



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ST EDMUND'S JUNIOR SCHOOL**

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St Edmund's Junior School

The Senior School was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	St Edmund's Junior School
DfE Number	886/6050
Registered Charity Number	1056382
Address	St Edmund's Junior School St Thomas Hill Canterbury Kent CT2 8HU
Telephone Number	01227 475600
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Email Address	juniorschool@stedmunds.org.uk
Head	Mrs Louise Moelwyn-Hughes Mr Matthew Jelley (Head of Junior School) Mrs Julia Exley (Head of Pre-Prep and EYFS)
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Terry
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	228
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (140 boys; 88 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 29 11-13: 96 5-11: 103
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 184
Number of Boarders	Total: 44 Full: 43 Weekly: 1
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Julia Exley
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	22 Sep to 25 Sep 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 boarding intermediate inspection was in October 2013 and the previous ISI integrated 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.

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.

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.

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, with the chair of governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and an assembly. 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

Dr Wendy Bowring	Reporting Inspector
Dr Pamela Edmonds	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr John Ingham	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Miss Sue Duff	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Miss Valerie Craven	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	11
(d) The quality of boarding	12
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
(a) The quality of governance	15
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	15

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Edmund's School, comprising Pre-Prep (3 to 7) Junior (7 to 13) and Senior (13 to 18), aims for pupils to strive for and achieve the very highest standards of which they are capable so that they grow into fine, young people, justifiably proud of themselves and fully equipped to make a success of their personal and professional lives in the modern world. It seeks to provide a caring and disciplined community, informed by Christian principles, and a broad education which will ensure that its pupils are both happy and successful. The school sets out to place particular emphasis on the development of compassionate and decent human relationships and the nurturing of individual interests and talents.
- 1.2 The school occupies an historic setting overlooking the city of Canterbury. Founded in 1751 by the Clergy Orphan Society in Yorkshire, the Senior School for boys moved to its current site in Canterbury in 1855, and in 1897 changed its name to St Edmund's School Canterbury. The Junior School was opened on the site in 1898 and began to educate the choristers of Canterbury Cathedral in 1972. Girls were introduced in 1982, and in 1996 the school was established as fully independent. In 1998, a purpose-built Junior School building was opened. In 2008 the Pre-Prep was established under its own head, for children aged 3 to 7. The three schools share the same site, while the choristers live within the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral in a dedicated boys' boarding house, Choir House.
- 1.3 A new head of the Junior School was appointed in September 2015. Both he and the head of the Pre-Prep are under the leadership of the Senior School head, who has been in post since 2011. St Edmund's is run as a charitable trust, with a board of governors who provide oversight of all three schools.
- 1.4 The Pre-Prep has 2 classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), comprising 31 children aged 3 to 5, and 2 classes for 27 pupils aged from 5 to 7. The Junior School, for pupils aged from 7 to 13, consists of 170 pupils. The school is attended by 140 boys and 88 girls. Of the 44 pupils who board, 24 are choristers and 20 others live in a mixed boarding house, School House. The vast majority of pupils transfer to the Senior School. Thirty pupils in the Junior School and six in the Pre-Prep, including three in the EYFS, are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils have an education, health and care plan. Twenty-seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), eighteen of whom are in the Pre-Prep, including eleven in the EYFS. Since the previous inspection, the Junior School has ended Saturday schooling.
- 1.5 The school is academically selective. The ability profile of the school is above the national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. The majority of pupils are of white British ethnic origin, with a few pupils of other nationalities and cultures. The school is Christian by foundation and welcomes pupils from all faiths and Christian denominations.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Ladybirds	Nursery
Honey Bees	Reception

Years 1 to 8

School	NC name
Cricketts	Year 1
Dragonflies	Year 2
Form 3	Year 3
Form 4	Year 4
Form 5	Year 5
Form 6	Year 6
Form 7	Year 7
Form 8	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good and they are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Children in the EYFS achieve particularly well in relation to their starting points. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve high standards and progress well in relation to their starting points through the excellent support they receive. More able pupils do not always achieve in line with their abilities as teaching does not consistently provide sufficient challenge. Pupils achieve significant success in a wide range of sports. The standards of singing and musical achievements of the choristers are exceptional. Many other pupils achieve high standards in music and drama. The good curriculum and extensive extra-curricular programme are successful in developing the pupils' individual gifts and talents. The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme reflects the school's active response to promoting fundamental British values. The quality of teaching is good and most sets high expectations. Subject specialist teaching significantly enhances pupils' learning.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school successfully creates a culture of respect and tolerance for all in the community and, as a result, pupils of all faiths and backgrounds thrive. Good pastoral guidance and support are provided, ensuring that pupils feel safe, are happy, and build strong relationships with one another and with staff. Behaviour is exemplary across all age groups. The close connection with Canterbury Cathedral enhances opportunities for spiritual development. Welfare, health and safety are good and care is taken to ensure that pupils are suitably safeguarded. The quality of boarding is good and boarders feel happy and secure.
- 2.3 The school is extremely well governed. Appropriate sub-committees and link governors, including those for the EYFS and boarding, ensure that the governing body is kept fully informed and fulfils its legal responsibilities effectively, including safeguarding. The school is well led. Recent changes to the roles of senior staff and other key appointments in the Junior School have ensured that senior management is well equipped to implement change and to continue to further the school's aims for its pupils in the future. Links with parents are excellent.
- 2.4 Since the previous integrated inspection in 2009 the school has made progress in increasing provision for information and communication technology (ICT), but this is not yet consistent across the school. Progress in extending the formal structure of sharing of good teaching practice in order to further develop teaching and learning has been particularly successful in the Pre-Prep but less so in the Junior School. The school has made some progress since the previous boarding intermediate inspection in 2013, a recommendation of which was to continue to promote and implement a culture of awareness of welfare, health and safety in boarding provision. Quick and effective communication across the pastoral network does not always support the individual needs of pupils, and the sharing of boarding practice across the two houses is somewhat limited.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.5 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.6 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all pupils have appropriate access to ICT in order to support their learning across the curriculum.
 2. Share the excellent teaching practice seen in many classes across all subjects in the Junior School, and provide greater challenge in lessons for the most able pupils.
 3. Implement planned systems of pastoral communication between teaching and non-teaching staff in order to further strengthen the welfare, health and safety of all pupils.

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 are well educated in line with the school's aim to provide a broad education for the all-round development of individuals. In the EYFS, children achieve extremely well in all areas of learning and development relative to their starting points. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS, and the most able exceed them in some areas. Children with SEND or EAL make excellent progress. Nursery children recognise their names, form letters and numbers correctly, and become engrossed when listening to stories. Good speaking and listening skills are fostered through exploring and investigating their local natural environment, and children are able to count everyday objects during practical activities. Reception children use their phonic knowledge to make plausible attempts at spellings, write short sentences and read simple texts. They are active learners who are able to concentrate and work independently, for example through operating software programmes, and are able to count to 20 and beyond. Both Nursery and Reception children are able to think critically through teacher-led problem-solving and creative activities.
- 3.3 From Year 1, pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding across all areas of the curriculum. Their literacy and numeracy skills are well developed. Pupils read well, are articulate and are able to express their thoughts clearly on paper. They listen carefully, contribute their opinions in a reasoned manner and are eager to give full explanations in answer to questions posed. Pupils are logical in their approach to problem solving, reason well, and apply their mathematical and scientific knowledge wisely. Older pupils of all abilities display excellent scientific understanding. Pupils' creative skills are strong, as seen in the art, design and technological work on display. Pupils demonstrate high levels of physical skills and abilities in a wide range of sports, and more able pupils achieve particularly well. Since the previous inspection pupils' skills in the use of ICT have improved, but these are not yet used consistently across the curriculum. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve particularly high standards in relation to their starting points through the targeted support they receive. More able pupils do not always achieve and progress in line with their abilities because they do not consistently benefit from additional challenge in lessons.
- 3.4 The standard of singing and other musical achievements of the choristers are exceptional. Extremely high standards are reached by many pupils in music and drama. Those who learn musical instruments achieve excellent results in external examinations and Year 8 pupils achieve considerable success in external speaking assessments. Pupils are successful when they compete in inter-school regional and national sports competitions. Pupils represented the school in the British Schools' Modern Biathlon Championships at the Olympic Park, and were finalists in English Schools' Swimming Association championships. Some teams have recently had unbeaten seasons in football and cricket. Many pupils have been successful in gaining scholarships to other senior independent schools, but almost all choose to transfer to the Senior School for their education.
- 3.5 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to performance in national tests, but on the evidence available from standardised measures of attainment, lesson observations, work seen and interviews with pupils, it is judged to be above age-

related expectations. Pupils across all age groups make good progress so that by the time they leave their attainment continues to be above that expected for pupils of similar ages and abilities. Particularly rapid progress was made in French by older pupils who had recently joined the school not having studied the language before. Pupils with SEND or EAL make rapid progress. Parents and pupils stated in response to the pre-inspection questionnaires that they were extremely pleased with the progress made over time at the school.

- 3.6 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are strongly motivated to succeed. They have good personal organisational skills and work with focus and application, whether independently or co-operatively. They settle down to their tasks quickly, enjoy their learning and relish taking the initiative when given the opportunity.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.8 The EYFS educational programmes comprehensively cover all seven areas of learning and enable all children to reach their full potential, in line with the school's aims. An appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities ensures that a wide range of activities is available to all children, both inside and outdoors. This strong provision enables children with SEND or EAL to make significant progress in relation to their starting points. All Nursery and Reception children have access to a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs including yoga, mathematics games and musical art. The specialist teaching in physical education, music and dance contributes positively to the outcomes for children. By the end of Reception, learning becomes more formal and a greater emphasis is placed on literacy and mathematics.
- 3.9 The curriculum for Years 1 to 8 is broad and covers all the key areas of learning. It fulfils the school's aim to provide a broad, holistic education that is enjoyed by all and is effective in meeting the individual needs of all pupils. Pupils develop appropriate skills for learning, and are provided with many exciting opportunities. The school is highly successful in developing the pupils' creative and sporting skills, alongside literacy and numeracy. All pupils benefit from the comprehensive PSHE programme that thoroughly promotes fundamental British values and a balanced approach to discussion of political views. Younger pupils learn about their inner feelings and emotions, while older pupils focus on the outside world, developing a clear understanding of the need for tolerance and the acceptance of differing points of view. Older pupils benefit from an excellent, innovative enrichment course known as 'StEdfast', which allows them to reflect on their personal development through the acquisition of key learning skills as well as their contributions to school life and wider society.
- 3.10 The provision for pupils with SEND or EAL is excellent and is highly effective in meeting their needs. A dedicated learning support team shares detailed education plans with staff and parents, and focused support during lessons successfully promotes these pupils' progress. From Reception, pupils study French, and pupils have the opportunity to study Latin from Year 5. The school makes excellent provision for a wide range of specialist teaching in music, sport, art and science, strongly supported by excellent facilities. It has started to make progress with the recommendation from the previous inspection to develop further its provision for ICT in order to ensure that pupils have wider access to it, but across the school this is still inconsistent.

- 3.11 An extensive range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils to experience and develop their interests, such as a gardening club, a sugar craft club and a rock band. Pupils participate in these activities with great enthusiasm, and their personal development is enhanced through the opportunity to represent the school in sporting competitions. The school ensures that pupils of all ages and abilities have many opportunities to be involved in music and drama events. The choristers enjoy excellent opportunities to sing almost daily in Canterbury Cathedral.
- 3.12 The curriculum is enriched by frequent trips and visits that provide pupils with a wide variety of learning opportunities. Regular residential excursions in the UK and abroad enable pupils to experience unfamiliar environments. Pupils benefit from strong community links, for example through the provision of university master classes for outstanding mathematicians and through the activities of the Cathedral choir. The establishment of St Edmund's Farm has provided an excellent resource for pupils of all ages. Pupils and their parents are appreciative of the breadth of the curriculum and the range of extra-curricular activities available.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.14 Staff in the EYFS provide many stimulating practical activities that successfully foster children's creative, investigative and imaginative skills. They are well qualified, experienced and very knowledgeable, and actively promote respect and tolerance through raising children's awareness of other cultures and religious practices. Carefully judged interventions for those children with SEND or EAL ensure that they have opportunities to reflect on their learning and refine their skills so that they make excellent progress. Staff have high expectations and frequently challenge children through open-ended questioning and problem-solving opportunities that successfully extend knowledge and understanding. Information gained through accurate assessment of children's learning and development is used rigorously to identify their next steps, ensuring that all children make the progress of which they are capable.
- 3.15 A significant amount of teaching in the Pre-Prep and Junior School observed was of high quality. Most teaching of pupils in Years 1 to 8 has high expectations, and subject-specialist teaching significantly enhances pupils' learning across the age range. The best teaching is characterised by brisk pace, skilful questioning and modelling of good practice. Individual targets for future learning are shared with the pupils. The majority of lessons have clear objectives, provide opportunities for collaborative learning and give appropriate support for those who need help or extra challenge. This is particularly effective in the Pre-Prep. Where lessons were less successful, they lacked clear objectives in planning, were slow in pace, and relied too heavily on a single teaching strategy, so that pupils lost focus and made limited progress.
- 3.16 Teaching largely promotes active learning and is shaped by a thorough knowledge of the needs of pupils in relation to their individual abilities. Pupils' ability and progress are efficiently assessed through a range of standardised assessments that enable teachers to gain a clear understanding of ability and progress over time. Assessment systems are being thoroughly reviewed in order to enhance the opportunity to inform pupils' future learning needs. This is particularly effective throughout the Pre-Prep. Lesson planning is mostly clear, concise and useful, but does not always incorporate the needs of the more able pupils.

- 3.17 Clear, succinct marking gives pupils positive feedback on the areas of strength in their work and insightful comments on how they might improve or extend their understanding further. However, not all marking is consistent as there is a wide variance in style and method of feedback. In some subjects, verbal feedback successfully engages pupils in responding immediately to the teacher's constructive comments.
- 3.18 Excellent provision for pupils with SEND or EAL is consistent across the school. Effective teaching strategies are shared, and all teachers liaise closely so that they understand the needs of individual pupils. Information gained from regular assessment feeds into individual provision maps, which result in clear, effective education plans with targets that are negotiated with the pupil.
- 3.19 Effective time management in lessons enables pupils to use their time productively. They are highly engaged in their learning due to the use made of a diverse variety of well-planned teaching strategies. Excellent use is made of group and paired work to stimulate discussion and promote collaborative learning skills. Pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers and are empowered to seek help when needed. The trust and rapport between pupils and teachers foster a supportive environment, free from partisan views in a culture of respect and tolerance, ensuring that pupils can learn with confidence. Classroom displays are lively and engaging. Teaching makes efficient use of good quality resources, although opportunities to extend pupils' learning through the use of digital technology are under-developed.

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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Children in the EYFS develop an excellent range of skills and attributes that enable them to make a positive contribution. They are able to share and take turns, and they show courtesy and respect towards each other and adults at all times. Behaviour in the EYFS is exemplary. Children are confident and happy in their work and play, demonstrating a high level of self-esteem. Purposeful use of lunchtime routines fosters children's personal independence and social skills: Nursery children independently cleared away their crockery after eating at lunchtime and Reception children were extremely successful in using their cutlery properly. Children have high awareness of the need to be tolerant of others, such as those from different cultural and religious backgrounds, which is enhanced through 'together times', where staff actively promote British values. Children are listened to, and staff take account of their particular needs and interests when planning topics and activities. Staff in the EYFS and Year 1 collaborate effectively using accurate developmental information to ensure smooth transitions for children.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They demonstrate respect and care for others, have a strong sense of self-awareness and are emotionally mature for their age. Regular chapel services, the support of the chaplaincy and assemblies help pupils to develop a sense of spirituality. They welcome and appreciate the celebration of their own and others' successes, and are proud to see examples of their work on display throughout the school. Pupils also develop a sense of self-knowledge and an understanding of others through their PSHEE lessons.
- 4.4 The quality of pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils gain a deep awareness of key moral topics through regular discussion in PSHEE. They have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong, understand the basic principle of English civil and criminal law, and support each other well. They know about major world crises, and have a clear ethical awareness. For example, in a Year 8 art project on 'Man and Machine', pupils commented on the negative impact that guns and bombs has had on the lives of people in Syria. Pupils are committed to helping others less fortunate than themselves, regularly supporting local, national and international charities.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent and a strong feature of the school. They are highly articulate, and engage supportively and encouragingly with each other and with their teachers. They develop leadership skills through undertaking a variety of roles, including election to the school council, where they accept responsibility with enthusiasm and commitment. Older pupils develop their sense of social responsibility through aspects of the bespoke 'StEdfast' course. The school successfully creates a culture of respect and tolerance for all in the community, and as a result pupils of all faiths and backgrounds thrive. It actively promotes fundamental British values within the community and pupils clearly understand the need to identify and combat discrimination. They show an excellent knowledge of distinctive English public institutions such as the monarchy, Parliament and the electoral system. Mock elections enabled pupils to understand the principles of democracy, including preparation of manifestos. The school ensures that pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.

- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils achieve significant personal growth through the many opportunities open to them for cultural development. They develop great respect for and demonstrate a strong appreciation of cultural diversity through their studies of different faiths, cultures and traditions. Ethnic diversity within the pupil body was celebrated as non-Christian pupils contributed to a class display on worship, and pupils from other countries were warmly received as they recited the *Lord's Prayer* in their own language in chapel. Within the PSHEE programme and through discussions in lessons, pupils develop a clear understanding of citizenship and gain an appreciation of Western culture and traditions. Regular excursions are frequently used to increase pupils' cultural knowledge, including local trips to the theatre and museums, and the school maintains significant links with Canterbury Cathedral.
- 4.7 Pupils are confident, courteous and conscientious, and they state that they are very happy and well supported at school. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed that they feel the education provided instils confidence in pupils. On leaving the school, pupils have achieved excellent standards of personal development in preparation for their future roles in modern British society.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.9 Staff in the EYFS have successfully provided a homely, nurturing, happy and stimulating environment in which children thrive. Excellent relationships are quickly and firmly established between children and staff. Key people and other staff work together to promote high standards of behavior, courtesy and mutual respect. Staff are constantly mindful of raising children's awareness of the need to stay safe, such as when they are taken to the dinner hall at lunchtime. Children learn about the importance of healthy eating, for example during lunch and snack time routines, when they are encouraged to make healthy choices. They understand the importance of washing their hands after going to the toilet or after messy activities. All children are involved in regular exercise, often during play sessions as they explore the outdoor spaces.
- 4.10 Pupils in Years 1 to 8 feel well supported by their peers and staff in and out of the classroom. Staff provide effective support and guidance in support of the school's aims for pupils to develop compassionate and decent human relationships. New pupils commented on how well they integrate easily into the community. Pupils are usually well supported through a network of varying pastoral systems. However, at times, these systems do not always ensure that information about pupils' individual needs are consistently communicated and that these needs are supported between teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 4.11 Pupils readily discuss the issues of healthy eating and living. A balanced diet is promoted through school meals and snacks, providing good nutrition, particularly in preparation for the excellent sporting opportunities on offer. Many of the well-supported clubs involve physical activity, which supports the school's commitment to health and fitness.
- 4.12 Policies to promote good behaviour and to guard against bullying are clear and well implemented. Behaviour across the school is exemplary. Pupils of all ages show great care and concern for each other, and feel empowered to seek adult help to

resolve difficulties if so desired. Some pupils talk about a 'bully free' school and all have clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable. A minority of pupils felt that the school is slow to deal with alleged bullying incidents, but in discussion with pupils during the inspection, it was clear that these related to friendship issues rather than bullying. Close scrutiny of documentation indicates that the rare incidents of alleged bullying are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Whilst pupils have formal and informal discussions on cyber-bullying, they report that limited access to computers for social and recreational use means that this is not a significant concern in school.

- 4.13 A concise accessibility plan is in place to improve educational access for pupils with SEND over a three-year period, as required. Building on from adjustments already made, the school emphasises its clear intent to ensure that pupils are protected from discrimination.
- 4.14 The school council enables staff to seek and listen to the views of pupils. This provides an opportunity for them to take a position of responsibility and influence change in aspects of school life, for example the acquisition of picnic benches in the playground. Other successful strategies for seeking pupils' views include the catering committee, boarders' house meetings and regular questionnaires for some parts of the school.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.16 In the EYFS, the provision for children's well-being is excellent and each child's welfare is strongly promoted. The school actively promotes prompt and regular attendance. Staff are aware of safeguarding policy and practices, and clearly understand the procedures to follow in the event of any safeguarding concerns. Visitors to the school raise children's awareness of the need to keep safe, for example when supporting a topic such as 'People who help us'. Good arrangements are in place to prevent extremism.
- 4.17 A high priority continues to be placed on welfare and safeguarding for the whole school by the governing body. All staff receive regular training in child protection, updated promptly when required, and have a keen awareness of the additional needs of vulnerable children as well as identifying those who may be at risk. A new safeguarding team was created in January 2015 which ensures that policies and procedures are securely in place to promote safeguarding, including full consideration of recent advice on preventing extremism. The team ensures that clear lines of communication between the senior management, staff and governors across the school, including those responsible for the care of the choristers of Canterbury Cathedral, are maintained. To support pupils, the school and cathedral safeguarding and child protection policies are closely co-ordinated and clear lines of reporting are evident for pupils, whether at school or at the cathedral.
- 4.18 Comprehensive recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff checks are completed before an individual commences employment. Admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately. The efficient work and support of secretarial, administrative and all other non-teaching staff make an excellent contribution to pupils' welfare.
- 4.19 The medical centre makes high quality provision for pupils who are sick or injured, supported by comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures.

Arrangements for health and safety are well managed by the health and safety committee. Written risk assessments, including those for visits out of school, are in place, but vary in quality. Staff are generally well informed about individual pupils' health needs. At times, insufficient sharing of information between teaching and non-teaching staff means that pupils' needs are not well communicated and supported. Many staff have received first-aid training, including paediatric first aid.

- 4.20 Efficient systems are in place for assessing risks and all necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. The fire safety manual and all records are generally carefully kept. A few safety matters which required attention during the inspection were promptly remedied. Regular fire drills are conducted, and the relevant equipment is checked at appropriate intervals.
- 4.21 Pupils are appropriately supervised. They stated clearly during interviews that there are several caring staff to whom they could turn if they were worried or concerned. The overwhelming majority of parents stated in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire that their children feel safe and happy at school.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.22 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.23 The outcomes for boarders are good. Boarders experience strong personal growth through the experience of boarding. They feel extremely happy and secure within the boarding environment and take a pride in their surroundings. They develop high levels of independence and self-reliance, and are confident when working through issues for themselves. Boarders develop tolerance through support from the chaplaincy's inclusive approach to pupils of different faiths. They develop strong feelings of attachment and belonging through being part of the large 'family' unit within each house and having constant access to house staff. Boarders talk affectionately about the homely environment that is created by the dedicated house parents and matrons, supported by graduate Gap Year students and visiting tutors. The older boarders are extremely supportive and nurturing of the youngest boarders, which is particularly evident in Choir House, where the set routine of the cathedral choristers presents extra demands on the boys' time. The choristers recognise their unique position within the school and enjoy the high profile that it brings.
- 4.24 Boarders are fully integrated with the day community in the school, although the boarding houses are kept exclusively for the use of those boarding on a full or flexible basis. Formal and informal methods for making choices and making views heard within the house are used. For example, voting on the weekend activity programme is the accepted democratic approach to make decisions. Good conduct is rewarded with 'stars' that result in specific treats, for example choosing a DVD for the weekend. Senior pupils selected by the cathedral hold specific responsibilities, and in School House the Year 8 boarders share duties. A few of the older boarders hold significant responsibilities within the four competitive houses across the school.
- 4.25 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The enthusiasm of the boarding team to ensure that the pupils are happy and safe throughout their time at school is embedded into the boarding culture. It effectively supports individual needs and helps to ensure that boarders remain safe, fit and healthy. A successful 'buddy' system ensures that boarders are well inducted into the daily routines of the house. They are aware of a number of people to whom they can turn for support, including an independent listener who is known to them.

- 4.26 Boarders receive excellent medical support from in-house matrons and staff at the medical centre. All medication is appropriately stored and distributed by fully trained nurses. However, quick and effective communication about pastoral issues is not always made to support the needs of pupils. Handover books are not routinely maintained to ensure that all staff are aware of issues and other information when they commence their duties.
- 4.27 Main meals are provided in the dining rooms in the main school and Choir House, and a variety of treats and snacks are provided every night. House staff ensure the efficient running of all the domestic aspects of the house, including cleaning, laundry and supplies. Personal items can be locked away, and valuables, including money, are kept safely by the house parents.
- 4.28 Boarders benefit from access to an excellent variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs. In School House these are complemented by special boarders' activities on Saturday mornings and Sundays, which the boarders greatly enjoy. An appropriate amount of time is given for boarders to occupy themselves, with newspapers and magazines available in the houses which mirror their particular interests. Choristers are not permitted to have free use of electronic equipment including laptops, tablet computers and smartphones during the week but have access to house computers for their independent work, which have suitable filters to ensure safe internet use.
- 4.29 Boarders enjoy living in two spacious houses amongst the architectural splendour of the school's historic setting. They mostly share accommodation with their peers, and the comfortable social and communal areas are well supplied with things to do both collectively and individually. Boys and girls are accommodated on separate floors in School House, with an ample number of suitable, though somewhat dated, bathroom facilities. Boarders in Choir House, however, benefit from a significantly higher standard of accommodation than their peers in School House, which looks tired in comparison.
- 4.30 Most of the boarders live in England and see their parents regularly, especially those in Choir House. Housemasters make contact with parents early each term to reassure them of their children's general happiness and well-being, and all boarders can contact their families using dedicated telephones for incoming parent calls. Good systems are in place for complaints to be promptly addressed and resolutions quickly made.
- 4.31 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is good. Safeguarding procedures are robust and effectively implemented, and all boarding staff are suitably trained in child protection. Behaviour is exemplary and effective strategies are in place to help develop positive relationships and promote good behaviour. Several boarders describe the school as a 'bully free' environment and they are confident that staff would quickly deal with issues should they arise.
- 4.32 Choristers are supported jointly by the school and the cathedral. Staff and choristers know exactly when they are under the care of each, ensuring that their welfare and safety are a priority wherever they are. The school shows flexibility and compassion when choristers have extra demands on their time. A rigorous safe recruitment policy is implemented and all adults resident in the boarding houses are employed by the school. An effective policy ensures that visitors to the boarding accommodation are effectively monitored, and an appropriate induction checklist for members of the boarding staff with specific job descriptions ensures that all are well informed about their roles. Fire prevention arrangements and risk assessments are

in place, and regular fire drills are efficiently carried out. Not all portable appliances in the houses had undergone safety testing, but this had been remedied by the end of the inspection. An appropriate missing child policy informs staff of the procedures to follow if necessary.

- 4.33 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is good. The Senior School boarding leadership has recently been given responsibility for overseeing Junior School boarding in order to share best practice in boarding across all sections of the schools. Responsibility for the boys in Choir House is shared between the school and the cathedral, the school having responsibility for all times other than when the choristers are away from Choir House engaged in cathedral activity. This works well as lines of accountability are clear, and effective arrangements are in place for the welfare, health and safety of all choristers at all times. A clear and well-written boarding handbook and informative supplementary house handbooks are provided to boarders and their parents which outline the school's boarding ethos and give full information about daily routines. Link governors show keen interest in boarding life and make termly visits to the houses. This ensures that the full governing body is kept up to date on issues that affect boarding provision. Regular surveys of boarding pupils help to inform future boarding practice.
- 4.34 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents said that their children do not enjoy boarding and that it does not contribute positively to their overall progress and development. During the inspection, all boarders appeared extremely happy and spoke positively about the whole boarding experience, stating that their peers are all equally content and cheerful at school.
- 4.35 The school has made some progress since the previous boarding inspection in 2013, when it was recommended to continue to promote and implement a culture of awareness of welfare, health and safety in boarding provision. However, the sharing of good practice across the two houses is somewhat limited.

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 has a strong balance of expertise across many fields to support the school, and recognises the need for careful future succession planning to maintain this as governors retire. A comprehensive induction programme for new governors includes welfare and safeguarding, and opportunities for joint training with teaching and pastoral staff promotes a strong framework for self-evaluation, reflection and development across all aspects of the school.
- 5.3 A governor effectively acts as a link between the EYFS and the governing body to ensure that key policies and procedures are implemented appropriately, in order to comply with EYFS requirements. Governors have an excellent understanding of the work of the EYFS and provide strong support for its work. This involvement has raised the profile of the setting and had a positive impact on the support the EYFS team feels that it is receiving.
- 5.4 The governing body is highly effective in supporting the school to achieve its aims by setting strategy, monitoring, maintaining financial stability, and reviewing policies and procedures. Three sub-committees meet termly: education and staffing, finance and general purposes, and development and estates. Several individual governors have designated responsibility for various aspects of school life, including child protection, SEND and supporting the school's boarding community. They regularly visit the school, attend a wide range of events, and provide a strong link between the school and the local community. A dynamic group, they fully engage in the life of the school, including the monitoring of standards. Governors provide extremely effective line management and support for the school's leadership.
- 5.5 The governing body has an excellent understanding of its statutory and legal responsibilities and demonstrates a substantial level of commitment to the school. The annual review of safeguarding is diligently conducted, and strong support is given to ensure the appointment of highly qualified staff, the implementation of safe recruitment procedures, and the maintenance of comprehensive and accurate records.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.7 Children's well-being and safeguarding are of paramount importance in the EYFS, with genuine concern evident for the welfare and personal development of children. Staff and governors undertake safeguarding training at the required frequency, enabling them to confidently take appropriate action should the need arise, thus promoting a safe, secure environment. An honest self-evaluation process provides a secure basis for planning development in the EYFS, which sets out clear strengths and areas to develop further. Staff had already identified their intent to review ICT resources in order to meet the developing learning needs for children in the future. Senior staff regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the educational

programmes in all seven areas of learning to ensure equality, diversity and the promotion of British values. Strong partnerships are established with parents, who are extremely supportive of the school. Parents comment that communication with staff is excellent. Since the previous inspection, good progress has been made in addressing the recommendation made at that time to implement plans for developing the outdoor area adjacent to the EYFS accommodation as an area for quiet outdoor activities.

- 5.8 At all levels, leadership and management are effective in enabling the school to successfully achieve its aim to provide a caring and disciplined community, informed by Christian principles. The whole-school management team clearly promotes a vision for the future direction of the school. It is committed to providing a broad education in order to ensure that all pupils are both happy and successful. New appointments to the Junior School leadership team have greatly strengthened the whole school's management, strongly supported by additions to the non-teaching, administrative team. All those in senior positions show a determination for moving the senior and junior schools forward as integral parts of St Edmund's.
- 5.9 Close collaboration is established between middle management staff in the Senior School and Junior School, and teamwork across the whole school is effective. Excellent use is made of Senior School teachers within the Junior School to ensure that pupils have the best opportunities to learn. During this period of change, as the school becomes truly embedded as one body under united leadership, the whole-school management team continues to provide clear educational direction for all parts of the school. Across the schools, clear, concise arrangements for monitoring all aspects of school life have made a positive impact on pupils' learning. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders, and that their views are actively sought and valued.
- 5.10 Senior managers in the Pre-Prep and Junior School are effective in self-evaluation, and development plans show a commitment to ongoing improvement. Middle managers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They provide strong leadership to their departments, and departmental targets feed into the school development plan, where priorities are identified and clear timescales set. Efficient plans are in place to strengthen links at transition points across the schools, already strong between the Pre-Prep and Junior School, and to improve the quality of education in individual subjects through ICT provision. The plan is reviewed annually and priorities adjusted to suit the changing needs of the school and pupils. One area already identified as requiring further development is the need to improve systems of pastoral communication across the school.
- 5.11 Management is successful in recruiting, supporting and developing highly motivated staff. The school operates a biennial appraisal programme for all staff and is strongly committed to continuing professional development, ensuring that all staff have opportunities to undertake courses that impact positively on pupils' learning. In particular, the school ensures that staff are fully trained in all aspects of welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, child protection and paediatric first aid. Meticulous arrangements are in place for ensuring the suitability of all staff and governors at the school. New staff are appointed in accordance with safer recruitment requirements. The necessary checks are carefully recorded in the single central register. Induction of new staff is thorough and staff mentors ensure that they feel extremely well supported. At all levels, staff demonstrate a secure understanding of their role in safeguarding the pupils in their care.

- 5.12 Some progress has been made in achieving the recommendation from the previous inspection to further the good quality of teaching and learning by extending the formal structure of the sharing of good practice across the school. The school has recognised that this is still an area for further development.
- 5.13 Excellent links are made with parents, carers and guardians, in line with the school's aims and ethos, which impact positively on outcomes for pupils. Responses to the parents questionnaire highlighted an overwhelmingly high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work. Parents are particularly appreciative of the progress of their children and the level of individual support they receive.
- 5.14 The school maintains constructive relationships with parents, who are aware of whom to approach for advice should they wish to raise a concern. They have complete confidence that their concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively and according to published procedures, and a timely resolution effected.
- 5.15 Parents appreciate the wide range of opportunities available to be involved in the work and progress of their children, including induction and parent-teacher meetings. In addition, informal opportunities such as 'drop-in' invitations allow parents to visit classrooms and see their children's work, and they attend music and drama performances, coffee mornings and chapel services. Parent representatives from each class meet regularly with the Pre-Prep leadership, and a thriving parents association in the Junior School is committed to supporting the school.
- 5.16 Parents of current and prospective pupils receive a wide range of high quality materials about the school at open days and on individual visits. Parents have access to the school's key policies and procedures on its informative website. Parents receive a detailed and informative handbook when their children start school, and find the weekly information mailings, particularly *The Week Ahead*, an excellent way of keeping abreast of school activities.
- 5.17 The school operates an 'open door' policy and staff are available if parents want to discuss their children's learning, development and progress. Parents receive good quality written reports twice a year that focus on progress and achievements linked to a range of learning areas, and a regular review card each term provides supplementary information more informally.

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