the inspection, indicate that pupils make good progress for their ability. This is as a result of good teaching that encourages independence, critical thinking, creativity and research within a broad curriculum, although the quality of marking in the senior school is inconsistent. Pupils with EAL and those with SEND demonstrate good levels of achievement due to the effective individual support they receive. The pupils' achievements are supported by their excellent attitudes towards learning.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is of high quality throughout the school, due to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, as well as the equally high standard of pastoral care they receive. They demonstrate high levels of self-knowledge and self-esteem. Their moral development is very good and high standards of behaviour are the norm. There is a strong sense of community, both in the school and in the boarding house. The quality of boarding provision is good and the staff display commitment, recognising that some aspects are not yet fully developed, particularly in relation to the shower facilities and to the provision of a common room for boys. Boarders say that they enjoy the experience and that the wide range of nationalities and cultures integrates well in the boarding community. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and their teachers are excellent and contribute to the nurturing atmosphere in the school. However, older pupils do not feel that the school listens to their opinions and views sufficiently well; inspectors found that, whilst there are appropriate forums, the school does not communicate its response to pupils' suggestions sufficiently clearly. The school pays good attention to arrangements to secure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils and ensures that thorough risk assessments and procedures are implemented efficiently on a day-to-day basis.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is sound overall. The directors' oversight supports the school's ethos well and promotes a clear vision for its future improvement. Governance is, however, somewhat remote from the school's operation and therefore provides limited support for the leadership. The system for monitoring regulatory responsibilities is underdeveloped, with the result that some recruitment checks on staff and governors have not been carried out at the correct time. The quality of leadership and management at all levels is good and the commitment of leaders and all staff contributes significantly to the educational standards and personal development of the pupils. Links with parents are excellent. The school has made good progress with most of the recommendations of the previous inspection in terms of using information gained from monitoring, appraisal and assessment for development planning, increasing pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT) and improving the overall quality of teaching to provide appropriately for individual needs.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- ensure that new staff do not begin work until all checks have been made and that governors undergo the necessary checks before or as soon as possible on appointment [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(a) and (e), 21.(6)(a)(i) and (ii), and (b)(i), (ii) and (iii), and 22.(6), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), and 8.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, and National Minimum Standards 11, under Child protection, and 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, as described above.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop the formal monitoring of marking in the senior school to ensure that pupils consistently receive clear feedback on how to improve.
 2. Establish a system to ensure that governors monitor the school's compliance with regulatory requirements.
 3. Give greater prominence to forums for consultation with older pupils, and demonstrate clearly to them how their suggestions have been addressed.
 4. Make improvements to the shower facilities in the boarding house and provide a common room for male boarders.
 5. Provide younger children in the EYFS with a greater range of activities to develop their creativity and independence, and older ones with more frequent outside learning.

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 good.
- 3.2 Pupils in both the junior and senior schools demonstrate strong skills of communication, co-operation, enquiry and creativity, in accordance with the school's aims. From the EYFS they develop a sense of curiosity and, as they grow older, proficient skills in research and interrogation of an argument. Pupils achieve good standards in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT, and successfully demonstrate the ability to apply their skills in the many opportunities provided for cross-curricular learning. Pupils of all ages are articulate and many of those with EAL are keen to express their views and speak with notable fluency. Since the previous inspection, pupils' ability to use ICT to support their work has developed well. They now demonstrate competency in design and technology (DT) through its consistent provision.
- 3.3 Pupils with SEND make good, and in some cases, rapid progress in mathematics and reading in relation to their abilities. Those who arrive at the school with a limited command of English also make good progress, so that many are successful in the International English Language Testing System examination as well as at International GCSE (IGCSE). Pupils who are identified as having all-round ability or specific talents achieve very well; for example, in the previous academic year some pupils in Year 10 gained success in IGCSE mathematics, co-ordinated science, global perspectives and English as a second language. Pupils' success is a result of the individual support they receive at an appropriate level for their abilities and highly positive relationships within the classroom.
- 3.4 Pupils are regularly successful in music examinations, and writing and art competitions. School teams, which involve all who wish to participate, frequently hold their own in matches against larger local schools. The school encourages pupils with particular sporting abilities to develop these at a higher level within the local community so that some have been selected for regional rugby, tennis and athletics teams. The school's under-16 Futsal team is regional champion and some pupils have been chosen as members of a regional badminton squad.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Pupils' attainment at the age of 11 in national tests is good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools, particularly in mathematics and science, where levels exceed those in English. Each year at least 25 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 gain entry to a local state grammar school. These results indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to those of similar ability. This view was endorsed through scrutiny of work throughout the school, lesson observations and discussions with pupils about their work. In 2012, just over 25 per cent of the grades awarded to the first cohort of pupils in Year 11 to enter IGCSE examinations were at A. Of the Year 10 pupils who took some IGCSE subjects early, 50 per cent of the grades awarded were at A or A*. The level of attainment in the senior school, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. In 2012, senior school leavers transferred to sixth-form colleges.
- 3.6 Pupils' achievements are supported well by their attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic and highly positive about their learning. They settle to work quickly and

most show good concentration, participating keenly in the many opportunities for discussions that they are given. When working collaboratively they listen respectfully and are generous in their support of one another's efforts. Pupils' learning is underpinned by their exemplary behaviour in the classroom.

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

- 3.7 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.8 The school is successful in its aim of creating a broad and balanced curriculum through dynamic programmes of study to prepare pupils for a fulfilling and rewarding adult life as citizens of Britain and other countries. Since the previous inspection, the school has revised its junior school curriculum and is moving towards teaching the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate. To achieve this, it prioritises the development of the child as an enquirer, both in the classroom and the world outside, and employs a cross-curricular approach with an emphasis on rigorous enquiry and problem solving. Specialist teaching in the junior school for physical education (PE), art, DT, French and music provides the pupils with opportunities to develop their skills explicitly under expert guidance.
- 3.9 In the senior school, pupils follow a broad and balanced programme based on the National Curriculum. A cross-curricular element is maintained through general studies, and includes planning that identifies and utilises these links. The school offers a wide range of IGCSE subjects in proportion to its size. Pupils receive some preparation for the next stage of their life through a careers programme that includes work experience and a visit to a careers conference.
- 3.10 Information and communication technology is used effectively within the curriculum to support learning at all stages. In the senior school, in response to findings at the previous inspection, pupils now develop their ICT skills through discrete lessons. The quality of DT provision has also improved and the subject is now taught up to Year 9 in a programme that covers construction, graphics and textiles. Both junior and senior libraries are well used to support learning. However, while the senior library is well stocked with fiction, it has insufficient non-fiction and reference books. Pupils' work is celebrated and displayed throughout the school, with the best examples being regularly updated.
- 3.11 The school makes good provision for pupils with EAL, which enables them to access the main curriculum. Pupils take classes in English as a second language and transfer to mainstream English classes when they are ready. Throughout the school, identification of pupils with SEND is efficient and appropriate support is provided, mostly in class, which is a requirement of the PYP programme, through the effective support of teaching assistants and individual learning programmes. Gifted and talented pupils have the opportunity to take some IGCSEs in Year 10, and their curriculum is enriched according to their particular abilities, for instance in mounting displays in art, entering external writing competitions and through extension material provided in class.
- 3.12 Extra-curricular provision is good, with a varied range of clubs that include sports, art, music, and in the senior school, science. Pupils are encouraged to take part in drama productions, such as the senior school's forthcoming performance of *Oliver*. Throughout the school, pupils' interests are enhanced by a wide range of trips and visitors. In Year 10, IGCSE pupils attend a residential course to carry out science and geography investigations, and Year 5 go camping. More local day visits provide

added depth to the curriculum. The school has developed useful sports links with local independent and maintained schools. Pupils develop their particular interests and aptitudes in community activities at local football, rugby, hockey and karate clubs, as well as the army cadets. Some take part in local competitions, such as for gardening, and undertake activities in the vicinity, for example a national hedge survey. International links have been developed through trips and links abroad, including a sports tour to Ecuador and pen pals in Australia and Chile.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is good overall.
- 3.14 Teaching is often excellent, fulfilling the principal aim of the school to support and develop pupils' ability and potential across all aspects of their learning, whether academic, sporting or artistic. In both the junior and senior schools, teaching usually enables pupils to make good, and in the best lessons, rapid progress. Planning in both the junior and senior schools is thorough and provides for the full range of pupils' abilities and interests. Staff generally demonstrate an accurate and detailed knowledge of individual pupils' needs. Marking, particularly in the junior school, is excellent, indicating the rationale for the mark awarded and what needs to be done to improve. In the senior school, marking is more inconsistent in quality. In some subjects and year groups it is limited to ticks with congratulatory comments and does not highlight short-term targets for further progress. The quality of assessment is excellent throughout the school and teachers regularly use information gained from this to guide their planning. This raises individual achievement and promotes progress. Teachers also use assessments to give pupils clear individual targets, particularly in the junior school. In lessons throughout the school, teachers make frequent checks to ascertain that pupils understand new information and that they are ready to progress further. This is particularly beneficial to those with EAL or SEND, and the most able.
- 3.15 Teachers' subject knowledge is good and often demonstrates a passion for their subject. In the best lessons teaching is lively, stimulating and imaginative. Effective questioning techniques, the employment of a wide variety of teaching methods and the creative use of resources enable all pupils to respond positively and foster their enthusiasm. In some classrooms, vibrant interactive displays make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. Time management in many lessons is excellent; the pace is brisk but sufficient time is allowed for support, encouragement and consolidation. The few less successful lessons are characterised by shortcomings in pace and classroom management. Pupils are extremely well known by their teachers. They have established an excellent rapport, creating a purposeful and productive classroom ethos that is highly conducive to effective learning and enjoyment. Staff are highly committed to supporting pupils and take genuine pleasure from each individual's successes.
- 3.16 Teaching promotes exploration and independent learning, and gives pupils confidence in their abilities, which represents an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a good balance between encouragement to work independently and opportunities to co-operate with others. A significant feature is that many lessons foster thinking and reasoning skills, and allow the pupils to develop effectively their oral as well as written communication. Teachers are very attentive to those pupils who need extra help, planning their work on many tailored levels so that account is taken of specific needs. Praise and encouragement are used effectively in most lessons to support and motivate the pupils. Individual education

plans (IEPs) are drawn up collaboratively by all those who teach the pupil, with advice from specialist staff. The plans have clear targets and are reviewed regularly so that all staff may meet the needs of pupils with SEND or EAL appropriately. In both the junior and senior schools, the most able pupils are provided for well through extra challenge and extension tasks.

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 Pupils demonstrate a strong spiritual awareness in relation to their ages, promoted effectively through the personal, social and health education and religious studies programmes. Throughout the school, pupils exhibit an understanding of world faiths. Pupils discuss and develop their own beliefs within a respectful and nurturing atmosphere; for example, some pupils offered insightful responses to the question 'Is there a creator?' and others marvelled at both the imagery and meaning of Islamic script. Pupils' mature self-awareness for their ages is demonstrated in their ability to evaluate their work and progress perceptively. Their emerging self-confidence is evident in their willingness to offer help to one another.
- 4.3 Pupils have an outstanding sense of right and wrong, evident in their exemplary behaviour. A sense of fairness and moral awareness is demonstrated throughout the school. Pupils are confident about sharing their individual views and secure in the knowledge that others will respect their right to hold them. In the senior school, pupils develop a principled approach as they consider issues such as the rights of young adults and the law, and the role of stereotyping in prejudice and discrimination. The anti-bullying posters created by pupils demonstrate an understanding and promotion of positive behaviour throughout the school.
- 4.4 Pupils of all ages demonstrate well-developed social responsibility. In the senior school, house-based tutor groups encourage pupils to become involved with those from other years, promoting the family atmosphere. In the junior school, pupils in Year 6 enjoy and take seriously their 'buddying' of Reception pupils. Senior school pupils play an active role in the corporate life of the school through their commitment to posts of responsibility, such as sports and house captains. Pupils are generous in their support of a variety of good causes and raise a considerable amount each year for those less fortunate than themselves, for national charities.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is a strength in the school. Their acceptance of, and respect for, people from other countries and faiths confirms the successful accomplishment of the school's aim to create an environment where respect for people from all cultures is paramount to pupils' daily life. It enables pupils from overseas, whether at the school for a short time or on a permanent basis, to settle quickly into the school. Pupils appreciate the availability of international links with overseas schools through membership of IES. They all benefit from the cultural mix of their peers, particularly in the senior school. In the junior school the pupils welcome children from a Russian infant school who visit annually. Throughout the school cultural links are explored through the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 8 explore American Indian designs to create their own designs on cloth.
- 4.6 The nurturing atmosphere means that by the time they leave the school, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of personal development. Pupils of all ages are polite, articulate and caring, with examples of their transformation through growing self-awareness and the confidence to share experiences. An environment has successfully been created in which respect for others results in confident, caring, articulate young people with a true sense of pride in being members of the school.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Pastoral care has been strengthened since the previous inspection, and fully reflects the school's aims. The caring and friendly environment is a major strength; pupils feel valued and independence is fostered. Extremely positive relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are a key factor in the cohesive school community. Co-operation and courtesy are evident in all aspects of school life; teaching and non-teaching staff are polite to pupils, and pupils respond respectfully. Pastoral matters are closely monitored by the school's leadership team, whose members ensure the successful gathering and sharing of pastoral information.
- 4.9 Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They are encouraged to eat healthily; meals provided are nutritious and include vegetarian and salad options as well as fruit. The PE and games programme, as well as the availability of outside space, gives pupils sufficient opportunity to exercise and play on a daily basis. The school implements effective procedures to promote good behaviour and discipline. Pupils of all ages move around school purposefully and happily, settling quickly in lessons. The anti-bullying procedures are highly effective and include the promotion within lessons of an awareness of cyber-bullying. Pupils report that bullying is extremely rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively should it occur. Questionnaire responses indicate that parents are extremely happy with the high standards of behaviour, though the pupil questionnaire responses showed that a small minority of older pupils question the fairness of certain sanctions. Pupils interviewed felt that staff are generally fair in the awarding of rewards and sanctions, which was evident in samples of records.
- 4.10 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The junior school, senior school and boarding councils meet regularly to seek the views of pupils. Although this has led to some changes, a minority of older pupils feel that the school does not sufficiently listen to their views. In interviews, whilst the majority of pupils were happy with this aspect, some expressed uncertainty about whether changes result from their suggestions. Inspectors agreed that communication regarding the school's response to pupils' suggestions is not yet sufficiently effective.

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

- 4.11 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good overall.
- 4.12 The school's policies give clear guidance on procedures and useful links are maintained with local welfare agencies. Thorough safeguarding arrangements ensure that staff receive child protection training at appropriate intervals for their level of responsibility and are clear about what to do should there be a concern. The school has an appropriate policy on safe recruitment and relevant staff have undergone training; however, the policy has not always been implemented rigorously. The school takes careful steps to ensure that health and safety procedures are robust. Appliances and equipment are tested at appropriate intervals and maintenance records are kept efficiently. Detailed risk assessments, overseen by an external consultant, promote safety for all areas of the site and include those for visits away from school.

- 4.13 The school implements strong procedures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards and all staff are trained in fire prevention and control procedures. Fire drills are carried out regularly, including in boarding time, and recorded efficiently. The school ensures that the provision for those pupils who are ill or injured, or those who require medication and support for on-going conditions, follows correct protocols. Any pupil with a particular difficulty is treated sensitively and given, where necessary, access to appropriate external support. Sufficient staff are trained in first aid at the appropriate level, to support the matrons, including paediatric first aid for the EYFS. Administration of treatment and medication is clearly recorded and parents informed. However, there is no system at present to ensure that first-aid bags are checked and replenished after use. The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.14 The quality of boarding is good overall.
- 4.15 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are confident and independent in the supportive environment of the boarding house. They demonstrate integrity and are tolerant towards each other, and those from a wide range of nationalities and cultures feel welcome. Boarders with additional needs feel accepted and supported; they are treated sensitively and respond positively. Relationships are excellent and encouraged by inter-house activities and communal mealtimes. Boarders from overseas share information about their countries and cultural values with the younger pupils. Boarders are kept informed of events outside of school through access to the internet and newspapers in the library, as well as through their visits to local shops. The recently formed boarding council enables the boarders to express their views and make a positive contribution to the running of the boarding house. Senior boarders are given areas of responsibility, such as library duty, or overseeing the tidiness of the senior common room.
- 4.16 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. An effective pupil mentor scheme, together with staff support, enables boarders to integrate quickly into the boarding community. Boarders report that this arrangement is effective. Boarders are aware of national helpline contact numbers and how to liaise with the school's independent listener. The website displays a clear complaints policy.
- 4.17 Twenty-four hour care is provided by three matrons, all first-aid trained. This takes place in the medical centre during the school day or in suitable rooms in the boarding house at night. Unwell boarders may contact a member of staff through a call bell system or call a staff member nearby. The school implements appropriate policies for the care of boarders who are unwell and now has pupil care plans for those with additional needs. An effective medication and audit system, updated through a centralised log, ensures that both day and night staff are aware of any medication administered. All staff receive appropriate training before they are authorised to administer medication. Matrons arrange appointments with a local general practitioner as necessary. Medical centre staff are aware of confidentiality issues relating to boarders and now provide information on how to access other specialist services. Fire evacuation drills are held in boarding time, equipment is checked regularly and appropriate logs are kept.
- 4.18 Boarders take all their meals in the dining room, including evening snacks. Food is nutritious, plentiful and varied. Pupil questionnaire responses expressed some negative views regarding food. This view was not supported by inspection evidence,

with the exception that options at breakfast were observed to be limited. Most boarders expressed dissatisfaction with evening snacks. Inspectors found that appropriate snacks are offered, although senior pupils cannot access these independently apart from at the weekend. The catering department is aware of boarders with particular dietary needs and provides alternatives, liaising with parents as necessary. Drinking water is available from water fountains around the school campus and readily available in the boarding areas. The school provides safe and suitable facilities and grounds for the boarders to access in their leisure time. During the summer months an outdoor pool may be used and a varied choice of extra-curricular activities is offered. In questionnaire responses, a minority of boarders expressed some dissatisfaction with evening and weekend activities. However, during the inspection boarders did not support this view and said that they enjoy activities in the local community and frequent weekend outings. Boarders had requested more free time during weekday evenings, and they now have extra self-directed time during one evening in the week. Should boarders wish to pursue a particular interest such as the army cadets or rugby club, they are encouraged to join activities in the locality. In questionnaire responses, a minority of boarders expressed disquiet about the safety of their possessions. Inspectors found that most boarders use a personal lockable space in the boarding area and all may choose this facility.

- 4.19 The boarding house is secure. Boarders do not access the house during the school day. Accommodation is generally spacious and adequate but some areas are of a lower standard, particularly one of the boys' shower rooms. The accommodation is clean and hygienically maintained and the laundry system is effective. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their own space but some areas, such as the girls' common room, lack homely accessories. The boys do not have a designated recreational area so must use the visitors' room in the school to watch television or relax. Most dormitories have study space and the library and computer room are also available for private study. Boarders may communicate easily with their families. They have suitably restricted use of personal mobile telephones and video messaging. A school computer and telephone are also available. An appropriate electronic policy promotes boarders' safety.
- 4.20 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is sound. The safeguarding policy now covers the necessary requirements and all staff have received appropriate training. However, a number of the required recruitment checks had not been carried out correctly at the time of appointment, but this has been rectified since. All staff have a strong awareness of safeguarding procedures. Boarders say that they feel safe, and effective roll-call systems and staff duty rotas allow staff to monitor their whereabouts. A member of staff sleeps in each area of the boarding house and boarders are clear of how and whom to contact, if necessary, during the night. Boarders have guardians arranged by the school or an outside agency and links with them are good. All regulatory checks regarding their suitability are recorded and the boarding house now has a clear record of guardianship details. Boarders report that bullying incidents are uncommon and are dealt with promptly and effectively should they arise. Positive behaviour is promoted through a system of recognition and reward, and during the inspection excellent behaviour was observed.
- 4.21 Leadership and management of the boarding provision are good. Boarding runs smoothly, underpinned by the guidance of clear boarding principles and practice. All staff are committed to enhancing and enriching the boarders' experience. Most boarding staff have teaching responsibilities that give them useful oversight of

boarders during the day. Record keeping is accurate and of a high standard. The appropriate sharing of information between boarding, pastoral and teaching staff is a strong feature and benefits boarders. Senior boarding staff have an excellent vision for improvement and in regular meetings with the senior leadership constantly review the rolling programme to refurbish the boarding accommodation. Parents of boarders who responded to the questionnaire did not express any concerns.

- 4.22 Since the previous boarding welfare inspection by Ofsted in 2008, the school has achieved most of the recommendations relating to training in the handling of medicines, risk assessment and sanctions. Some of the showers, in particular for the boys, have not yet been sufficiently improved and the system for providing evening snacks is not yet suitable for older boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governance successfully supports the aims of IES in promoting international co-operation and development in education and the pupils' educational experience is enriched as a result. The wider executive group draws on appropriate expertise in economics, finance and the law, and two of the directors have a background in international educational development. This enables them to provide suitable stimulus to direct the future development of the school and to have successfully undertaken the change in school ownership. Prudent financial management has allowed improvements to teaching and boarding facilities and the successful expansion into senior education.
- 5.3 The directors provide professional governance but not all visit the school frequently. This limits the support and advice they can provide to the leadership and staff, and arrangements by IES to appraise the work of the heads in its schools have not yet been implemented at this school. The directors are informed through regular reports from, and informal contact with, the acting head. This gives them some understanding of the challenges and opportunities encountered by the school. However, these arrangements make it more difficult for governance and leadership to ensure that the school development plan reflects a shared vision for improvement.
- 5.4 The directors carry out the required annual review of safeguarding arrangements in the school. They have drawn on the expertise of IES to advise them on their responsibility for health and safety matters. However, their monitoring of compliance with the regulatory requirements concerning the recruitment of staff and proprietors has not been sufficiently robust.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.6 In a period of transition to providing senior as well as junior education, senior leaders, who form a small but highly effective group, have worked very successfully to ensure that the school's ethos is upheld. This has taken place through strong example setting and highly committed leadership in support of the school's primary aim of providing excellence in education within an international perspective. They have ensured that the day-to-day implementation of policies and procedures for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is secure. Their success is evident in the pupils' good achievements and high level of personal development.
- 5.7 Through astute self-evaluation the leadership has focused on promoting the development of several key areas. This has resulted in the successful introduction of a new programme of study for junior school pupils and success in public examinations for the school's first cohort of sixteen-year-olds. A strength of the collegial leadership is the transparency of decision making, which has allowed for issues to be disseminated and discussed by all staff. This collaboration encourages strong involvement and commitment at all levels. However, some leaders carry a heavy workload of diverse responsibilities, which has limited their ability to fully

monitor some aspects of management. Whilst all staff now have the necessary clearance, management had not identified some errors in relation to recruitment; checks on several staff, including some in the EYFS, have not always been completed before they began work. Similarly, lack of formal monitoring of marking in the senior school has led to an inconsistency in its quality.

- 5.8 Staff with subject responsibilities have a firm grasp of their roles, though several staff, particularly in the senior school, do not have a job description that reflects their responsibilities. Since the previous inspection, subject documentation is more consistent and comprehensive. The leadership has introduced a thorough induction programme for new staff to ensure that they are fully aware of the school's policies and procedures. A rolling training programme ensures that all staff receive regular updates to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. A strong system of appraisal which starts with peer review and is linked to professional and personal targets has been instigated since the previous inspection. This is appreciated by staff, who say that they feel supported yet accountable. Staff are encouraged to take on fresh responsibilities to enhance their professional development, and are extremely hard working and fervent in support of the school and each other. As the senior school has extended a year at a time, leaders have worked hard to promote liaison and continuity between this emerging section of the school and its junior counterpart but are aware that this is not yet fully developed.
- 5.9 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents. Almost all respondents to the questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with the education and support provided, a view endorsed by inspectors. Parents were appreciative of the staff's efforts to make themselves available and their prompt response to messages. The school makes efficient use of electronic as well as conventional methods of communication to ensure effective liaison with parents. Parents particularly appreciate the quality of individual communications, such as when teachers send them photographs of their children participating in activities.
- 5.10 Relationships with parents are friendly and constructive. Parents consider that concerns are handled promptly and well, so that they can generally be resolved at an early stage. The 'open-door' policy is appreciated as a means by which any concern can be raised with an assurance of a sympathetic hearing and resolution. An active parents' association arranges many social and fund-raising events. A notable recent initiative was a scheme whereby pupils from each of the senior school classes produced a presentation to this association as part of a grant application for funds for their projects. This gave the pupils who took part a valuable experience of the realities of applying for funds.
- 5.11 Parents appreciate the ease by which school policies may be accessed on the website. This, together with the comprehensive school prospectus and magazines, affords parents of prospective pupils useful information. A weekly newsletter is sent in hard copy as well as posted on the website, and is also highly valued. Parents feel that there are excellent opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children; for example, the results of regular assessments such as on tables and spellings are communicated directly to them. They say that this allows them to address any difficulties immediately.
- 5.12 The school's arrangements concerning information about pupils' progress are highly regarded. Reports are detailed and informative, explaining clearly what comments mean and next steps. Parents particularly appreciate additional comments by the

heads of section, which they consider to be perceptive in demonstrating knowledge of their children. A notable feature of the reporting process is the use of pupil-led reporting sessions. Pupils select work to enter into a portfolio, together with reports and assessment results for the year. These high quality documents are discussed with parents or a volunteer teacher where parents are unavailable. Senior staff visit the countries of boarders from overseas whose parents cannot attend events at the school, taking samples of work and records. This gives these parents a chance to discuss their children in a more personal manner than remote email communication.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 6.1 The setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The EYFS and PYP programmes provide a compatible framework, which helps all children to reach their expected levels of development, including those with SEND. Most staff demonstrate high expectations and a secure understanding of the EYFS and ways that young children learn. They generally provide engaging activities that foster the children's concentration. Children's learning benefits from the expertise of specialist staff and resources in PE and French. Regular assessments of progress enable the effective planning of next steps. Children requiring extra help are encouraged and supported so that they also make good progress.
- 6.2 Learning opportunities for younger children, whilst enjoyable, do not allow sufficient variety of activities. Opportunities to explore differing role-play areas and sensory experiences are limited despite ready access to outside learning, so that occasionally these children's progress slows. Older children are given more opportunities to investigate and think creatively using interesting and stimulating topics, which include child-initiated investigations. However, outside learning is less well planned-for in Reception.
- 6.3 Throughout the setting, staff's genuine concern for the individual child is supported by policies that implement equality and eliminate discrimination. Parents are very appreciative of the setting. In Reception, they are encouraged to support their children's learning by hearing them read or helping them to find topic artefacts, such as light producing objects. These are greeted with much enthusiasm by staff, enhancing both the children's self-worth and the sense that school and home are working together. Parents of children in the Nursery are encouraged to share and discuss books with their children. All parents of children in the EYFS appreciate informative verbal and good quality written reports about their children's achievements and progress.

6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 6.4 Provision for the children's well-being is good. Children trust all staff, and look to their key people for care and support. They form strong relationships with adults and each other, and consequently develop their independence. Staff provide clear guidance on desirable behaviour and encouraging children to play co-operatively. Safety is a priority and children are encouraged to think carefully about the reasons for any restrictions and the consequences of unwise behaviour.
- 6.5 Health, safety and well-being are enhanced by careful implementation of policies as well as routines and procedures which children follow confidently. Risk assessments and the checking of all areas are frequent. The staff give clear messages about keeping healthy and the children are provided with water and nutritious food; however, not all the staff involved in preparing and handling snacks have received training in food hygiene. Younger children are provided with appropriate care and sensitive attention to personal hygiene.

- 6.6 Provision of resources is good. In Reception, a variety of books and educational equipment, including an electronic whiteboard, enables children to develop and maintain interest in topics, for example, Diwali, which was supported by authentic Rajasthani puppets. In the Nursery, resources are more limited and so children have less opportunity to explore stimulating experiences. Good liaison between the Nursery and Reception supports children in their transition to the next stage of their education.

6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 6.7 Leadership and management are good. Governor contact is limited, however, and occurs mainly in relation to the provision of facilities. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are appropriately implemented on a day-to-day basis. All staff are trained in safeguarding, health and safety procedures and correctly checked with the Criminal Records Bureau. However, recruitment checks have not always been carried out before some staff began work.
- 6.8 The staff's effective overview of the curriculum promotes children's good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Self-evaluation is undertaken informally and identifies areas for improvement that are indicated in the junior school development plan. Appraisal arrangements are very effective. A commitment to on-going professional development is shown by staff's willingness to undertake further study to improve their qualifications. Some staff have taken up opportunities to improve their practice through locally provided training. The EYFS maintains good relations with local children's services to provide extra support to children and their families as necessary.

6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 6.9 The overall quality and standards of the provision are good. The children, including those with SEND, make good progress relative to their ability and needs. Younger children speak clearly and express themselves confidently in their art. They are beginning to count and to use numbers in conversation. They enjoy playing, both in and out of doors. Older children are developing their phonic knowledge well using a published scheme, and this systematic learning is reinforced in good personal reading sessions and group work. Interesting and enjoyable activities, such as investigating the behaviour of water particles in differing temperatures, with children acting as particles, enable older children to widen their vocabulary well in a creative fashion.
- 6.10 The children develop as effective learners. Younger children are beginning to listen carefully, and older children are taught listening skills explicitly and are starting to evaluate their own thinking. Perceptive adult questioning enables them to extend their ideas, and respond thoughtfully. The school considers the nurturing of inquisitive children to be important and this is a theme of many of the informative displays.
- 6.11 Children demonstrate good personal and emotional development for their ages. Younger children are generally happy to share and take turns. They are beginning to organise themselves effectively, recognising their own peg and where their property belongs. This increasing independence is well developed by the time children move on to Year 1. Children benefit from education in an international community. They understand individual differences and respect one another. Older children eagerly anticipate visits from boarders to describe their cultural celebrations.

Leadership and management are generally effective, and self-evaluation that identifies areas for improvement has resulted in progress since the previous inspection. Children are well looked after and secure, and all safeguarding requirements are now complete.

- 6.12 Since the previous inspection, the setting has made considerable improvements to enable children to have a clearer understanding of how they can keep themselves safe. Planning has been improved to ensure that children's needs are consistently met, and there is increased consistency of practice across the whole EYFS.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.13 In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those responsible for the registered provision must:
- ensure that all staff involved in preparing and handling food have received training in food hygiene.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision other than take the action specified above.