



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION STOVER SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Stover School

Full Name of School	Stover School
DfE Number	878/6014
Registered Charity Number	306712
Address	Stover School Stover Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 6QG
Telephone Number	01626 354505
Fax Number	01626 361475
Email Address	mail@stover.co.uk
Principal	Mrs Susan Bradley
Chair of Governors	Mr Stewart Killick
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	369
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (169 boys; 200 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 38 5-11: 112 11-18: 219
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 285
Number of Boarders	Total: 84 Full: 77 Weekly: 7
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Caroline Coyle
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	28 Jan 2014 to 31 Jan 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 October 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, 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.

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Stephen Cole	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Val Barnes	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Mr Michael Horrocks-Taylor	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Nicholas Park	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Alastair Ramsay	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr John Tolputt	Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC school)
Mrs Karen Pickles	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	2
(a) Main findings	2
(b) Action points	3
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	4
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c) The contribution of teaching	6
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	8
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d) The quality of boarding	10
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	12
(a) The quality of governance	12
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	12

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Stover School was founded in 1932 on its present 64-acre site in Stover Park on the outskirts of Newton Abbot. The school became an educational trust and a company limited by guarantee in 1956. The twelve members of the governing body delegate various functions to six sub-committees. The school aims to provide a high quality education in accordance with Christian principles, enabling pupils to acquire the qualifications, confidence and skills needed to achieve their aspirations.
- 1.2 The school was established as a day and boarding school for girls aged 11 to 18. A Nursery was opened in 1994 and a preparatory school for girls aged from 5 to 11 the following year. Boys were admitted in 2002, and the school became fully co-educational in 2012. The Nursery takes children from the age of three.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, a new boys' boarding house, an all-weather sports dome and a sports pavilion have been opened, and information and communication technology (ICT) provision has increased. In addition, the senior leadership team has been restructured.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 369 pupils on roll. In the preparatory school, a total of 38 pupils were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and 112 in Years 1 to 6. In the senior school, 165 pupils were in Year 7 to 11, and 54 pupils were in the sixth form. The 84 boarders reside in 3 boarding houses and with host families, and come from 16 different countries. Most day pupils live within a 30-mile radius of the school.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the preparatory school is slightly above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented. The ability profile of Year 7 is above the national average for maintained schools, with around two-thirds of pupils who are of at least above average ability. The ability of Year 10 is similar to the national average, with a wide spread of ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is below the national average, and in 2012 to 13 was lower than in previous years.
- 1.6 Forty pupils have been identified by the school as requiring learning support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including five pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Sixty-six pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom fifty-six receive support with written and spoken English.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school very successfully fulfils its aim of providing a high quality education in which the individual needs of its pupils are paramount. Pupils' achievement is good, and excellent in the EYFS. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve and progress at the same level as others of similar ability and age, responding positively to the tailored approach of the lessons. The quality of teaching is excellent. Pupils work co-operatively and independently, but too infrequently show initiative in pursuing their studies beyond the curriculum. They have good reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, and their creative writing and artwork are both strong. The well-balanced curriculum in the preparatory school supports the pupils' progress, and the flexibility of the curriculum in the senior school underpins the further good progress to GCSE and A level. Pupils enthusiastically take up the opportunities offered by the good extra-curricular programme.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is good throughout the school. They show excellent behaviour, a good moral awareness and strong sense of right and wrong. Boarders from overseas integrate easily and take a full part in the life of the school, and their varied backgrounds deepen the cultural understanding of their peers. However, pupils generally cannot easily articulate a sensitivity to non-material aspects of life, and do not show a developing spiritual awareness. Pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the school and a very large majority felt that teaching helps them to make progress. A small minority expressed the view that the school does not listen to or respond to their views. Inspectors found that the related mechanisms in place are effective. Pupils are supported by excellent pastoral care. The quality of boarding is good. Boarders are well cared for and the accommodation is gradually being refurbished. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are excellent, and given high priority by the senior leadership. Strong and effective anti-bullying procedures are carefully implemented.
- 2.3 The quality of governance and of leadership and management is excellent, and underpins the success of the school. The senior leadership team, with the support of the governors, has responded positively to the recommendations of the previous inspection, particularly in the monitoring of teaching and the use of assessment to improve attainment, although this is not yet sufficiently developed in the EYFS. Staff appraisal is now embedded through performance management plans. The governors monitor in detail policies and procedures, especially those concerning safer recruitment and safeguarding. Through their regular visits to the school and attendance at committees, governors have a strong understanding of the school's priorities as articulated in clear development planning and regular evaluation. Links with parents are excellent.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Seek more opportunities to develop the spiritual awareness of pupils.
 2. Maintain the focus on improving the standard of all boarding accommodation.
 3. Monitor the impact on progress of assessment in the EYFS.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims, demonstrating good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding for their ability at all ages in their subjects and activities. They respond positively to the tailored approach of excellent teaching. Children enter Nursery with a wide range of starting points. These are broadly at expected levels for their age. By the end of Reception many children achieve most of the Early Learning Goals in the majority of the areas of learning. Children in the EYFS are enthusiastic about their activities. They listen carefully, speak well and make suggestions. Their use of numbers is confident, and they read and write well. They show sustained concentration, enjoy being creative and are happy to work both independently and in groups.
- 3.3 Pupils talk with assurance in class. Sixth formers are articulate and argue cogently. Pupils with EAL gain confidence through their involvement in discussions. Pupils listen keenly to each other. In nearly all subjects pupils complete a good volume of written work, and they take care over the presentation and organisation of books and files. However, the quality of handwriting in Years 1 to 6 is not always appropriate for age and ability. The pupils' competent use of ICT is evident in wall displays, and in the senior school it is used appropriately and confidently in lessons.
- 3.4 The pupils' level of reading is appropriate at all ages, as is the quality of their writing. In Years 1 to 6, pupils read enthusiastically and enjoy the opportunities provided by the newly stocked library. Pupils show imagination in the quality of their creative writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Those identified as being very able show a wide vocabulary for their age. Pupils of all ages have good numeracy skills and manipulate numbers with confidence that enables them to solve more difficult problems. Pupils' practical skills in science are good. Senior school pupils follow sequential scientific arguments, and the more able have good powers of analysis, for example in the investigation of beta absorption. The standard of both two- and three-dimensional artwork throughout the school is excellent. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve well and gain confidence from the extra support they are given throughout the school.
- 3.5 Pupils gain success in teams and individually. The school mathematics team was the regional winner at a national mathematics competition. Pupils have won first prizes in piano competitions at a local festival, and achieve success in external speech and drama, and music examinations. Pupils enjoy physical activity and take part in the annual Ten Tors expedition. Preparatory school pupils compete successfully against local schools and reach the finals of regional sports tournaments.
- 3.6 In Years 1 to 6, the pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but based on standardised tests, lesson observation, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. The following analysis uses the national data for 2010 to 2012, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools. International GCSE English as a second language results have been lower than worldwide norms. A-level results in 2010 to 2011 were above the

national average for girls in maintained schools and similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. A-level results in 2012 were similar to the national average for maintained schools. Nationally standardised measures of progress in Years 1 to 6 indicate that pupils make progress that is appropriate in relation to the average for pupils with similar abilities, supported by evidence from their work, responses in interviews and performance in lessons. Progress to GCSE is good in relation to pupils of similar abilities, and at A level it is in line with pupils of similar abilities. Almost all leavers gain places at their first or second choice of university. A very large majority of parents throughout the school who responded to the questionnaire said that they are pleased with the progress their children are making. Pupils with SEND or EAL made progress in line with others.

- 3.7 Pupils work co-operatively, are well organised and settle quickly in class. When given the opportunity they enjoy independent research, for example in investigation of the environment. Although they enjoy their studies, they do not habitually show initiative or spirit of enquiry.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 A good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is maintained in the EYFS. The programme focuses on the specific needs of each child and helps all children to effectively reach their expected levels of development. They investigate and are encouraged to make decisions. In Years 1 to 6, pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum that successfully supports the aims of the school and caters well for all their needs. Their linguistic skills are strengthened by the opportunity to study French and Spanish. Pupils identified as being especially talented are provided with detailed individual education plans and are given additional challenges. Those who require extra help are strongly supported by teaching assistants in almost all classes, and by specialist help of high quality in English and mathematics. Since the previous inspection, ICT facilities have been developed to support teaching and learning. However, pupils reported that there are limited opportunities to use ICT outside lessons. Classroom work is enhanced by a number of subject-linked activities off site, such as pond dipping in nearby Stover Park, or visiting Roman Baths and the Eden Project. There is a well-planned and effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme.
- 3.10 Curricular provision in Years 7 to 11 is good, and is flexible in adapting to pupils' needs. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to continue with French and Spanish, and to study German. Pupils prepare for a good range of subjects at GCSE. Those with EAL are well supported by specialist teachers and also by extra English lessons in Year 10. Pupils whose first language is Cantonese or Mandarin receive knowledgeable extra assistance. Those wishing to proceed to university are prepared successfully for a formal academic qualification designed to improve proficiency in English.
- 3.11 Information and communication technology provision in the senior school has improved since the previous inspection, and all pupils benefit from taking a vocational ICT course. To enhance pupils' choices, a few Year 10 pupils take vocational courses in rural pursuits at a local college. A wide range of subjects is offered at A level, and good quality general courses are provided through the PSHE programme. In response to the questionnaire, almost all parents said that their children are offered an appropriate range of subjects.

- 3.12 Throughout the school pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sport, drama and music. Participation, compulsory each day of the week, successfully enriches each pupil's educational experience. Many pupils play musical instruments and they are encouraged to take part in choirs, orchestras and bands, which are popular activities. Pupils of all ages and abilities play sport, and participation rates are high, especially in the preparatory school. A regional schools sports partnership provides good access to further sporting opportunities. Pupils' personal development benefits greatly from many of these activities, with the promotion of resilience and self-esteem, for example through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and community sports awards.
- 3.13 The curriculum for many pupils is further enhanced by the school's strong encouragement and support for their involvement in local, regional or national competitions in debating, chess and mathematics, or in sporting activities such as the school's five kilometres charity run.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 The school has embraced the recommendations of the previous inspection and been highly successful in improving the quality of teaching. Throughout the school, teaching promotes effective learning, catering extremely well for the full range of pupils. Positive, supportive relationships stimulate and motivate the pupils so that they make good progress. Staff throughout the school have a clear understanding of and are sensitive to the needs of each individual pupil. Teachers create a purposeful working environment where pupils feel listened to, valued and appreciated.
- 3.16 Lessons are carefully and thoughtfully planned and teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge. The more successful lessons foster the pupils' interest and independence. Teachers set clear objectives, employ a wide range of resources, and adjust the pace and teaching strategies to meet the needs of differing abilities. Departments regularly engage in collective work scrutiny that provides them with the opportunity to evaluate and monitor the pupils' performance. Marking across the school is thorough and informative, and helps the pupils to make positive, meaningful progress. The school's tracking system ensures that each pupil has identifiable targets. Where teaching sets high expectations and is inspirational, pupils are enabled to embrace the challenges presented to them with energy, confidence and enthusiasm. For example in Year 13 art, pupils with EAL were able to give excellent verbal expression about abstract concepts of their artwork. In response to the questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils stated that their teachers give individual help when needed and encourage them to work independently.
- 3.17 Effective use of ICT in lessons further enhances the pupils' learning. The library is a useful resource and pupils are actively encouraged by staff to use it for further independent research and enrichment. Teachers exploit the school's grounds, taking learning outside the classroom for mathematical and scientific investigations. Teachers foster a spirit of collaborative working, providing the pupils with regular opportunities for pair or group work. In the few less successful lessons observed, tasks were not appropriately matched to the ability of the pupils, and use of resources was limited. In these lessons teaching did not always inspire pupils to

develop ideas creatively and the lessons lacked dynamism, leading to a decrease in focus and motivation.

- 3.18 Throughout the school, pupils with SEND, including those with a statement of special educational needs, and those with EAL are well supported by subject staff and in additional lessons taken by specialists. Pupils with SEND have individual education plans that are communicated to teaching staff and effectively disseminated to ensure that their needs are met. Pupils with EAL have further support as required from a specialist teacher.
- 3.19 Most teaching in the EYFS is excellent, characterised by interesting information and challenging questions that encourage children to think and put forward their own ideas. Activities are adapted so that children of all abilities are confident and can take part fully at their own levels, working either independently or in groups. Careful, detailed planning is adapted in response to frequent assessment of children's progress, understanding and changing interests. Children are given rich opportunities to listen, talk and make suggestions, to work independently or with adults and to develop a range of physical skills. Teachers use good quality resources effectively. The experienced staff in the EYFS create orderly, well-known routines that promote children's learning and development.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.
- 4.2 Pupils' spiritual development is good. The spiritual awareness of the pupils is greatly enhanced by the school grounds and immediate surroundings. Confirmation classes and an active Christian Union contribute towards achieving the school's aim to provide an education in accordance with Christian principles. Despite this, there are few formal acts of worship during the week although pupils are encouraged to attend local religious services to augment their house assemblies. Opportunities to develop pupils' moral and spiritual awareness in assemblies are limited. Pupils do not demonstrate a strong appreciation of non-material aspects of life.
- 4.3 Pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils of all ages have a very clear sense of right and wrong and a strong moral base. The pupils demonstrate understanding and tolerance towards each other. This was particularly evident in Years 1 to 6 where they were seen to share and work together extremely well. Pupils greatly enjoyed the recent initiative to incorporate a sense of values into the curriculum through the 'Values Tree'.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils value the rewards system and report that sanctions are fairly and appropriately managed, seeing rules as a significant part of community life. Peer and literacy mentoring systems underpin the culture of respect between pupils of differing age groups and backgrounds. Pupils are comfortable and confident in giving their views, and relish the opportunity to take on responsibilities such as form and sports captains and representing their peers' views on the school council. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to support those less fortunate than themselves and are active in fund raising and charitable support. They are politically aware and have good knowledge of key world events, both current and historical, as evidenced by the moving messages placed on the Anne Frank memorial tree.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about world religions in their religious education lessons and appreciate the differences of a variety of cultures and faiths. Cultural visits by groups such as an African children's choir and the cultural diversity of the school population significantly enhance this awareness.
- 4.6 In the EYFS, relationships are excellent. In the Nursery, children quickly establish friendships and in Reception they become thoughtful of others. They show warmth and trust towards all the adults who care for them. Children display high levels of confidence. They co-operate well and are able to make choices. They often visit and work with children and staff in other classrooms, enabling their smooth transition from one year group to another.
- 4.7 By the time they reach the end of each stage of the school, pupils' personal development is excellent for their age. Pupils demonstrate emotional maturity, are articulate and show confidence in their conversations with adults.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The quality of relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, is excellent. The system of pastoral care is extremely effective in supporting pupils throughout the school. The pastoral board co-ordinates and has established initiatives to improve pupils' educational experiences, including successfully restructuring the school day in the senior school to allow for the introduction of a coherent activities programme and increased opportunities for supported study.
- 4.10 This supportive ethos successfully promotes good behaviour and helps guard against bullying and harassment. Pupils feel safe and confirm that they have numerous adults and older pupils to turn to whom they trust. Pupils highly value the support of the counselling and other listening services. A sustained anti-bullying campaign has successfully reinforced the school's high expectations of pupil behaviour. If unacceptable behaviour does occur, it is dealt with constructively. A very large majority of parents were in agreement that the school deals well with any cases of bullying.
- 4.11 In response to the pupil questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. The inspection judgement is that pupils have ample opportunity to put their views forward and contribute to school development. For example, the school council has been involved with staff and governors in deciding the revised sixth-form dress code. Pupil surveys conducted by the school involve the pupils in school life.
- 4.12 Pupils have a clear understanding of healthy eating and the need for regular exercise. The excellent quality and variety of food meet their needs extremely well, catering efficiently for those with special dietary requirements.
- 4.13 Pupils benefit from effective induction and support when joining the school or transferring between sections. They are well supported when considering their GCSE subjects choices, and careers guidance is effective, linked to the broad PSHE programme. Pupils with SEND or EAL are fully included. The school has an appropriate plan in place to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.14 In the EYFS, teachers and teaching assistants give expert help to children needing additional support. The key people ensure that the atmosphere in both classrooms is welcoming and calm, and they are excellent role models to the children for politeness and the formation of strong relationships. Adults in the EYFS have high expectations of good behaviour and children respond positively; their behaviour is exemplary. Children are used to following well-conceived routines so that they start to understand how to stay safe, and the importance of physical exercise and eating healthily.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.16 The safeguarding of pupils is given a high priority. All governors and staff are trained in child protection to an appropriate level, and are very aware of their responsibilities. The school's annual self-evaluation of safeguarding is audited externally by the local safeguarding children's board, with whom the school has a close relationship. Safer recruitment procedures are methodically and efficiently carried out, and checks and training are fully recorded as required. In the EYFS, the experienced staff have thorough knowledge of child protection and health and safety requirements, and all those related to safeguarding and welfare are met.
- 4.17 All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Fire risk assessments and training records are up to date, fire drills are held regularly at different times of the day and evacuation procedures are clear. Electrical equipment is tested regularly, and chemicals appropriately stored. Accident records are accurately kept, and risk assessments are well thought out and cover all appropriate areas of school life. Pupils of all ages said that they feel safe. Access to the internet is filtered, and all pupils receive advice on e-safety.
- 4.18 Provision for ill or injured pupils is very good, and the first-aid policy is clear. Medicines are securely stored. Pupils with SEND are well supported in and outside the classroom. Admission and attendance registers are efficiently completed and archived, and unexpected pupil absence is expeditiously investigated.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.20 Outcomes for boarders are good. The boarders enjoy their community and friendships, and generally have a good relationship with boarding staff. They are well behaved and polite, showing confidence when talking to others about their school and home. Some feel that their views are not considered. Inspectors found that boarders are given the opportunity to express their opinions and be heard in a variety of effective ways. The impact of house prefects is limited, and the training they receive is inconsistent. However, younger year groups rely on close friendships at and between all ages, and this is a strong element of the boarding community. The diverse nationalities of boarders develop an interest in others' traditions and improve language skills. Most boarders personalise their rooms and enjoy their environment, taking advantage of the opportunities for activities and sport to keep fit.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The boarders are extremely well supported overall by the house staff, who devote time to giving them individual care and attention in personal and academic decisions. An appropriate number of individuals are accessible to the pupils if they need to talk to an adult, which is much appreciated. The procedures for sick boarders are excellent. The reassuring and professional approach and outstanding record keeping provide a confidence that the pupils appreciate. The facilities are well maintained and the sick bay is close to the health centre; with a further isolation unit. Care plans are in place where necessary, and these are shared with appropriate staff. Boarders have good access to local medical services. All boarding house staff are qualified in first aid and fire training, and all medicines are securely stored and checked daily. Since the previous inspection, the range of activities available to boarders has been developed. This

has resulted in more opportunities for boarding pupils, for example walks across a nearby moor, visits to sporting events or the cinema, and spa days.

- 4.22 Boarding accommodation is of a good standard. Since the previous inspection, one of the houses has been refurbished. A minority of boarders expressed concerns in response to the pupil questionnaire about security for their personal possessions. Inspectors found that boarders are encouraged to use a padlock on their cupboards to protect their possessions, and there are lockable metal cupboards in some areas for their ICT equipment. Alongside a weekly school laundry service, sixth-form pupils have access to a washing machine and tumble dryer to encourage growing independence. Fire drills are carried out at different times of day and night and are carefully recorded.
- 4.23 The quality of food and menus is excellent, and the nutritious range is designed to cater for pupils with specific food requirements or allergies. A few pupils feel that they would like more variety for breakfast during the week though a wide choice is on offer at lunch. The catering team monitor any boarders with allergies, and assist in serving them to ensure that they do not choose unsuitable food. A variety of fruit is available throughout the day in the dining hall, and pupils can purchase snacks from either house tuck shops or the school fair trade shop. A small minority of boarders felt there is not sufficient access to drinking water. Inspectors found that labelled drinking water is available in every house.
- 4.24 The house staff encourage the boarders to keep in contact with family and friends at home; landlines in each house with suitable privacy are available if required. All the boarders have mobile telephones and most have laptops, which makes accessing family relatively easy. House staff keep in regular contact with parents to ensure that they are kept updated on academic progress. The younger boarders have monitored weekend sleepovers with friends who are day pupils, which adds a sense of family atmosphere and reinforces the family approach to boarding. Clear procedures are in place for signing in and out in the houses, and security procedures are strongly adhered to so that boarders feel safe.
- 4.25 The effectiveness of boarding leadership and management is excellent. The school's clearly stated boarding principles focus on the pupils' academic needs and targets, and the place of pastoral care in that progress. Boarding strategy is overseen by a member of the senior leadership responsible for the growing cohesion of policies and practice. The programme of staff induction is well planned, but in its early stages of implementation. Pastoral staff attend professional boarding training courses that provide a useful theoretical background to their work with boarders. Pupils feel that the school gives boarding a high priority, and parents are appreciative of the quality of care and communication.

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 broad range of skills on the governing body facilitates its effective and detailed oversight of the school, in line with its aims. It works closely with all staff at both the senior and preparatory schools in the creation and evaluation of the development plan. Governors have successfully ensured the positive response to the recommendations of the previous inspection. They are highly committed, providing a well-balanced blend of challenge and support in ensuring that the educational experience of pupils continues to improve. Governors gain a detailed understanding of the education provided as they regularly visit the senior and preparatory schools and shadow pupils. Their attendance at the boarders' welfare committee enables them to have direct feedback from the pupils, and a system of link governors, including to all academic departments and the EYFS, ensures that they have good links to specific areas of the school.
- 5.3 The governing body directs expenditure, ensuring the development of resources, staffing and accommodation, and maintenance of the attractive grounds and buildings. The governors have an excellent and informed oversight of areas for which they have regulatory responsibility. They receive excellent induction and regular training. Regular analysis of all welfare, health and safety and recruitment procedures includes a detailed overview of the single central register. The personnel and welfare committee conducts an annual and thorough audit of every aspect of child protection and safer recruitment. Minutes record the excellent detailed discussion and review of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.5 Clear leadership by the senior leadership team ensures that staff are successful in fulfilling the school's aim of providing a high quality education in accordance with Christian principles. Development planning is inclusive: teaching and non-teaching staff and governors share in reviewing the work of the school, setting out clear priorities. Robust oversight ensures that policies are consistently implemented; reports to governors provide necessary information to ensure regulatory compliance. A recent change of the timings of the school day in the senior school has increased the efficiency of the use of time for sport, study and lessons; it has been successfully evaluated through a questionnaire seeking the views of pupils and staff.
- 5.6 The arrangements for pastoral care have been reorganised and brought under the skilled supervision of the senior leadership team. This is an effective forum for exchanging information and initiating development, for example in reviewing the sixth-form uniform guidelines. Academic leadership, through the directors of teaching and learning, and the academic board, promotes excellent advice on marking, feedback to pupils, reporting, and other policies to monitor and promote learning. An academic board priority is to fully implement the policy to integrate into the curriculum, as a whole, the teaching of EAL. A highly successful process to

define and promulgate the values of the preparatory school has resulted in creation of the 'Values Tree', a striking statement vibrantly borne out in the life of the school.

- 5.7 In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the senior school has strengthened the delegation of responsibilities to middle managers. As part of this, the creation of new posts of head of year has enhanced the ability of the school to care for pupils and track their progress. Leadership of departments ensures that the school's priorities are implemented, and that teaching is targeted at the progress of pupils at every level of ability. A detailed review of the curriculum is well advanced to provide some pupils with more appropriate vocational qualifications, alongside A levels and GCSEs.
- 5.8 The school appoints a high quality of teaching and non-teaching staff. A comprehensive induction scheme introduces them to the life and work of the school, and they are well supported by colleagues and fully trained in safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety. Following another recommendation of the previous inspection, an effective appraisal scheme is now established, linked to professional development, the setting of targets and training needs. A recent staff training day focused on lesson observation and evaluation has helped to improve teaching and learning. Excellent relations between teaching and non-teaching staff ensure that they all work harmoniously as a team, enriching the education of all pupils. Arrangements for checking the suitability of staff and governors are robust, and the single central register is correctly maintained.
- 5.9 The leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent. Strong emphasis is placed on safeguarding children. Parents are highly satisfied with the warm, friendly atmosphere and the support their children receive, and they particularly appreciate the experience that the team in the Nursery bring to the school day for the youngest children. They are very pleased with the quality of information from the school, and feel well aware of all that goes on in school. Close liaison between parents and EYFS staff helps to continue learning at home, and external agencies give valued support and input to the setting. The setting constantly reviews its procedures. Arrangements for assessment are being revised with a view to identifying areas where children might benefit from additional support or challenge. Phonics has been identified as an area needing improvement in order to develop children's reading and writing skills further, in parallel with a drive to improve handwriting skills. Policies are updated regularly, and the educational programmes reflect latest EYFS guidance. The development plan for the setting is detailed and includes items that are considered by the whole staff and rigorously checked for their quality and effect on provision for children.
- 5.10 The school has excellent links with parents. Parents who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the education and support given to their children. A wealth of good quality information, including the required policies, is provided to parents of current and prospective pupils on the school website, in addition to the regular newsletters and the highly popular school newsletter *Stover Life*. Throughout, the warmth of welcome reflects the school's aims, and all parents are encouraged to use the school's 'open door' policy if they wish to speak to a member of staff. Parents are assured of speedy attention should they have a minor concern, and they are aware of the formal complaints procedure should a more serious matter arise.
- 5.11 Parents of pupils in the EYFS and Years 1 to 6 have opportunities to talk to staff at the start or the end of the day, while parents of older pupils usually make

appointments with relevant staff. Formal meetings are held during the school year when parents meet teachers. Reports to parents are clear and useful, giving detailed information of how pupils are achieving as they move through the school. In the best examples, pupils are given targets to work towards. Parents provide good levels of support to events such as sports fixtures, concerts, plays and other productions. The active parents' association, The Friends of Stover, raises large sums of money in aid of the school and emphasises the family feel of the community.

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