



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

THE KINGSLEY SCHOOL

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The Kingsley School

Full Name of School	The Kingsley School
DfE Number	937/6005
Registered Charity Number	528774
Address	The Kingsley School Beauchamp Avenue Leamington Spa Warwickshire CV32 5RD
Telephone Number	01926 425127
Fax Number	01926 831691
Email Address	h.owens@kingsleyschool.co.uk
Headteacher	Ms Heather Owens
Joint Chairs of Governors	Mrs Alison Darling and Mrs Joan White
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	338
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (1 boy; 337 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 10 5-11: 74 11-18: 254
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Anne Hornsby
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	30 Sep 2014 to 03 Oct 2014

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 January 2011.

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, as amended. 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.

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Stephen Grounds	Reporting Inspector
Ms Charlotte Avery	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Garry Binks	Team Inspector (Housemaster and Head of Department, HMC school)
Miss Kate Mitchell	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Simon Mozley	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Ros Ford	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Kingsley School, founded in 1884, is an independent day school for girls aged 3 to 18, which welcomes boys aged 3 to 7. The school takes its name from its founder, Rose Kingsley, the elder daughter of Charles Kingsley. The prep school, for pupils from Years 1 to 6, and the sixth form are housed in their own separate buildings across the street from the main building, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) being accommodated within the prep school building. Since the previous inspection there has been substantial refurbishment of the accommodation and the adoption of one-hour lessons within a two-week timetable.
- 1.2 The school aims to foster confidence, creativity, independence, and a sense of responsibility and respect for others, within a friendly, caring and supportive environment in which pupils are encouraged as individuals to work hard and achieve their best academically. The school has two chairs of governors who co-chair meetings of the governing body, which consists of twelve members, including several parents of former pupils.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the prep school overall is above the national average, with variance in the spread and ability of different cohorts. The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with around three-quarters of pupils having ability that is at least above average.
- 1.4 There are ten children, including one boy, in the EYFS: nine full-time and one part-time. The prep school has 74 girls, and the senior school, comprising Years 7 to 13, 254 girls. The school has identified 63 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and provides extra support for 41 of them. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, funded by a local authority. There are eight pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), of whom two are in receipt of extra help. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds: the overwhelming majority are of white British origin.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school from Reception to Year 13 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the Nursery is Foundation 1.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 All pupils, including those with SEND and those in the EYFS, make very good progress compared with those of similar abilities. Their standards in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are excellent. Pupils speak with confidence and clarity. They develop reasoning and thinking skills which they bring to bear in all their studies, approaching problem-solving tasks with confidence. Their creative work is inventive and well presented, and artistically they excel. A particular strength of the school is the high proportion of pupils in each cohort participating and succeeding in music, sport and other extra-curricular activities. Most pupils achieve places at their first choice of university when they leave. The school's aim to offer a broad curriculum complemented by a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities is realised and, given the school's size, this is a strength. Teaching is good overall and many lessons provide effective challenge which enables pupils to learn well and to excel. In some aspects of teaching there is reliance on the direction of the teacher which is reducing the potential in some instances for self-exploration. The teaching of pupils with SEND is very effective. At its best assessment is thorough and allows pupils to make further progress through the use of formative comments and targets for improvement. The school makes effective use of nationally standardised data to set targets for pupils of all ages and this is being increasingly used to inform teaching.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent. From the EYFS onwards, good relationships are a strength of the school. Senior pupils have a sense of the transcendent and strong moral values. Pupils of all ages are mindful of those less fortunate than themselves and take pride and enjoyment in raising funds for a variety of charitable causes. The pupils' social development contributes to the welcoming and friendly atmosphere of encouragement and support in the school's small community, which many comment on as being like an extended family. Those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive in their opinions of the school. Pastoral care and individual welfare are excellent.
- 2.3 The school has excellent leadership and management, and links with parents. It is successful in meeting its overall aims. A great deal has been done since the previous inspection to improve the school and to provide it with a strong forward direction. New managerial structures have been incorporated to advantage. Governance is excellent: the governors give generously of their time and exercise a strategic oversight of the school's overall quality, finance, resources and safeguarding. Their strategic oversight of learning is less developed. Welfare, health and safety are strengths and the school now meets all the regulatory requirements. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the parental questionnaire were extremely positive in their views of the school. The school has moved forward on all the four recommended action points of the previous inspection but the excellent practice evident in some current teaching and assessment is not yet extended across all subjects.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Review the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to ensure that it is being utilised in a consistent manner across the school to help enrich teaching
 2. Ensure that governors have regular access to information and data in order to fulfil their obligation to oversee the consistency, quality and impact of teaching, including the use of ICT and other resources in lessons.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school fulfils its aims to encourage care and concern for pupils as individuals in an environment where they enjoy learning, while pursuing excellence and fulfilling their academic potential. The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- 3.3 Children in the EYFS make excellent progress relative to their abilities and needs, with the overwhelming majority reaching and often exceeding the expected levels of attainment at the end of this stage. Nursery children were observed re-enacting a story that they had heard using props from the outdoor area. They can count up to ten and are starting to identify letter sounds. They are able to select what they want to do independently and move between activities with confidence. In Reception, the children have secure knowledge of sounds and are able to use them in independent work. Their writing skills develop well and they can write short sentences. They count to 20, complete simple sums and contribute to a tally chart. They are able to make observational drawings.
- 3.4 As they progress through the school pupils are increasingly articulate and express their ideas confidently and fluently. Their confidence and clarity in speaking are illustrated by their excellent success in speech and drama examinations. Their standards of literacy are good and they present written tasks thoroughly, taking great care with their presentation. In languages pupils have writing and speaking skills appropriate to their ages. Pupils demonstrate confident numeracy skills that they apply across the curriculum. They develop reasoning and thinking skills that they bring to bear in all their studies, approaching problem-solving tasks with confidence. Their creative work is inventive and well presented, and artistically they excel. Many notable examples are displayed around all parts of the prep and senior schools. Senior pupils are confident in design technology: they apply theory well in textiles and undertake independent work in the production of recipes in food technology.
- 3.5 In the sixth form excellent examples of work were seen, as, for example, where pupils demonstrated a high level of competence in French grammar and vocabulary. In physics, mathematics was seen successfully applied to kinematic events, and in fine art and photography sophisticated photographic techniques were deployed. Sixth-form pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT are very good.
- 3.6 A particular strength of the school is the high proportion of pupils in each cohort which participates and succeeds in extra-curricular activities. Pupils are enthusiastic in sport and other physical activities. Individuals compete successfully at county and national level in a number of sports. Notable success is achieved in music examinations, and at all levels of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, nineteen gold awards having been attained in the past three years. Pupils are successful, individually or in groups, in drama, singing and instrumental music. Most pupils leaving at the age of eighteen proceed to higher education, with the majority achieving places at their first choice of university.
- 3.7 The pupils' attainment in the prep school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the inspection evidence gathered through observation of lessons, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of the pupils' work, it is

judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Relative progress is also high.

- 3.8 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Performance at GCSE has been above the national average for girls in maintained schools. The results in 2011 were similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Across all years the percentage of A* and A grades was significantly above the national average for girls in maintained schools. Results at A level have been similar to the national average for girls in maintained schools overall, and shown a steady improvement over the three years; in 2013 the results were similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. The higher grade results were comparable with those for girls in maintained selective schools. The results for 2014 are at similar levels to those for 2013. These levels of attainment, and available standardised measures of progress, indicate that pupils make progress that is good, and in some cases high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Pupils identified with SEND or EAL make similar progress to their peers. Those identified as able, gifted and talented achieve similarly to other pupils in their classroom work and make further progress in out-of-class activities.
- 3.9 The pupils' attitudes to learning in all sections of the school are excellent. Children in the EYFS sustain their concentration and, in common with other pupils in the school, they take great pride in their work. Pupils from Year 1 onwards are inquisitive, well organised and highly motivated. They work well in groups, supporting each other and enjoying one another's success. Their behaviour in lessons is exemplary and they pay careful attention to their teachers. These co-operative and positive attitudes contribute significantly to their learning.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 All children in the EYFS are given many opportunities to develop excellent speaking and listening skills. The curriculum is enhanced by the use of specialist staff for Chinese, music, drama and games, and by learning opportunities in the nearby woodland environment. Teaching is adapted to the next steps in the children's learning, and adjusted to the children's changing needs and interests. Those children with SEND or EAL are well supported. The setting offers a bright and lively environment both indoors and outside. The newly refurbished outside classroom and play area allow many opportunities to enhance the curriculum and promote outdoor learning.
- 3.12 In Years 1 to 13, the aim to offer a broad curriculum complemented by a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities is achieved significantly well given the size of the school. The curriculum is suitable for all ages and for the range and abilities of the pupils. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated the view that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and experiences.
- 3.13 In the prep school, pupils benefit from a core curriculum that is enhanced by the provision of specialist teaching in French, Chinese and Spanish, and enriched by a programme of activities which includes public speaking, outdoor sports, music and drama. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught to all years and covers topics appropriate to their age.

- 3.14 Senior pupils too benefit from a wide range of choice, such as to study separate sciences and classics. They have options to study more than one modern foreign language as well as Latin. Outside the timetabled lessons pupils appreciate being able to study additional subjects to GCSE level, for example astronomy, as well as the individual support offered in several subjects.
- 3.15 In the sixth form, pupils choose from a wide range of academic subjects. The Extended Project Qualification allows the pupils to develop excellent research skills and independence in their learning. The enrichment programme includes a four-week volunteering scheme, a fitness course and work on citizenship. The provision of careers advice is valued by the pupils, who speak highly of the advice they are given as they progress through school.
- 3.16 A scheme, (Minerva), runs throughout the school to promote the achievements of individuals who are able, gifted and talented. Within the school, clubs provide challenging activities for identified pupils, such as a mathematics club and 'Young Writers'. Additionally, pupils are encouraged by the school to enter competitions and join outside clubs.
- 3.17 The school has made good progress in addressing the recommendation of the previous inspection to strengthen liaison between the prep and senior schools in order to support curriculum development and consistency of assessment. Where termly meetings are held across departments, robust and mutually beneficial discussions take place, but this is limited in some subjects. In Year 7 French, teachers link vocabulary to what pupils have learned in Year 6. Senior school staff teach in the prep school, and prep school pupils use senior school facilities for games, science, drama and library time.
- 3.18 From the earliest years pupils are offered opportunities to further their learning through school visits to local and international destinations. These include a multi-activity centre, residential for pupils from Year 4 upwards, a local museum which focuses on women in construction and architecture, a choir trip to Tuscany and a battlefields visit to Ypres.
- 3.19 The number and variety of extra-curricular activities have increased significantly since the previous inspection. These activities promote the pupils' intellectual, aesthetic and physical skills. The wide range of activities is genuinely appreciated by pupils, in particular where older help younger. For example, senior school pupils run a jump rope club for pupils in Years 2 and 3.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.21 Staff in the EYFS provide interesting and challenging experiences that are highly effective in promoting the children's language, communication, personal, social and emotional development, appropriate to their age. An excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning both indoors and outdoors encourages independent learning, problem solving and exploration. Children are motivated and enthusiastic learners who respond well to the staff's high expectations of them. Excellent use is made of observations of children to identify progress and next steps in learning. Parents and carers provide useful information on entry and contribute to reading records. The setting is very well resourced.
- 3.22 From Year 1, the school meets its aim to create an environment where the educational process is enjoyable and valued, and provides a learning experience in which all pupils feel valued and supported by teachers who know them well and who have a strong knowledge of their subjects. Much teaching allows pupils to develop their ideas, enhancing their learning through experiences, which challenges and enables very good progress to be made by all. In sixth-form teaching, small group sizes allow teachers to tailor their lessons to maximise achievement. In creative and practical subjects teachers successfully develop and capitalise on the pupils' capacity for independent learning. Managers are aware that this approach is not always consistently applied across all teaching and have a strategy to ensure that examples of best teaching practice are consistently replicated.
- 3.23 The strong relationships between staff and pupils are extremely effective in recognising the pupils' individual needs. Teaching provides excellent individual support for most pupils and enables them to develop their ideas through effective questioning. The most able, however, are not always extended other than through repeated tasks. The most successful teaching, in frequently promoting independent work, allows pupils to set their own targets for success, a responsibility to which the pupils respond well.
- 3.24 Teaching of pupils with SEND and EAL is very effective, with excellent in-class support as well as structured sessions to address individual needs. Provision for pupils with a statement of special educational needs fulfils the requirements of the statements. Across all pupil abilities, teachers give freely of their time to reinforce work completed in lessons and support extra work, which is greatly appreciated by the pupils.
- 3.25 In most teaching, assessment is thorough and allows pupils to make further progress through formative comments and targets for improvement, but this is not evident within and across all sections of the school. The school's marking policy is not yet uniformly applied. Where it is, pupils are enabled to reflect on areas for improvement and set realistic targets for their future work. The school makes effective use of nationally standardised data to set targets for pupils of all ages and this is increasingly used to inform teaching. Effective oral feedback is facilitated by the small class sizes, enabling staff to give individuals guidance for further improvement. Reports, and particularly the targets within, are informative and useful in both improving the pupils' performance and tracking progress.
- 3.26 Teaching is suitably resourced and the libraries are well stocked to aid reading and study skills. Much excellent teaching is supported by the effective use of

technology. Good development of ICT provision has taken place since the previous inspection. While there has been successful sharing of good practice and staff training in this area, the integration and level of use of ICT to enrich teaching and learning is variable.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. When offered opportunities to reflect on themselves pupils do so with maturity: prep school pupils responded strongly in a PSHE lesson on the works of C S Lewis exploring the notion of finding feelings. Senior pupils benefit from the school's developing 'mindfulness' programme. They are aware of and have a mature approach to transcendental aspects of life. For example, senior pupils spoke about the need for services of remembrance and considered that participation in these was a significant aspect of being human. Pupils appreciate the place of religion alongside the mores of secular society.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils well understand their role in upholding the school's code of conduct. The theme of peace and reconciliation, which is supported through a cross-curricular Year 8 trip to Coventry Cathedral, is important to pupils. The pupils' awareness and understanding of prejudice, inequality and discrimination are evident in their responses to topics in religious studies in Year 9. Senior school pupils showed empathy in discussions generated in history and English about social conditions in the Victorian era. The school has a very active group to support prisoners of conscience, run by senior girl pupils. The 'eco' club and committee support a focus on developing respect for the natural environment.
- 4.4 Pupils develop excellent social awareness. This contributes to the welcoming and friendly atmosphere of encouragement and support in the small community of the school, which many comment on as being like an extended family. Behaviour is excellent, both in the classroom and communal areas, and in pupils' relationships with each other. Pupils take pleasure in the achievements of others and enjoy the opportunity to experience each other's talents, for example during a performance of Chopin works in assembly. Sixth-form pupils relish their prefect leadership responsibilities, as do Year 6 pupils in the prep school, who, within in, take on positions that match the senior school roles of head girl, deputy head girl and house captains. Other prep pupils enjoy responsibilities as librarians, as well as helping out with dining and playground support for the very youngest members of the community. Senior pupils befriend and help younger pupils in cross-phase activities and clubs. Pupils of all ages are mindful of those less fortunate than themselves and take pride and enjoyment in raising funds for a variety of charitable causes. Their empathy has increased as a result of having some direct contact with the recipients of their generosity. Pupils understand why the school promotes citizenship and British values: they have actively participated in a recent assembly on democracy and in other activities of a national and international slant.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Assemblies address key cultural themes, including a powerful presentation on forgiveness which focused on Nelson Mandela. Pupils were articulate and thoughtful in a discussion about the value of religious studies, which they recognise helps to develop empathy and an awareness of others and other cultures. The pupils' awareness of western European culture is evident in their understanding of issues surrounding the Scottish referendum, and in sixth formers' knowledge of the election system in the United States and of cultural stereotyping. Prep pupils have developed knowledge about Spain from learning with native speakers in the Spanish club.

- 4.6 Many senior school pupils have ambitious career aspirations that reflect the nurturing of the school. Pupils are able to articulate the high levels of social as well as academic progress they have made as a result of coming to the school, and which are evident by the time they leave.
- 4.7 In the EYFS all children make excellent progress in their personal and social development. They share resources and take turns, and develop independence to a high level by the end of Reception. They show a high degree of respect for each other and their behaviour is exemplary. This contributes to the development of excellent learning habits and prepares them very well for transition into the prep school.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school is successful in fulfilling its aims to develop self-confidence and to demonstrate a care and concern for pupils as individuals.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, key people form very strong relationships with the children, so that the children are happy and confident. Children feel safe and secure, readily seeking support or comfort from familiar adults. Staff caringly guide them in exploring and trying out new activities appropriate to their stage of development. Regular classroom discussions on the importance of exercise and a positive attitude to outside learning promote healthy lifestyles.
- 4.11 In the rest of the school, the pastoral system is clear, very effective and well managed. The size of the school encourages positive relationships between staff and pupils, and a clear sense of community encompasses pupils, teachers and support staff, as well as parents. There is a constant and effective flow of pastoral information amongst staff, both formally and informally. Pupils appreciate the care they receive and are happy to talk with their teachers if they have concerns.
- 4.12 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. Bullying is infrequent and pupils are confident that it is dealt with effectively when it arises. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils expressed how happy they are at school. Some older pupils expressed a concern that rewards and sanctions are administered unfairly. However, in discussion, pupils disagreed with these views and said that most pupils value the reward system.
- 4.13 Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through PSHE lessons. School lunches are healthy and enjoyed, with positive comments across all age groups. The level of participation in sport is very good and the school has recently promoted a fit lifestyle by creating a fitness suite.
- 4.14 The rejuvenated school councils are developing as an effective forum for the pupil voice and are welcomed. Pupils feel that their requests for change are already given a fair hearing. Recent changes to the sixth-form building were seen by pupils as a good response to conversations with staff at various levels.
- 4.15 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and others with particular needs, and is effective in implementing the plan.

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

- 4.16 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.17 Thorough attention is paid to child protection in all parts of the school, including the EYFS. The two designated safeguarding leads have had recent training to update their expertise. They organise regular events to train staff, and this has recently included sharing with staff the necessary features of the latest government advice. The school maintains good and productive links with local agencies. The governors take a close and direct interest in any child protection matters. The school operates safe recruitment procedures and has significantly strengthened the ways in which it handles recruitment and the maintenance of the central register of appointments. The requirements of the previous inspection have been met in this respect.
- 4.18 Appropriate arrangements promote the health and safety of pupils in the built environment. Over the year a site inspection and audit of health and safety matters are carried out across the school, including fire and electrical safety. This approach, together with the appointment of an external specialist advisor, provides assurance that all necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety, including matters pertaining to the EYFS, are in good order. Attention to detail in staff information booklets is very thorough.
- 4.19 Effective measures are taken regarding the pupils' safety in organising the evacuation of the school in case of fire or other hazards, and fire drills take place regularly. Health and safety training for staff takes place as part of their induction on arrival. Admission and attendance records are maintained and stored to a high standard.
- 4.20 The school has a well-appointed medical room for pupils who are sick or injured. Systematic records are kept. The first-aid policy is comprehensive and the school has an appropriate number of staff with first-aid qualifications.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The members of the governing body have a good range of professional experience in areas relevant to the school. They recognise their role as 'critical friends', offering encouragement to the school to fulfil its aspirations as well as support to the headteacher, which is greatly welcomed. They discharge their responsibilities for the standards, financial planning, appointment of staff and learning resources of the school, and maintain an attractive built environment.
- 5.3 A useful and effective committee structure spans welfare, health and safety, the curriculum, and business and development, and has been reviewed since the previous inspection. Governors are informed about the school through regular and full briefings by the headteacher and regular presentations at meetings by school staff. Governors attend major events. They visit classes and departments, though not on a regular basis, and this limits their insight into educational matters and any strategic overview they might have. They have a good knowledge of the EYFS, whose staff attend governors' meetings and feel well supported by the governing body.
- 5.4 The governors understand very clearly their legal obligations in child protection, welfare and health and safety matters. Within the health and safety committee, a designated governor takes particular responsibility for health and safety matters and governor has a lead responsibility for pupils' safeguarding. The process of reviewing relevant documentation is robust: the governor responsible for safeguarding, supported by senior management, organised an extensive review of the policy of the school at the summer meeting of the whole governing body. Extensive discussion took place before the policy was approved and adopted.
- 5.5 From time to time the governing body has carried out both a self-audit of its effectiveness and an audit of the skills of individual governors. The former has not recently taken place but the latter was usefully carried out recently. New governors are provided with an induction pack and offered external training. The governors usefully employ external consultancy to appraise the headteacher.

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 excellent.
- 5.7 The senior leadership team has been newly constituted, with internal promotions of experienced staff. With a current focus on team building, it is working hard to ensure the induction of its new members. In a timely way the school recognises the need for continued succession planning and training for new senior leaders over the medium-term. At middle management level the school benefits from clearly defined working parties, for example those overseeing ICT or assessment and reporting. These provide managers with an effective voice in contributing at the level of strategic whole-school planning and their recommendations have been adopted. In meetings, cohesive, co-operative and supportive interaction was evident across middle and senior management, and both groups are appreciative of the committed hard work of the governing body.
- 5.8 The leadership and management and the governors work in regular and close co-operation to ensure that regulatory compliance is well maintained in all parts of the school, including in the EYFS, and especially in safeguarding. Recent staff turnover has necessitated a series of new staff appointments, all of which have followed rigorous procedures designed to facilitate the appointment of high quality staff to the school. Safer recruitment procedures are equally rigorous and the central register is now scrupulously maintained to ensure that all employees are suitable to work with children. This process, coupled with an extensive induction programme that outlines new procedures and policies, including those for health and safety, staff conduct and employment, ensures that new staff are aware of the managerial processes of the school. New structures have been incorporated since the previous inspection. For example, a new system of appraisal has been introduced and clearer line management accountability has been developed.
- 5.9 Strengths of the school identified through previous inspection, for example pastoral care, remain at a high standard across the school at senior and middle management level, not least owing to clear structures being firmly embedded. For example, heads of year pass on detailed information on individual pupils at weekly briefings for the benefit of the pupils' teachers, with an equivalent and equally effective structure in the prep school. The leadership and management are reflected in the high standard of the pupils' personal qualities.
- 5.10 In the EYFS the safeguarding of children is of paramount importance, and thorough risk assessments to ensure their safety at all times are in place. Careful appointment checks ensure that only suitably qualified adults, who update their training regularly, work with children. Policies are thorough in their scope, and regular monitoring ensures that they are implemented effectively and that the regulatory requirements are met. Effective self-evaluation ensures that areas for development are quickly identified and action taken to improve. Staff share a vision for the continued development of the setting. Inclusion in local moderation enables the most successful practice to be shared and evaluation of the success of the setting. Much has been achieved since the previous inspection. The setting demonstrates excellent capacity for improvement through its very effective partnership with parents, the improvement of all facilities and its thorough self-assessment.

- 5.11 The senior leadership team has worked very hard to accommodate every pupil's choice of subject into a full timetable that sees lessons extend into lunchtime and after school, relies on both staff's and pupils' stamina and good will, and allows the school to fulfil its aim to provide small classes. It has also put considerable effort into monitoring progress towards targets through assessment between and within departments, not least through the introduction of a tracking and monitoring system. Priorities for improvement in teaching and learning are clearly set and this is leading to greater consistency.
- 5.12 The school has worked with determined focus since the previous inspection to create a viable development plan as well as a more confident corporate image; a strong sense of pride about the school's distinctive approach is frequently articulated. Leadership and management are increasingly effective in setting out this shared vision, and tackling and promoting the many aims of the school, and key priorities in the development plan. This activity is further enhanced through department self-reviews, also incorporating development plans for the following year, which are presented by middle managers to the governors' curriculum sub-committee.
- 5.13 Close relationships between the prep and senior schools is a growing strength, which has created a greater sense of a through-school community. For example, subject leaders in science in the prep and senior schools effectively co-ordinated the purchase of a new textbook and accompanying scheme of work and ICT provision, while subject leaders from the senior school lead assemblies in the prep school and judge competitions. Cross-phase co-operation has also been achieved through such positive ventures as joint in-service training sessions and whole-school staff meetings, and prep and senior colleagues work together on curriculum planning.
- 5.14 There has been much investment in the infrastructure, software and hardware for ICT, but it is not fully used as a tool to benefit teaching and learning across the school. This was noted at the previous inspection. The school currently lacks a social media strategy as well as an enhanced website communications system with parents.
- 5.15 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in conversation, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the EYFS setting and the main school, and the support that their children are given.
- 5.16 In the EYFS, parents and carers provide comments through the setting's 'note in the book' system. This enables them to secure interventions for their children. They are also involved in monitoring their children's reading.
- 5.17 A wide range of information about the school is made available to the parents of both current and prospective pupils, including availability of the required policies on the school's website. Regular newsletters and the *Kingsley News* keep parents up to date with news and forthcoming events. An electronic messaging system notifies parents of any last-minute changes to routine.
- 5.18 The prep school has an 'open door' policy which is part of a whole school aim to ensure that concerns and other issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Parents have the opportunity to talk to staff at the start and end of the day and they can also contact staff by email. The procedure for parental complaints is robust, appropriate and fair.

- 5.19 A number of information evenings to inform parents about the curriculum, examination procedure and careers advice are held throughout the year and are well attended. Detailed handbooks for each year group are also provided. Parents receive good quality reports, which give detailed information about how pupils are achieving and set out work objectives and plans. Formal meetings with staff are held twice a year.
- 5.20 There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in school activities. Parents provide good levels of support to events such as sports fixtures, Fathers' Day celebrations, concerts, plays and other productions. Parent volunteers assist with trips and hear children read, and have contributed to workshops and assemblies. In the prep school, parents are invited to attend the termly parents' forum to meet with the senior leadership team. The parent form representatives provide an effective link between parents and the school. The very supportive Friends of Kingsley group organises fund-raising events in aid of charity and to purchase additional equipment for the school.

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