



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

FRAMLINGHAM COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

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Framlingham College Preparatory School

The senior school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Framlingham College Preparatory School		
DfE Number	935/6046		
EYFS Number	EY406728		
Registered Charity Number	1114383		
Address	Framlingham College Preparatory School Brandeston Hall Brandeston Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 7AH		
Telephone Number	01728 685331		
Fax Number	01728 685437		
Email Address	office@brandestonhall.co.uk		
Head	Mr Martin Myers-Allen		
Chair of Governors	Mr Andrew Fane		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	237		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (126 boys; 111 girls)		
Numbers by Age	2-5 (EYFS):	31	5-11: 142
	11-13:	64	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	178	
Number of Boarders	Total:	59	
	Full:	13	Part time: 46
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Ruth Steggles		
EYFS Gender	Mixed		
Inspection Dates	28 Apr 2015 to 01 May 2015		

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 February 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) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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

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

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

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

Mrs Daphne Cawthorne

Mr Alan Laurent

Ms Diane Martin

Mrs Gillian Bilbo

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Framlingham College Preparatory School, normally known as Brandeston Hall, is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from 2 to 13. It is located near to the village of Brandeston in Suffolk. It is the junior section of nearby Framlingham College, and is overseen by the same board of governors. It was founded in 1949 as a memorial to former pupils of the college who died in the two World Wars.
- 1.2 The school occupies a 27-acre rural site adjacent to the River Deben, centred upon a Jacobean manor house. This has been extensively refurbished and extended to provide classrooms, including specialist teaching facilities for science, art, sport, technology and information and communication technology (ICT). The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) department is located adjacent to the main building. Since the previous inspection, a new performing arts centre has been established, facilities for learning support and the pre-preparatory department enhanced, and the boarding house relocated and refurbished. The curriculum has been substantially revised with regard to the personal development of pupils and provision for individual learning needs.
- 1.3 The school is committed to providing a holistic, high quality, forward-looking education accessible to boys and girls with a broad range of abilities. It seeks to encourage pupils to aim high in their academic studies and co-curricular activities, to provide strong pastoral care within a secure community where pupils feel valued, and, as a result, enable pupils to reach their full academic and personal potential.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 237 pupils on roll: 111 girls and 126 boys. In the EYFS there are 31 children, most of whom attend part time; 22 receive Nursery funding. There are 59 boarders: 13 boarding full time and 46 boarding flexibly. Twenty-six pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 19 receive extra learning support. There are no pupils with a statement of educational needs. Eleven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and 9 require learning support for this.
- 1.5 The ability profile on entry, based on standardised tests, is above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Pupils mostly come from business, farming and professional families, and reflect the cultural and ethnic backgrounds to be found in the local area. A small minority of pupils are from overseas, some of whom are not native English speakers.
- 1.6 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 is successful in meeting its aims, most notably in the provision of a holistic education and high standards of care. The pupils' achievements are good; those of all ages and abilities make good progress, including the EYFS children. Pupils are successful in gaining admission to their first choice of senior schools. Their extra-curricular achievements are excellent, and pupils enjoy notable success in many different aspects of sport, music and the creative arts. Pupils benefit from an excellent curriculum. This has been successfully developed since the previous inspection to provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop and learn, both inside and outside of the classroom. The quality of teaching is good, and a majority of lessons are well-planned and delivered. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not follow the school's teaching policies in providing opportunities for pupils of all abilities to reach their full potential.
- 2.2 The personal development and pastoral care of the pupils is excellent. They display confidence, and empathy and respect for others around them and an appreciation of culture and diversity. Standards of behaviour are high, and staff are committed to providing a high quality of individual care. The recently restructured boarding provision provides an excellent experience which is valued highly by both the boarders and their parents. Procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Some of the policies in this area required strengthening during the inspection to meet requirements, but staff show a strong awareness of good practice in their application; medical provision is excellent.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is good and has ensured sufficient resources to carry through its recent development. Leadership and management of the school are good; leaders are highly committed to ensuring the school's on-going success, and the creation of a supportive and challenging environment in line with its ethos. All recommendations of the previous inspection have been met. A comprehensive development plan has enabled substantial improvements in educational provision, the outcomes of which can be seen most notably in the personal development of the pupils. The current assessment process does not provide a clear oversight of progress throughout the school. The EYFS makes good provision for the needs of the children in the setting, provides excellent standards of care and the outcomes for children are good. The school has established excellent links with parents throughout the school. Parents are very supportive of the school, and highly satisfied with the education and care of their children.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.
- 2.6 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all policies, including those for safeguarding and health and safety, are reviewed and updated regularly.
 2. Ensure that assessment procedures provide a clear and consistent overview of attainment and progress from the EYFS onwards.
 3. Ensure that the school's revised teaching and learning policies are followed consistently by all staff.
 4. Provide support for the leadership of the EYFS setting to carry out the increased responsibilities associated with their role.
 5. Make more effective use of the EYFS outside area, particularly in Reception, to further promote high quality learning opportunities and improve the children's creative development further.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 The school is successful in meeting its aim of allowing pupils with a broad range of abilities to reach their potential. Pupils have good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding and demonstrate an enthusiastic approach towards their learning.
- 3.3 Pupils have good speaking and listening skills, and they use these well in all subjects. They have a secure grasp of mathematical concepts and they apply these effectively to solve numerical problems. Their reading levels are good, and many pupils gain enjoyment from literature. They write clearly, with an awareness of their reader, and use spelling and grammar well.
- 3.4 The pupils' ICT skills are excellent, and they make effective use of these for independent research and to share their learning with their peers. The pupils' work in art and design technology is creative and completed to a high standard. Pupils reason well, approach problems in a logical manner and their linguistic development is excellent. Older pupils showed an excellent understanding of French grammar in presentations to their peers. Pupils of all ages develop excellent physical skills and enjoy taking part in sport, either individually or as part of a team.
- 3.5 The extra-curricular achievements of the pupils are excellent. The school has an excellent record in team sports, notably hockey, athletics and swimming, where they have recently reached the finals of national championships. In riding, tennis and cross country, teams perform well in regional competitions. Individual pupils regularly reach county level in a wide range of sports, including athletics and rugby. Their results in music, and speech and drama examinations are equally strong, and excellent individual skills are evident in the high quality of drama and musical productions. These also allow all pupils to gain confidence from opportunities to perform in public.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available from standardised tests, it is judged to be above national age-related expectations throughout the school. Most Year 8 pupils transfer to Framlingham College and the remainder to other independent senior schools throughout the country. They receive many awards and scholarships, both academic and those that reflect their attainment in areas such as sport, music and the performing arts. This level of attainment, as judged, means that pupils make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Inspection evidence from lesson observations, interviews and a scrutiny of the pupils' written work confirms this judgement.
- 3.7 Progress for pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent. This can be seen in the rapid progress in the reading abilities of individual pupils. The most able pupils make progress that is good in relation to their abilities, especially when they are given challenging extension activities.
- 3.8 Pupils have highly positive attitudes towards learning and they are keen to do well. Their behaviour in lessons is usually excellent, and they show a determination to succeed. They work very well with each other in pairs, groups or as a class. During interviews, they stated that they enjoy their learning in many different subjects, and

the results of pre-inspection questionnaires completed by parents and pupils indicate that almost all feel that pupils make good progress.

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

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The curriculum fully supports the school's aim to provide a holistic and forward-looking education. It includes all key areas of learning, and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. The curriculum is notably strong for the excellent opportunities provided for the personal development of pupils. In questionnaire responses, both pupils and their parents expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the range of educational experiences and extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
- 3.11 A number of recent changes have improved provision. These include the adoption of elements of a new curriculum which enable the balanced acquisition of knowledge, learning and communication skills. The school has adapted this curriculum to ensure that it is well-matched to the needs of the pupils and their future examination requirements. New guidelines for staff ensure that the key elements of curriculum planning are shared by all subjects.
- 3.12 In addition to the relevant National Curriculum subjects, pupils of all ages study French and older pupils have opportunities to study Latin and Italian. The school makes excellent provision for a wide range of specialist teaching. Themed weeks, such as Science Week, enhance the profiles of related subjects.
- 3.13 The provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is highly effective in meeting their needs. A dedicated learning support team and support during lessons promote these pupils' progress. Clear and detailed education plans are shared with staff and parents. Recent developments in the provision for the most able pupils have resulted in challenging opportunities to extend their learning in much teaching.
- 3.14 The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, the religious education syllabus and themed assemblies all contribute effectively to the pupils' excellent personal development. They are actively encouraged to consider current affairs, economic and social issues in a balanced manner, respecting opposing views. They gain a strong understanding of modern British society and the other faiths and cultures within it.
- 3.15 The innovative Brandeston Award scheme allows older pupils to record their personal development through the acquisition of key learning and social skills, as well as their contributions to school life and wider society. Outstanding opportunities for sport, music and the performing arts, allow pupils of all abilities to develop their talents in these areas. The school arranges numerous sporting fixtures, well-matched to the capability of the pupils. There are extensive opportunities to sing and play a musical instrument, and all pupils take part in drama productions. In addition, the school has an excellent choice of extra-curricular activities and the pupils value these and participate with enthusiasm. Full use is made of the facilities of the nearby senior school where appropriate.
- 3.16 There are frequent educational outings to a wide range of venues which support the pupils' learning well. Recent visits have included religious and historical sites. All pupils from Year 3 upwards take part in annual residential trips. These help to develop their independence, self-confidence and teamwork skills. There are opportunities to join ambitious overseas trips to countries such as Morocco. The

pupils benefit from excellent links with their local community, such as a joint Brownie pack, and they support many local and international charities. The school has strong links to a school in Sierra Leone, increasing the pupils' awareness of the lives of children very different to their own.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 Teaching is of a high quality; it is effective in promoting good achievement and supports the aims of the school. Lessons are usually well planned, use an imaginative and varied range of strategies to engage pupils and promote good understanding. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils declare that their teachers help them to learn. They know teachers value their efforts by seeing the many displays of work around the school, including reminders of the Science week and a current art project.
- 3.19 Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and manage their time well. They use resources effectively to promote the pupils' learning and usually plan work to match their needs, in accordance with the school's teaching policies. Teaching shows an excellent awareness of pupils with SEND and EAL, and these pupils receive highly effective learning support from specialist teachers. Provision for the more able pupils has recently been developed and the new policy is not yet consistently followed by all teachers across the school. Questionnaire responses show that both pupils and parents are appreciative of the quality of teaching and many feel that the able pupils are given challenging work. In much teaching, effective use is made of work to support less able pupils and extend the more able. In a Year 5 English lesson, tasks were sensitively matched to their abilities, enabling all ability groups to make strong progress. However, in a small amount of teaching, appropriate work is not provided, notably to meet the needs of the more able pupils, which hinders their progress.
- 3.20 Teaching promotes tolerance and respect while being non-partisan in the coverage of political views. For example, older pupils studying aspects of British life, including the forthcoming general election were well-informed about the issues and showed respect for differing political views.
- 3.21 Since the previous inspection, marking is much improved with almost all observing the school's revised marking policy. This is evident in the pupils' work. Teaching assesses knowledge and understanding through effective questioning. Good use is made of peer and self-assessment to identify areas for improvement. Pupils are provided with much detailed feedback and targets are often used to promote effective learning. Available assessment data is analysed well and used to inform planning. In Years 3 to 8 an effective tracking system monitors progress. However, some of this data from the EYFS and Years 1 and 2 is presented in a different form, and does not feed into this system, so it is difficult for teachers to obtain a clear overview of the pupils' progress throughout the school.
- 3.22 The use of ICT has benefited from much investment in equipment and training and is used well to support learning across the whole curriculum. The use of interactive whiteboards and tablets regularly enhances learning and enables pupils to monitor their own progress. Some lessons are recorded for pupils to view and used to assess their skills. These improvements meet the recommendation of the previous inspection.

- 3.23 Inspection evidence shows that pupils feel that homework tasks are usually linked to current topics, and help to extend their knowledge and understanding. Older pupils learn to use an online system in preparation for their move to senior school. Teachers foster independent learning through numerous research tasks and project work, and pupils indicated that this is an aspect they particularly enjoy.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Throughout the school pupils develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence and, by the time they leave, they have an excellent standard of personal development. Pupils value and respect each other, and the older pupils regard caring for younger pupils as a natural part of their responsibilities. In response to the questionnaire, and in interviews, pupils spoke of the warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone is known to everyone else and respected.
- 4.3 The pupils display an excellent sense of spiritual awareness. They are reflective during prayers and sing enthusiastically during worship in the local church and in assemblies. Younger pupils created a display with their own hand prints which spells out the message "we are all unique but together we make a masterpiece". Pupils are making ceramic poppies as a memorial; one for each of the former pupils who fell whilst fighting in the World Wars. Pupils show an inner belief that they can, and should, question barriers to their own developing confidence, and they are not afraid to bring such issues to the attention of adults.
- 4.4 The pupils' moral development is excellent. There are clear moral standards throughout the school and, as a result, pupils often demonstrate exemplary behaviour and a highly developed sense of right and wrong. Pupils debate opposing viewpoints sensitively and consider a wide range of moral and ethical issues in their PSHE lessons. Older pupils held an interesting discussion on the importance of saying sorry and the difficulties that might cause and younger pupils effectively explored the concept of forgiveness. Older pupils show a clear understanding and respect for the civil and criminal law of England, including civil liberties and democracy.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is excellent. This is demonstrated in their enthusiastic contribution to the school community. Pupils show high levels of respect, tolerate diversity, and understand the importance of identifying and combating discrimination. In the pupil questionnaire a small minority of pupils felt that there are not enough opportunities for responsibility within the school. During the inspection no evidence was found to support this. Pupils eagerly aspire to numerous positions of responsibility, including prefects, monitors and school councillors. The school promotes social responsibility throughout all year groups. For example Years 7 and 8 pupils act as 'buddies' to younger pupils and successfully contribute to their well-being. Pupils show work and play co-operatively and support each other. They seek ways to make a difference to the lives of others through the school council, where they suggest ways to benefit others and the wider world. This natural inclination to help those in need is followed through with enthusiastic support for charitable activities, including fundraising to support their linked school in Sierra Leone.
- 4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Music and art permeate the school with many pupils enjoying participation in clubs, music ensembles and art sessions. Pupils show an excellent understanding and appreciation of diversity between cultures and religions. They speak of their interest and respect during visits to local places of worship. They show an excellent knowledge of distinctive British

institutions such as Parliament, the monarchy, the electoral system and the role of political parties.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The pastoral care system, based around the class tutors, provides strong support. Tutors know their pupils extremely well and make great efforts to give them support and guidance in all aspects of their school lives. Communication is excellent, ensured by a weekly briefing attended by all staff, regular emails and circulation of monitoring forms, if necessary. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, are a strength of the school, and these high standards of care are fully in line with the school's aims. Questionnaire responses speak very highly of the care provided for pupils.
- 4.9 Behaviour is usually excellent. The school has effective measures to guard against bullying, including cyber-bullying. A small number of concerns were raised in the pupil questionnaires about the school's response to bullying. Inspection evidence does not support this. Evidence from interviews with pupils and staff, a scrutiny of behaviour records, and observations indicate that the school deals promptly and effectively on the very rare occasions when issues arise. Pupils state that any concerns are taken seriously and that effective action is taken.
- 4.10 Healthy lifestyle choices are encouraged in many lessons and assemblies, and numerous opportunities for exercise are provided in games and other activities. Pupils show an excellent awareness of healthy eating choices.
- 4.11 In the pupil questionnaires small minorities of pupils felt that rewards and sanctions are not fairly applied and that they do not have the opportunity to voice their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support either of these views. Some issues may have arisen during the recent introduction of a new system but, in interviews, pupils all felt that sanctions are now applied fairly. Inspectors agree. The school implements an effective policy to promote good behaviour. Pupils have a strong voice within the school through the school council and this is respected. They were involved in the appointment process of the new headmaster.
- 4.12 There is a suitable plan to increase educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.14 Safeguarding arrangements are good, and now have regard to official guidance. Those with designated responsibilities are appropriately trained, and a nominated governor provides good support and oversight. The school works closely with local child protection agencies, and effective recording systems are in place. All staff receive appropriate training, including those responsible for appointing new staff. The central register of staff appointments is correctly maintained. At the start of the inspection process, the safeguarding policy was insufficiently detailed. The school has reviewed and revised the policy successfully to follow the latest statutory guidance and to better reflect the school's careful practice. Changes are understood by staff.

- 4.15 Procedures to monitor health and safety are implemented effectively. Risk assessments are produced to cover the full range of activities that take place both on and away from the school site. The arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils on school trips are particularly rigorous. Detailed records are maintained and a small number of issues identified during the inspection were immediately addressed. The necessary steps to reduce the risk from fire are also securely in place. There are regular fire practices and alarm tests; equipment is maintained efficiently and fire exit routes are clearly displayed.
- 4.16 There is excellent provision for pupils who are unwell or injured. The facilities on site are supported further by the medical centre in the senior school, available for advice or in emergencies. Appropriate documentation allows for the safe administration of medication as necessary. Accidents involving pupils, staff and visitors are clearly recorded. Thirteen staff have first-aid training, including several with higher level or paediatric qualifications. First aid is given promptly and efficiently. First-aid boxes are located throughout the school and regularly checked and restocked. Staff are well informed about the individual medical needs of their pupils.
- 4.17 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.19 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders receive high quality care which enables them to become confident, caring and articulate. They enjoy boarding and speak of their friends and staff as part of an extended family. In interviews, boarders showed a strong appreciation of the benefits they receive from their boarding experience. Behaviour is of a very high standard and boarders become more tolerant and resilient as a result of their experiences. Part-time boarders speak of their full acceptance into the boarding community.
- 4.20 The school seeks boarders' opinions through meetings led by the house representatives, who then meet with the housemaster and subsequently report back. Boarders feel that they have a genuine voice in boarding as there have been numerous outcomes from their suggestions. They know that they can talk to any member of staff if they need to do so and that staff will always respond. Senior pupils play an effective role in the life of the boarding house.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders feel that staff understand them as individuals and the induction process rapidly helps them to feel welcome and settled. They know how to access the independent listener and other relevant telephone numbers are available. Pastoral care of the boarders is extremely effective, and concerns about them are quickly shared between relevant staff. Activities in the evenings and at weekends are plentiful and varied and boarders are consulted as to what is provided for them.
- 4.22 The food is of high quality and boarders can make suggestions about it through the school council. In the pupil questionnaires, a few boarders said that drinks and snacks are not available during the day. On investigation it was found that this was not the case. Snacks are available in the dining hall at breaks and in the house in the evenings, and drinking water is freely available. Menus are varied and nutritious, and all the necessary checks in the kitchens are thorough. Events, such as Chinese New Year, are celebrated with special meals. Provision for any specific dietary requirements is good.

- 4.23 Arrangements for the care of sick boarders are excellent and managed by matrons and house staff who are trained in paediatric first aid. Suitable accommodation is provided should a boarder need to stay in sick bay overnight. Protocols for storing and dispensing medicines are good and suitable electronic records of medication are kept. School doctors visit as required, and arrangements for other medical needs are made as necessary. There is a good system of handover in the morning and evening between staff.
- 4.24 Accommodation is secure and of a high quality, welcoming, comfortable and well maintained. The new dormitories and common areas have been refurbished to a high standard. Boarders have good levels of privacy, and arrangements are in place for private study in the evenings. Accommodation and washing areas for male and female boarders are suitably separated, and access to the house is appropriately controlled. Boarders can personalise their own sleeping areas, and personal possessions are kept securely. The school council have recently been responsible for changing the common room arrangements, advising on the decoration and furnishings. These areas have access to televisions and newspapers, so boarders can keep abreast of current events. Good procedures provide pupils with clean laundry. Any stationery or toiletry requirements can be purchased on visits to the shops at weekends, or matrons can shop for them. Boarders have ample opportunity to contact their families in the evenings through a free phone to call out and a phone on which parents can contact them. The school maintains effective communication with the boarders' parents.
- 4.25 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety of boarders are excellent. Staff follow procedures diligently, and show a high level of awareness of the needs of the boarders in their charge. Following guidance during the inspection, safeguarding policy and procedures now meet requirements. There are efficient procedures for boarding staff recruitment and safeguarding training is regularly updated.
- 4.26 Boarders are encouraged to be open with staff in sharing concerns or queries. They are extremely aware of the need to report concerns quickly and that they are confident that any that arise are dealt with effectively. Behaviour is managed very well, and this is reflected in the high standards observed. Both staff and pupils agree that bullying is rare. The house runs a detailed recording system for behaviour and other incidents, accessible to all relevant staff. This enables effective monitoring and handover of information. There is appropriate guidance available in the event of the necessity to search boarders' possessions. Health and safety arrangements, including procedures for risk assessments for each boarding area, are implemented rigorously. Arrangements for fire practices, including at night, and the relevant safety checks are all implemented effectively.
- 4.27 Staff duty rotas ensure that there are always sufficient members of staff on duty in the evenings, which allows pupils to have ample levels of supervision. There is a system for contacting staff during the night, if necessary. Staff accommodation in the house is appropriately separated from the accommodation for the boarders and is not accessed by them at any time.
- 4.28 Leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Since the previous inspection, the school has made major changes in the structure of boarding, including much greater opportunities to board part time, and moved to excellent new accommodation. The evening activity programme has been enhanced, with input from boarders, and they speak highly of the choice available. This has significantly enhanced provision and outcomes, and shows a clear vision of

the role of boarding in the school. The self-evaluation of the boarding house and future development plans are well-integrated into the overall school plan. Senior leaders are fully involved in the lives of boarders, and monitor standards carefully. Clear and detailed policies and procedures are implemented well, fully in line with the published aims of boarding in the school. Records are accurately and securely kept and monitored appropriately.

- 4.29 All new staff have a thorough induction process and the boarding team is cohesive and enthusiastic. Adults living on site have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All teaching staff share in boarding duties, which allows them to develop an excellent understanding of life in the boarding house. House teaching staff receive annual appraisal through the school system. Currently, there is no arrangement for appraisal of the non-teaching house staff, but suitable arrangements have been introduced to provide for this. Staff training is recorded and staff have been able to take advantage of internal and external training.
- 4.30 The questionnaire responses indicate that both parents and pupils are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of boarding in the school, and feel that high standards of care are maintained and that the boarders' personal development is enhanced by their boarding experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The board of governors is responsible for both schools, and there is a committee with specific oversight of the preparatory school. Excellent arrangements are in place for the recruitment and induction of new members, and they have a broad range of skills relevant to their role, including education, the law, business and finance. A number of current parents and former pupils provide additional insight into the needs and views of the school community.
- 5.3 Governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school which is shared by the school's leadership team. They meet together annually to review future development needs and identify priorities and plan realistic ways in which these may be achieved. They support and challenge leaders, holding them effectively to account. This enables the pupils' good academic achievement and excellent personal development. Governors exercise prudent financial management, ensuring that new projects and investments in staffing and resources are shared equally across both preparatory and senior schools.
- 5.4 The preparatory school committee maintains a good oversight through regular visits to the school. These arrangements are informal, and include discussions with senior leaders and attendance at school functions. Teaching staff rarely meet governors and this limits opportunities for governors to gain extended understanding of the educational experience of the pupils.
- 5.5 Governors have a good awareness of their legal responsibilities. They monitor health and safety effectively and review the school's policies and procedures for child protection annually. They maintain regular contact with the school's child protection officers. However, this review is not sufficiently thorough to ensure that policies remain up-to-date with requirements, although governors are very responsive to any amendments required. They recognise the need to strengthen this area in the future.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.7 The leadership of the school is wholly committed to providing a high standard of care for pupils, excellent personal development opportunities and enhancing the school's academic provision. As a result, the school is successful in meeting all of its aims, and has benefited from an extensive development programme since the previous inspection. This is evident in the pupils' good achievement and excellent personal development.
- 5.8 Leaders are highly visible, approachable, and react positively to any ideas or concerns. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire feel the school is well led and managed. The leadership are highly reflective in their practice, and the overall school development plan is the product of effective self-evaluation and

consultation with staff in all areas of the school. As a result it reflects a shared vision for fulfilling the school's mission. There are clear priorities in place, and realistic steps identified through which these can be achieved. Departmental development plans also contribute to this process. The quality of these is more variable.

- 5.9 The recommendations from the previous inspections have been fully implemented. Effective use is now made of ICT for both teaching and learning. The quality and consistency of marking is much improved, and most teaching is enabled to make good use of available assessment information in lesson planning. The head of the EYFS is now part of the senior team, although limited time and support is provided to enable this figure to carry out all of the growing responsibilities attached to the role.
- 5.10 Leaders have brought about significant progress since the previous inspection. Boarding provision has been restructured to take account of changing demand, and reflects an excellent standard of care. The curriculum has substantially improved in many aspects. There is an outstanding focus on personal development, characterised by the Brandeston Award scheme. The sharing of good practice takes place as staff observe one another's lessons and meet to review planning and the use of resources.
- 5.11 The senior team is effective in the discharge of its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils, although some whole-school policies required adjustment in order to meet the requirements. All appropriate checks are made to ensure the suitability of staff and governors to work with children and the centralised register is accurately maintained. Supervision duties are carried out diligently.
- 5.12 Leaders have established detailed policies and procedures for all other aspects of school life which ensure the smooth running of the school and the provision of a good educational experience for the pupils. Policies for teaching and learning have recently been revised, and now focus on meeting the needs of pupils of all abilities, such as those with SEND, EAL and the more able. Middle management positions have also been restructured to improve support and monitoring in this area. Policies are generally implemented well. Some inconsistencies still remain in their application in a small amount of teaching, although practice has clearly strengthened recently, and assessment policy is not consistent at all ages.
- 5.13 The school is staffed by well-qualified and experienced teachers who are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, including safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. All are given very clear guidance on how to realise the school's objectives. Leaders provide a supportive and stimulating environment for staff, as well as pupils, so that they feel highly involved in sustaining the caring ethos of the school. Leaders ensure a respect for others and the democratic process through their own personal example, and the provision of an excellent personal development programme for all pupils.
- 5.14 A number of specific training sessions have taken place that are linked to school development priorities. For example, staff have received additional training on the use of ICT in lessons, with the result that significant improvements have been achieved. A formal system of appraisal fosters the development of teaching and non-teaching staff, although not in boarding. This process includes observed teaching, and leads to the clear identification of areas for further development. In addition, members of staff are provided with regular opportunities to attend courses for their professional development. There is a comprehensive induction process for

new members of staff, which enables them to adapt to their new role quickly. Regular staff meetings and email communication throughout the school, ensure that staff are kept well informed about school routines and pastoral issues.

- 5.15 The support and administrative staff play an important role in maintaining high standards of care. The grounds, buildings and facilities are very well maintained, so that they provide an attractive and stimulating setting in which pupils learn and develop.
- 5.16 Links with parents, guardians and carers are excellent. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school. They particularly appreciate the ready availability of information about the school and its policies and the high standards of behaviour promoted. They feel that their children are safe and well looked after. Almost all would recommend this school to other parents.
- 5.17 The school maintains an excellent relationship with parents. It responds to any concerns with care and sensitivity, according to its published procedures, which are rarely used. Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved in school life. They particularly appreciate the accessibility of school staff and the introduction of an area where they can meet other parents and senior staff for coffee each morning, and informally raise any concerns if necessary. Parents regularly help with activities such as horse riding, shooting and fencing and attend events organised by the Friends of Brandeston Hall and the senior school.
- 5.18 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required information about the school. The informative website, weekly bulletins and the 'Brandeston Blog' provide extensive current information. Examination results and the annual cycle of half-term grades, two detailed full reports and one summary report can be accessed from the website. These reports are detailed, and indicate areas for future development. Regular information evenings provide details specific to each year group. Carefully timetabled meetings for the parents of boarders ensure that all parents have opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Open days and high quality publications inform prospective parents about the opportunities offered by the school.

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

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

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

- 6.1 The setting is good in meeting the needs of the children who attend. Effective planning of educational programmes ensures that most children achieve the expected level of development in the prime and specific levels of learning of the EYFS. Practitioners demonstrate high expectations. Specialist teaching and extra-curricular activities further enrich the creative curriculum. The purpose-built unit provides direct access to an enclosed play area for the Nursery, facilitating a free flow of activities. However, Reception children do not benefit from their own outdoor learning area; this limits their learning opportunities, especially in creative aspects.
- 6.2 An effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, imaginatively supported by an extensive range of resources within the classrooms, promotes an individual love of learning and discovery and ensures that personal learning styles are catered for. These activities enthuse, engage and motivate the children. Supervised use of climbing apparatus and large wheeled toys promotes gross motor development and controlled risk taking, for example crossing the outside of the rope bridge. Younger children develop their fine motor skills by making finger puppets walk, skip and run. Progress and achievements of the children, recorded on the setting's own profiling system, are used to inform individual learning plans. However, this system has no direct continuity with whole-school recording systems, which limits opportunities to obtain an overview of individual children's development and future needs. The identification of SEND is enhanced by a dedicated co-ordinator and appropriate contact with outside agencies. The two-year checks are used as useful starting points for observations in Nursery.
- 6.3 In the pre-inspection questionnaire and in interviews during the inspection, parents expressed their strong support for the school. They feel that their children are happy and safe and they are highly satisfied with the information they receive about their child's progress.

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

- 6.4 The contribution of the provision to children's well-being is outstanding. Effective use of the key person system ensures that all children settle well and confidently share any concerns. Extra support is provided for two-year-old pupils who need help to ensure a positive transition to the setting. Staff act as excellent role models, demonstrating the standards of mutual respect expected from the children. Within the culture of praise for good behaviour, sanctions are rarely used. Children show imagination in their play. They talk sensibly with adults, and show respect for each other. Children share well; for example, they take turns to paint with colours.
- 6.5 Independence is gently encouraged and even the youngest children decide if they need a coat to go outside. Healthy eating practices are supported by the provision of nutritious snacks and lunches, and accessible drinking water. Older children can attend to their own hygiene. Details of personal care for younger children are carefully recorded for parents. Medical needs and dietary issues are meticulously addressed and arrangements for the care of sick children are excellent. Children

are prepared well for their transitions within the school or to another setting. Detailed discussions inform the next teacher of individual strengths and needs.

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

- 6.6 The leadership and management of the setting is good. Dedicated staff ensure the efficient daily organization of the setting. Adherence to recruitment procedures and to current good practice in safeguarding, supported by rigorous safety checks, provides a secure environment. In line with recommendations from the previous inspection, the head of EYFS is now a member of the SMT. However, a lack of dedicated management time allocated to this role limits opportunities for monitoring educational provision and to develop assessment and profiling systems further. Governors have an adequate insight of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS.
- 6.7 All staff contribute ideas informally for the continuous improvement of the setting, including further development of the woodland and outdoor areas. However, these have not been clearly translated into an action plan with measurable success criteria. Best use is not made of the immediate outside areas. Inclusion in local moderation schemes provides a benchmark for the evaluation of the children's progress against the Early Learning Goals. All staff in the EYFS are included in the school appraisal system which includes opportunities for personal and professional development. Supervision sessions support teaching assistants in the care of their key children. Exceptionally strong partnerships with parents and effective links with outside agencies help to ensure that children's needs are met.

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

- 6.8 The overall quality and standards of the EYFS are good. Children make good progress in their learning and development relative to their starting points with most achieving and some exceeding the Early Learning Goals.
- 6.9 Reception children work confidently with numbers to ten and beyond and can calculate simple number bonds. They enjoy practising their phonic skills in games and confidently identify vowel and consonant blends, using them in their personal writing. Nursery children understand one-to-one correspondence when counting and are learning to write their names and to copy simple phrases. They demonstrated their grasp of positional language during a parachute game and competently produced drawings of a rainbow using the computer. No children under three were present during inspection observations but scrutiny of learning journals shows developing skills in mark making and increasing confidence to join in with group activities. Creative learning experiences promote investigative play and opportunities for team building. For example, in a woodland experience, Reception and Nursery children worked harmoniously together to build a wooden shelter. Nursery children worked together to find out how to speed up the movement of floating objects by increasing the water flow.
- 6.10 By the time of the inspection, safeguarding and welfare arrangements met current requirements, ensuring that children feel safe and secure. Staff, including those new to the school, are aware of relevant legislation. Since the previous inspection, Nursery parents have increased opportunities to contribute to their children's learning, the head of the EYFS is now a member of the senior management team and training in maintaining the EYFS profiles has been provided. On-going self-

evaluation has resulted in suggestions for further improvement, such as the use of woodland areas nearby.

Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three

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

Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision.