



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ST AUGUSTINE'S PRIORY

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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St Augustine's Priory

Full Name of School	St Augustine's Priory		
DfE Number	307/6005		
EYFS Number	EY427070		
Registered Charity Number	1097781		
Address	St Augustine's Priory Hillcrest Road Ealing London W5 2JL		
Telephone Number	02089972022		
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Email Address	jhague@saintaugustinespriory.org		
Head	Mrs Sarah Raffray		
Chair of Governors	Professor Anne Hemingway		
Age Range	2 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	452		
Gender of Pupils	Girls		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	2	5-11: 147
	3-5 (EYFS):	29	11-18: 274
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	452	
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Elizabeth Keane		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection dates	27 Nov 2012 to 30 Nov 2012		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2010.

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

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

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

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors/the proprietor/a governors' representative/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

Mr Martin Bussey	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Serena Alexander	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Sandra Clements	Team Inspector (Former Head, GDST school)
Mrs Sarah Dawson	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr David Goulbourn	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Susan Smith	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mrs Mary Hughes	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Augustine's Priory is an independent day school for pupils aged from two to eighteen years although boys are educated only in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Originally a foundation of the Augustinian Canonesses Regular of the Lateran in 1634 it moved to London in 1911 and has been on the current site since 1914. The school is overseen by a group of seven trustees who delegate day to day oversight to a governing body of nine. Of the governors, all but one has been appointed since the previous inspection. The school has a Catholic ethos but welcomes those from other religious traditions. It views itself as an inclusive and welcoming community educating the whole person.
- 1.2 The school occupies a 15-acre site in Ealing, west London. It comprises, in adjoining buildings, the senior school for those aged from 11 to 18, and the junior school for younger pupils; this includes the Nursery. It currently educates 452 pupils, of whom 274 are in the senior school, including 61 in the sixth form, and 178 are in the junior school. Of the latter, 31 are educated in the EYFS and these include a few children under the age of three.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection new buildings for the junior school and Nursery have been opened, there has been extensive refurbishment of information and communication technology (ICT) systems and resources, bursarial and human resources arrangements have been revised, and provision for careers has been reorganised. The head was appointed in August 2012.
- 1.4 The school aims to: provide pupils with a full and balanced education in the Catholic tradition within a caring and stimulating environment; to stretch those who are gifted academically, and to encourage those who are gifted in other ways to realise their full potential. It strives to ensure that both staff and pupils reflect, in their work and dealings with each other, the Gospel values of truth, justice, compassion and forgiveness.
- 1.5 The average ability on entry to the junior school is slightly above the national average. In the senior school it is above the national average with the profile in the sixth form slightly lower than this. Most day pupils come from north and west London from professional backgrounds. Many pupils come from homes where another language is commonly spoken in addition to English; five pupils receive support for English as an additional language (EAL). No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are 35 pupils throughout the school who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of whom 14 receive specialist help.
- 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 National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table(s).

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Nursery	Nursery
Prep 1	Reception

Junior School

School	NC name
Prep 2	Year 1
Prep 3	Year 2
Lower 1	Year 3
Upper 1	Year 4
Lower 2	Year 5
Upper 2	Year 6

Senior School

School	NC name
Form 3	Year 7
Lower 4	Year 8
Upper 4	Year 9
Lower 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower 6	Year 12
Upper 6	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The overall achievement of pupils throughout the school is good. Pupils develop well in knowledge, skills and understanding across all subject areas and in activities. Some achieve excellent standards, particularly in the EYFS and the sixth form. Pupils make good progress including those pupils who require additional support for languages or other learning needs. Parental questionnaire responses showed some concern that the most able are not sufficiently challenged and the inspection found evidence to support this view. Some more able pupils achieve very high individual standards but this is not consistent across all subject areas. The school offers a good curriculum which is regularly reviewed. Some parents expressed concern in questionnaire responses about the provision of activities. Recent developments in this area have ensured that provision is now good in the junior school and excellent in the senior school. The pupils' progress is encouraged by good teaching. Some teaching is excellent; it demonstrates fast pace, provides pupils with varied activities suited to their individual needs and promotes independent research. These attributes are not common to all teaching and are not sufficiently supported by library facilities. Pupils are keen and highly-motivated learners who work well with others.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Children in the EYFS achieve excellent personal development for their ages. Pupils of all ages show confidence and high levels of self-awareness through the school's provision of ample time for reflection. They show a strong sense of justice, truth and compassion, in line with the school's aims, and excellent cultural awareness. Their personal development is supported by excellent pastoral care. Recent revisions to the behaviour policy, discussed with pupils, provide guidance on how consistency in the administration of sanctions and rewards can be achieved. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The shortcomings identified in staff recruitment and safeguarding at the time of the previous full inspection have been rectified. Those pupils who responded to pre-inspection questionnaires were positive about the school.
- 2.3 Sound governance supports the school's aims and ethos evident in the pupils' good academic achievement and excellent personal development. It also gives support to individual areas of the school, although direct support for the EYFS has only recently been initiated. The recent reorganisation of financial and administrative structures, including for the use of information and communication technology (ICT), has strengthened governance and management. Oversight of those areas where the proprietors have legal responsibilities has been improved by the trustees delegation of the routine monitoring and action to the governors. This has ensured that the requirements of the previous report have been met, including the requirement to provide notification to the appropriate authority of those whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with children. However, the philosophical and practical approaches to governance as expressed by trustees and governors orally and in writing are not yet consistent, and the consequent dual systems of communication with the head have limited the effectiveness of the support that governors can provide. Through good leadership and management, the school has made significant progress in the past year with particularly strong self-evaluation, evident this term. This has resulted in revised management structures which provide an excellent foundation for future development alongside existing excellent structures for pastoral care. These

arrangements include provision for increased monitoring of teaching and learning which is firmly in place, meeting the requirement of the previous inspection. Parents expressed overall satisfaction with the education provided by the school in pre-inspection questionnaires throughout the school. Inspection evidence confirms these views.

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 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Realise the plan for governance in full to ensure that consistent philosophy and practice guide the actions of both trustees and governors.
 2. Realise in full the revision to management structures, particularly in teaching and learning, to ensure robust implementation and monitoring of policy.
 3. Improve library and other facilities, and learning policy, to encourage a more widespread culture of independent research and enquiry amongst pupils.
 4. Extend the excellence already evident in some teaching, particularly in provision for the more able, to pupils' educational experience in all subject areas and at all ages.
 5. In the EYFS, provide children in Reception with access to a wider range of outdoor facilities.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Whole School

3.1 The pupils' achievement is good overall.

Junior School

3.2 Pupils develop good knowledge, skills and understanding. Their strong literacy skills are demonstrated in the wide range of vocabulary they employ and their highly articulate expression of ideas. Their numeracy skills are developed well overall but older pupils apply these less successfully to problem solving. Pupils achieve well in science where they use appropriate terminology and evaluate the outcomes of practical work successfully. Across the range of subjects, however, whilst they acquire good factual knowledge, their skills of analysis are sometimes less highly developed. Pupils develop appropriate skills in physical education and show high levels of creativity, producing strong art work and singing well and enthusiastically. They use ICT successfully and use their skills to produce documents, posters and presentations.

3.3 Pupils achieve appropriate standards in extra-curricular activities. They achieve well in mathematics challenges and compete successfully against other schools in cross-country competitions. They are successful in instrumental examinations.

3.4 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from their work and their performance in lessons and standardised tests, it is judged to be good in relation to national age-related expectations. This attainment, as judged, indicates that pupils make good progress when compared to the average for pupils of similar ability. Those pupils with SEND or EAL usually achieve in line with their peers, indicating progress which is good and often better, given their learning needs. The more able in Years 1 and 2 often attain high levels of achievement, fulfilling their potential. This is also the case for older pupils in some subjects but not consistently so.

3.5 The pupils' success reflects their high levels of motivation as learners. They are consistently keen to learn although this is not always reflected in confidence to explore ideas independently. They work co-operatively with much success from an early age.

Senior School

3.6 The pupils' achievement is good, encouraged by the good teaching they receive. All pupils express themselves clearly. Pupils write fluently and accurately. They develop good knowledge, skills and understanding in Years 7 to 11 and some achievement in the sixth form is excellent. Pupils develop good mathematical skills and apply them successfully in other subjects.

3.7 Pupils' good achievement was evident in the sample of other lessons scrutinised, for example, in science where achievement was good and sometimes excellent, in modern foreign languages and in classics where pupils achieved high standards. Pupils reason well within a given framework but do not always take the initiative if teaching does not demand that they do so. They acquire excellent ICT skills, gaining certificates of competence at good levels for their age in Year 9. Pupils

achieved excellent standards in art and creative writing where they demonstrated imagination linked to secure technical skills. Pupils achieve good standards in physical activity, and some demonstrated very high levels of performance for their age in netball and in dance.

- 3.8 The achievements of those pupils with SEND or EAL are in line with those of their peers. Some more able pupils achieve very high individual standards, notably in music, art, and in individual research projects in science and astronomy, but this level of achievement is not seen consistently across all subject areas.
- 3.9 Pupils reach good levels of achievement in extra-curricular activities. They perform well in instrumental examinations, and a good proportion of those entered attain gold in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) scheme. Pupils participate in business enterprise competitions and mathematics challenges. They enjoy success in sports at regional and national levels and have won prizes in national writing competitions.
- 3.10 The following analysis of examination results uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE and at A level have been good in relation to the national average for pupils in maintained schools. The proportion of grades at A or A* in GCSE is consistently above 50 per cent and results in 2012 indicate that this level of attainment has been maintained. The A-level results regularly include 70 per cent or more of passes at grades A* to B. These results, when considered alongside evidence from the pupils' work and their achievement in lessons, indicate that they make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. The results in GCSE of those pupils with SEND indicate excellent progress in relation to their starting points. Most pupils proceed from Year 11 into the sixth form, with leavers proceeding to maintained or independent school sixth forms. On leaving school nearly all pupils achieve places at university.
- 3.11 Pupils are keen to learn and are highly motivated. They take great care over their work and co-operate with others very successfully. The mature approach of sixth-form pupils enables them to work independently and with particular success in practical work in science.

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

Whole School

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.

Junior School

- 3.13 The experience provided by the junior school curriculum is good at all levels and supports the aims of the school. It provides effective coverage of the required areas of learning for all pupils and meets their needs well. Adequate breadth is provided for them to explore their interests and develop their skills at appropriate levels although structured provision for more able pupils is limited to activities outside the classroom. Modern foreign languages are offered from Year 3. Subjects are allocated sufficient time, appropriate to the age of the pupils. Monitoring and evaluation of the well-planned curriculum are effective. The recommendation from the previous inspection to improve these areas has been met. The transition from one section of the junior school to another is managed well, as is entry to the senior school. A strong focus on practical activities in Year 1 provides a very effective transition from the EYFS.

- 3.14 The junior school provides a good level of learning to support each pupil's needs. An effective system of assessment through the use of reading and cognitive ability tests is used to identify these, including the needs of more able pupils. Support is provided for those with SEND or EAL through one-to-one lessons with specialists. More able pupils attend enrichment classes outside the timetable. Further help is the responsibility of class teachers, for example through adapting their teaching within class, or targeting the work of teaching assistants.
- 3.15 The range of extra-curricular provision is good. Parents, in response to pre-inspection questionnaires, showed some dissatisfaction with the activities offered but provision has recently improved. Participation in a range of activities is heartily encouraged, including sports, music, drama and a book club, mathematics and creative writing enrichment activities. Monitoring systems are in place to record attendance, and to check that activities are effective and are what the pupils want. Participation in activities is at a high level and the pupils expressed their appreciation of what is available to them. Visits and trips support the curriculum and enhance the learning experience of the pupils, particularly so in history, art and English.
- 3.16 The school is widely involved in enterprising charitable work. Each junior house raises money during a charity week and throughout the year in numerous functions. Strong links exist with charities abroad and within the local community. Pupils in local maintained schools are invited to share the use of facilities and to participate in a spiritual retreat. Pupils work well with those in the senior school in these charitable enterprises.

Senior School

- 3.17 The quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides a wide range of educational opportunities, some of them excellent, which are consistent with its declared aims and philosophy.
- 3.18 A suitable core of subjects is provided for pupils in Years 7 to 9 with a strong focus on religious studies (RS) and good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship (PSHCE) education. Spanish is introduced as a second modern foreign language in Year 8 and ICT lessons are offered throughout the senior school. The curriculum has been the focus of regular review in the past year, meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection report.
- 3.19 At GCSE, all pupils study English, mathematics and RS and select six options from an extensive list, although opportunities are limited in the area of technology other than through the study of ICT. When pupils move into the sixth form they benefit from a similarly wide range of option choices at A level, which include Greek, psychology, and government and politics. Pupils benefit from a very flexible timetable which facilitates individual choices even if this means small teaching groups. There are good opportunities to study subjects off the timetable if this suits individual needs, such as GCSE astronomy. Visits by poets and theatre groups provide excellent enrichment of the curriculum. There are many academic and sports trips which take pupils all around the world, for example, a recent trek to Morocco and an intensive coaching tour for netball teams in Holland.
- 3.20 Pupils in Year 9 receive considerable guidance to help them make informed choices for GCSE study. The careers department provides good one-to-one guidance and expertise from outside the school to provide independent advice on subject choices for older pupils and inform them about university courses. Pupils expressed confidence in this programme.

- 3.21 More able pupils and those with particular talents are catered for by setting by ability in some subjects, and the chance to enter national competitions but further structured provision is limited. A co-ordinator for the able, gifted and talented has recently been appointed to oversee this area. Pupils with SEND or EAL are identified and receive excellent support, as required, from specialist teachers which helps them to make at least the same progress as other pupils.
- 3.22 The opportunities available through extra-curricular activities are excellent, reflecting the contribution made by staff to the wider life of the school. Concerns expressed by parents in questionnaires have been addressed by developments in this area this term. Many physical activities are now offered including dance fitness classes, swimming and a running club which includes both students and staff. These have been received with enthusiasm by pupils. The school's very successful arrangements for participation in the DofE scheme result in almost total participation from Year 10 pupils with 12 pupils in Year 12 currently pursuing the gold award. There are opportunities for drama and excellent singing opportunities, including tours which enable pupils to sing in cathedrals and other venues at home and abroad. Many sixth-form pupils help pupils in the junior school with activities such as chess, reading, and debating. All economics and business studies pupils in Year 12 participate in the Young Enterprise competition.
- 3.23 The school has well-established local community links with a nursing home for retired service personnel. Fund-raising activities for worthwhile causes involve all pupils throughout the year. The current chosen projects include a global children's charity which enables girls in poorer countries to stay in education. Pupils say this enables them to appreciate the wealth of opportunities available to them, which others in impoverished communities struggle to access.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.24 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.25 Throughout the school, and in all subjects overall, teaching is successful in enabling the pupils to make good, and sometimes excellent progress. Some teaching is of an outstanding quality, fully meeting the aims of the school. Such teaching enthuses pupils through fast pace and varied activities, but elsewhere some teaching lacks pace and drive, offering limited stimulation of the pupils' interest. Generally characterised by careful planning, all teaching reflects the teachers' good subject knowledge and, where appropriate, of examination requirements. Specialist subject-based teaching is increasingly used as pupils move up the junior school. For example, older junior school pupils benefited from excellent subject knowledge in a French lesson, further enhanced by interactive use of ICT and targeted questioning which ensured that all pupils, including the most able, made rapid progress. However, opportunities for similarly imaginative use of ICT are often missed in many lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils in the classroom are excellent.
- 3.26 Overall, teaching makes effective use of a range of methods; appropriately-framed questions probed directorial decisions in a sixth-form drama class, whilst the provision of a clear learning framework enabled Year 8 pupils to debate the depiction of women in *The Canterbury Tales* with success. In the most effective teaching, imaginative tasks engage and challenge all pupils. Role-play to illustrate fertilisation in a science lesson for younger pupils in the senior school enabled excellent progress, whilst older junior school pupils made similar progress in science by using chromatography to solve the mystery of a kidnapped goldfish. However, a

minority of the teaching provides limited opportunities for pupils to think for themselves. In the junior school, pupils show aptitude for creative writing that is too often under-utilised by tasks set only to closely guided frameworks, which inhibits the pupils' initiative. There is limited opportunity for open-ended, independent research throughout the school. The library is primarily a quiet place for private study rather than a hub of learning. No library induction takes place, few pupils borrow books, and there is no multi-media provision in the library or elsewhere for pupils to use for independent research.

- 3.27 Pupils with EAL and SEND are well catered for in class. When teaching assistants are present in lessons they are used effectively. Teaching shows awareness of those who are able, gifted and talented but not all lessons show a full understanding of these pupils' needs or plans for them accordingly. Parental questionnaire responses showed some concern that the most able were not sufficiently challenged and the inspection found evidence to support this view. In some junior school teaching there is an over-reliance on following courses in text books which offer limited occasions when work can be tailored to suit the needs of different abilities, hindering the pupils' progress. In contrast, a small number of sixth-form pupils encouraged to undertake an extended project qualification have successfully extended their aptitude in science.
- 3.28 Most teaching uses assessment well to identify the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and to plan for progression in learning over time. This includes the use of information related to national benchmarks. Marking of the pupils' books and files is regular and, for the most part, contains constructive advice for improvement as well as encouraging comments. Sixth-form artists, for example, benefit from detailed individual critiques. Pupils appreciate this personalised approach and are proud of the merit awards and achievement stickers they receive in many subjects. The use of individual target setting encourages pupils throughout the senior school, and sometimes in the junior school, to take responsibility for their learning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school's aim that the pupils' development should reflect values of truth, justice, compassion and forgiveness is met with great success. Pupils reach outstanding levels of personal development for their age on leaving both the junior and senior schools. They develop high levels of self-awareness born of the many opportunities for reflection offered within school life, such as prayer before registration or still moments within the mass. Sixth-form pupils demonstrated a clear independence of mind when discussing their plans for university study.
- 4.3 Throughout the school the pupils' strong spiritual development is apparent in their quiet confidence as they move around the school and talk with visitors. They articulate their views and discuss those values that they consider important with clarity. They enjoy performing in a variety of situations. Younger junior school pupils sang with sensitivity in the chapel while older pupils played challenging piano music with aplomb. Pupils show a keen interest in the spiritual. Nearly a third of Year 13 pupils opt to study A-level religious studies. Pupils are keen to embrace the spirit of service through groups such as the St Augustine's Society, which promotes opportunities for pupils to explore counselling roles for their peers outside the school.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is excellent. They show a clear understanding of the benefits of self-discipline and adherence to agreed codes of conduct. Older pupils participate in seminars outside the school which explore concepts of justice, and they debate medical ethics with interest in school. All pupils promote and support Fair Trade and other schemes to benefit those in danger of exploitation or whose opportunities for economic wellbeing are limited. Charitable giving and support is a key focus of school life, frequently for causes espoused by pupils, such as support for a school in Ghana, promoted by the school council. Pupils throughout the school are very keen to support charitable causes and help others.
- 4.5 The pupils' social skills are highly developed. Behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils appreciate the mentoring scheme whereby Year 7 pupils are linked with sixth formers and commented that the relationships formed persist as pupils move up the school. The elections to the school councils in both sections of the school enable pupils to experience civic responsibilities both through casting their vote and, in the case of candidates, drawing up and presenting a manifesto. Those elected carry out their roles with diligence and effectiveness. Junior school council members prepared, and helped their teachers to present, a lesson on the dangers of bullying. In addition posts such as form liturgy monitors enable pupils to take responsibility for leadership within their form groups which they fulfil with seriousness of purpose.
- 4.6 Pupils develop excellent cultural awareness. Those of different backgrounds mix easily and share faith values enthusiastically. Sikh and Hindu pupils in the senior school lead assemblies about their faiths and junior school pupils enjoy hearing about Hanukkah and Diwali in presentations by parents. Frequent trips such as pilgrimages to Lourdes broaden the pupils' awareness of other cultures. Younger junior school pupils visit galleries in London and the fruits of such experiences are

shown in a good awareness of the artistic styles of others evident in artwork. Older senior school pupils embrace the latest styles of dance from around the world, such as booiaka, with enthusiasm and flair.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Since the previous inspection the school has continued to build on its excellent pastoral provision, and provides a caring environment in accordance with the Catholic ethos at the heart of the school. Staff provide effective support and guidance. Pastoral structures provide for regular meetings, which include section and year heads together with health representatives, under the leadership of senior figures. These co-ordinate pastoral care and monitor the pupils' personal development highly effectively. An independent counsellor is available to assist with individuals' concerns. .
- 4.9 Pupils have an excellent relationship with their form tutors and other adults in the school. This is assisted by careful recording which ensures continuity of care as pupils progress through the school. Relationships amongst the pupils themselves are excellent; they voluntarily provide support for one another. In addition to mentoring schemes, older pupils are in regular contact with those younger through initiatives such as voluntary work within the DofE scheme and through prefect duties.
- 4.10 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy through study in the PSHCE and science programmes. They are served good quality food at lunchtime, with a wide variety on offer. Pupils understand the concept of 'five a day' although this is not always seen to guide their choices in practice. Pupils receive good opportunities to stay fit through provision for sport and exercise in the PE curriculum and there are many more options for extra-curricular sport. In the sixth form, all pupils are encouraged and expected to participate in some exercise. .
- 4.11 The school's behaviour policy is highly effective. A few pupils expressed concerns in pre-inspection questionnaires regarding the consistency with which rewards and sanctions are applied. Inspectors found that systems for reward and sanctions are consistent in the junior school and have evolved recently in the senior school, after consultation with the pupils, to include clear advice to ensure consistency. The school's measures to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying are embedded in all aspects of pastoral care and a recent anti-bullying week made this a specific focus of PSHCE lessons. The happy atmosphere of the school creates a culture where incidents of bullying are rare and any that occur are swiftly dealt with.
- 4.12 The school now has a suitable plan for improving educational access for those with particular needs or disabilities. In addition to the school's strong programme to support those with SEND, there has been considerable investment in facilities to promote physical access including ramps and lifts, including chair lifts, to assist with mobility.
- 4.13 The newly-constituted and vibrant school council has been expanded to include junior school pupils from Year 3 onwards. Pupils are confident that their recommendations are taken seriously and many have been swiftly implemented, for example, the provision of more play equipment and new resources for netball.

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

- 4.14 The arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good.
- 4.15 The school has appropriate arrangements to safeguard the pupils' welfare which take account of the school's own circumstances and the shortcomings identified in the previous report. A comprehensive policy is implemented with care throughout the school. Safer recruitment procedures for staff and governors are followed and checks of individual entries on the single central register are made by the chair of governors to provide oversight as tasked by the proprietor. Designated staff receive regular and effective training, and training given to all staff is carefully recorded. Provision is made to ensure that temporary staff and volunteers are aware of safeguarding procedures. Arrangements to report concerns about individual staff considered unsuitable to work with children are implemented in line with requirements. Relationships with external agencies are good and advice from such agencies is readily sought and followed.
- 4.16 Registration of the pupils is undertaken in an orderly and careful manner and any absence is followed up quickly. The school maintains a suitable admission register which is stored appropriately. Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety are strong. Pupils who feel unwell during the day are attended to by one of a good number of staff trained in first aid in both sections of the school. A medical room with appropriate facilities is provided for those who need to lie down. This meets the requirement of the previous report. Due care is taken to ensure the health and safety of those with special physical or learning needs.
- 4.17 Measures to prevent risks of fire and other hazards are good. Drills are held appropriately and equipment checked regularly. Assessments of risk are effective throughout the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The beneficial support for the good achievement and excellent personal development identified at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Satisfactory oversight of the school's arrangements for safeguarding has been achieved through a system whereby the trustees retain responsibility appropriately while governors are tasked to ensure that regular oversight is maintained. This has been replicated in other policy areas such as the handling of complaints by parents. These arrangements ensure that requirements of the previous inspection have been met, including that all appropriate checks on staff, volunteers and governors are carried out, central register entries exist for all staff, whilst persons whose services are no longer used because they are considered unsuitable to work with children are always reported fully to the Independent Safeguarding Authority within one month of leaving the school.
- 5.3 Governors have closer involvement in the day-to-day implementation of school safeguarding policy than is usually found. Recent reviews of governance have identified the desirability of this involvement now being reduced along with the development of other areas of governance. Measures to achieve this have been formulated in an action plan. These include: broadening the range of experience represented in the governing body, particularly with regard to education, including in the EYFS; the institution of a clear structure for bursarial management of finance, overseen by governors; a structure of governors' committees, including for finance and education, to provide appropriate support and challenge; and the institution of a system of appraisal for all teaching and non-teaching staff, including for the head. These elements of the action plan have been initiated recently. However, the philosophical and practical approaches to governance as expressed by trustees and governors orally and in writing are not yet consistent and structures for communication between the head and the two bodies result in the duplication of reporting and reviewing procedures that is of limited effectiveness.
- 5.4 Governance by both trustees and the governing body provides strong support for the school's Catholic ethos. Members of the governing body have received training, for example in safeguarding procedures, and as a body they undertake an annual review of safeguarding, and health and safety on behalf of the trustees. Governance ensures that the school receives appropriate resources and supports the school's development planning. This has resulted in successful new building projects such as the clock building for younger pupils and outside facilities such as playing surfaces. Existing buildings are maintained effectively although décor in some areas, such as the hall, is faded.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good.
- 5.6 Good leadership and management by senior figures ensure that the school's educational provision supports the pupils' good academic achievement and excellent personal development at all levels of the school. The school's aim to create an inclusive and nurturing community which educates the whole person is met well.
- 5.7 Since the previous inspection the school has improved its arrangements for safeguarding pupils. The leadership and management of the school discharge their responsibilities in this area effectively. Arrangements to ensure that staff are suitably trained in their roles to safeguard the welfare of all children and ensure their welfare, health and safety are good.
- 5.8 The school has recently thoroughly revised its structures for leadership and management particularly with regard to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy throughout the school. These new structures provide an excellent, sure foundation for future development across all areas of school life, though they have not been in place long enough yet to judge their full effect in practice. However, the new arrangements ensure that leadership and management roles are shared amongst senior leaders to avoid an undue focus of responsibility in one post. They give greater responsibilities to middle managers to develop teaching and learning, particularly in the junior school where posts of co-ordinators for Years 1 and 2, and for Years 3 to 6, have been created. These responsibilities now include monitoring the quality of teaching through regular appraisal of teaching staff, matching existing good practice in the EYFS. This meets in essence the recommendation of the previous report. For many staff these responsibilities are relatively unfamiliar. In many departments elements of good practice in these areas are already evident in the way pupils make successful progress. The new structures provide a framework for this improvement to become more consistent but implementation is as yet by no means realised in full. Allied to these initiatives is the successful introduction of budgets assigned to individual departments to provide for resources in, and the development of, individual subjects. That pastoral care remains a highly successful feature of the school is a reflection of successful leadership in this area at many levels.
- 5.9 The rapid and successful introduction of these new management structures is the result of highly effective evaluation of the school's needs in the recent past. In addition this has led to a comprehensive development plan which is being regularly reviewed to ensure that its aims remain clearly focused and effective. This practice has ensured that the recommendation of the previous report for the objective evaluation of new initiatives has been met. The plan is supported by the creation of clearly-defined posts with financial, ICT and human resources responsibilities to ensure that financial and administrative management is integrated appropriately with educational leadership. This has further ensured that the recommendation of the previous report to develop the use of technology in administration and communication with parents has been met successfully.
- 5.10 The school appoints well-qualified staff, both teaching and non-teaching, throughout the school. Recent senior appointments have ensured that necessary changes and improvements within the school have taken place, but the results of these steps are not yet fully evident. Staff training needs have begun to be identified effectively

throughout the school and provided for quickly and well in the area of monitoring and appraisal training for senior and middle managers. All staff, including efficient secretarial, administrative, medical and other non-teaching staff work very hard, and with great loyalty, to ensure the success of the school.

- 5.11 The school has strong links with parents. Parents throughout the school show overall satisfaction with the education and support provided for their children. Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented many strategies to ensure more effective communication with parents, meeting the requirements of that report. The introduction of rapid electronic systems has been received well. Parents' evenings and coffee mornings are frequent; parents are encouraged to attend and do so. In addition the head has instituted a regular 'open door' morning. This opportunity to discuss a range of matters with senior leaders is greatly appreciated by parents. The school has regular contact with parents at both the start and the end of the school day, when a senior leader is always present at the school gate. In addition parents attend mass, and concerts and sports events.
- 5.12 The school website makes required policies and information available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils. Also available are comprehensive information booklets for each year group. The weekly newsletter includes a diary of events and keeps parents well informed about activities in the school.
- 5.13 In the senior school, the frequency of reporting to parents has increased since the previous inspection. The newly-implemented progress information reports and detailed progress reports give parents clear information about their child's progress through potential minimum grades and target grades. The event of any pupil falling below a minimum expectation triggers a process which includes immediate liaison with parents. In the junior school parents receive two reports each year. These are enhanced by many opportunities for parents to meet with staff at parents' evenings.
- 5.14 The school is supported by a strong parents' committee which works tirelessly to fund extra resources, such as equipment for outdoor play.
- 5.15 The school has an appropriate complaints procedure. This has been invoked twice in the last twelve months and implemented appropriately, in accordance with the published policy. In response to questionnaires, a small number of parents indicated that they felt their concerns were not taken seriously or handled well by the school. Inspection evidence of current practice does not fully support this view. Although, in the past, some responses have lacked care, current arrangements ensure that concerns are handled promptly and effectively.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 In meeting the needs of the range of children who attend, the provision is outstanding. Across the setting, highly stimulating indoor areas and a broad educational programme provide a wealth of self-directed and adult-initiated activities. These support all areas of learning successfully and contribute to the children's rapid progress. The Nursery's well-resourced outdoor area, is used well, particularly to support the three prime areas of development. A more limited range of activities is available in the small designated outdoor area for children in Reception, although good use is made of existing facilities to investigate and explore. Effective specialist teaching enriches the curriculum in Reception. Staff have high expectations and are highly skilled in enabling children to become active learners. The many practical activities, such as designing their own road safety signs and building bridges, enable children to solve problems and think critically. All staff are adept in using questioning and intervention to prompt the children to think and to accelerate their learning. The outstanding use of the children's own interests ensures that all are excited about their learning and highly motivated.
- 6.2 Thorough assessments are used well to plan next steps in the children's learning. Close monitoring ensures that adults know children well and can respond to their needs. Although there are currently no children with SEND, good systems are in place to provide support if needed. Provision for those children who are bi-lingual is outstanding. This is because staff work closely with parents to engage them in their children's learning. There are a wide range of formal and informal opportunities for information about a child's progress to be shared. 'Wow' cards enable achievements at home to be celebrated in school.

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

- 6.3 Provision for the children's well-being is outstanding. Outstanding relationships between each child and his or her key person enable each to feel happy, safe and valued. An excellent focus on care and nurture, particularly for the youngest children, underpins the setting. The children's exemplary behaviour and high levels of independence are the result of the high expectations of staff in this area, and their deep knowledge of individuals. Younger children register themselves and clear away their own dishes after lunch. Older children change for PE by themselves and are well organised in the classroom.
- 6.4 Staff are vigilant about the children's welfare. Risk assessments are rigorous and reviewed regularly. Staff encourage children to manage risk and help them understand how to keep themselves safe. This was seen in the Nursery when children built a structure with blocks and were guided to walk safely on it.
- 6.5 Children are helped to develop independent hygiene routines with sensitivity and to understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They talk about why their fruit snacks are important and older children know that they need to stretch their muscles in a warm-up before PE. Children are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

- 6.6 Leadership and management of the setting are outstanding. The governing body receives information and reports about the EYFS but they have limited direct involvement. Safeguarding and welfare requirements are met and a wide range of effective policies and procedures are in place. The highest priority is given to keeping children safe.
- 6.7 Day-to-day management of the setting is outstanding. The strong, reflective staff team meets regularly to share and review their practice. Good systems for self-evaluation are in place. Appraisal and training are well-linked to identified priorities, including the children's progress, and contribute to their successful development. Staff strive constantly to make further improvements to sustain the existing, excellent standards.
- 6.8 Excellent links with the local authority, both for training and advice, further develop the practitioners' knowledge and skills. An outstanding partnership is in place with parents. They comment particularly on the warm, caring nature of the staff, how quickly children settle and the progress they make.

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

- 6.9 The overall quality and standards are outstanding. All children enjoy their time in the setting and make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. Younger children make excellent progress in their development of communication and language skills. Children are highly articulate. They spoke clearly and confidently in a concert rehearsal. Those children under three used well-developed fine motor skills in helping to make an Advent wreath. All children develop excellent technological skills. Nursery children enjoyed selecting and dragging items on an interactive whiteboard to send Christmas parcels down a chimney in a game. Children in Reception can write their names independently, with some able to write sentences unaided, and can successfully add two digits. Children are competent readers. Most children leave Reception having exceeded the early learning goals.
- 6.10 Outstanding personal development is evident throughout the setting. Strong social skills were shown when children in Reception used role play in the opticians. Nursery children co-operated well to build a den and ably used a sand timer to take turns. Children show empathy, respect one another and willingly share resources.
- 6.11 Children trust the support of the staff readily in a secure environment in which their welfare is properly safeguarded. Key issues from the recent Ofsted inspection have all been addressed. A wide range of equipment is now available for children to use to investigate and develop technological skills. A thorough development plan sets clear, challenging targets. The setting demonstrates a high capacity for continuous improvement.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

- 6.12 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

Section 2 includes what the Early Years Foundation Stage should do to improve its provision.