

WETHERBY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
INTEGRATED INSPECTION 2012

Dear Parents,

I have long been an advocate of objective, independent school scrutiny so I, together with my management, teaching and support team, was delighted to welcome the Independent Schools Inspectorate to Wetherby Preparatory School in May. I believe that their report identifies the spirit, strengths and character of our school particularly well and am proud to offer it to existing and prospective parents alike.

Ours is not a complacent school, for its boys, teachers or management. The desire to succeed, address challenge and refine our practice is innate to our culture; qualities which, I think you will agree, the following report demonstrates.

Nick Baker
Headmaster
Wetherby Preparatory School

September 2012

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Wetherby Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Wetherby Preparatory School
DfE Number	213/6395
Address	Wetherby Preparatory School 48 Bryanston Square London W1H 2EA
Telephone Number	0207 5353520
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Email Address	admin@wetherbyprep.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Nick Baker
Chair of Governors	Sir John Ritblat
Age Range	7 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	267
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Numbers by Age 7-13:	267
Number of Day Pupils Total:	267
Number of Boarders Total:	0
Inspection dates	22 May 2012 to 25 May 2012

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the ISI schedule, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The school has not been inspected by the ISI before. The previous Ofsted inspection was in November 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed through the following link: www.legislation.gov.uk. Search for Independent School Standards Regulations and enter date 2010, to find Schedule 1, Parts 1-7.

Legislation additional to Part 3, Welfare, health and safety of pupils, is as follows.

- (i) The Equality Act 2010 (including race, gender, special educational needs and/or disabilities).
- (ii) The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, banning corporal punishment.

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

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.

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 a governors' representative, 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 Peter McGregor

Mr Gareth Davies

Mr Geoffrey Hammond

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, IAPS & ISA school)

Team Inspector (Deputy Head, IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

1.1 Wetherby Preparatory School opened in 2004, providing education in central London for boys aged 7 to 13. In 2009, the school moved to its present Bryanston Square site.

1.2 The school is a member of the Alpha Plus Group, which provides governance and proprietorial responsibility through a management board and a senior management team. The chief executive of the senior management team has day-to-day oversight of Wetherby Preparatory School, supported by five directors each with different areas of responsibility.

1.3 The school aims to provide an 'education in the round' for all its pupils, developing their intellectual, physical, social and moral selves. It is intended to prepare them for a wide range of senior schools and provide firm foundations for a successful, balanced and accomplished adult life. The school believes it can achieve this through providing effective and consistent pastoral care, an appropriate academic curriculum which raises pupils' aspirations, and an extensive range of clubs, sporting activities and visits.

1.4 Since the previous inspection, carried out by Ofsted four years ago, the school has moved into larger, Grade 2 listed accommodation, with classrooms, laboratories and other facilities spread over five floors. A Year 3 class was established in 2010. Friday afternoon activity sessions have been introduced for all pupils and the range of clubs, activities and sports fixtures has been increased.

1.5 The school has 267 pupils, with one class in Year 3, and two or more classes in Years 4 to 8. The ability profile of the pupils is above the national average. Most pupils have at least above average ability and, in some cohorts, a notable proportion are of well above average ability. Boys from Wetherby Pre-preparatory School gain automatic entry to this school. Other boys achieve places as a result of success on entrance tests in English and mathematics, references from the candidates' previous schools and observations made during an assessment day.

1.6 About one fifth of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Approximately half of these receive specialist support. Pupils' needs are mainly dyslexia. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language, none of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The great majority of the pupils are sons of professional families working in the City of London who live locally. About one third of pupils are from families originally based in other countries, mainly in Europe or North America. A small number of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.

1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

2.1 The progress and achievement of pupils in lessons is excellent. This success is enhanced by dynamic, specialist teaching and the boys' determination to succeed. They are extremely positive about the quality of education provided and have excellent attitudes to learning. The school fully meets its aim of providing an 'education in the round', with exceptional breadth in its extra-curriculum programme, enabling pupils to achieve highly in a great range of activities, from singing to fencing. The pupils also benefit from many day and residential visits, including several trips abroad. The excellent curriculum contributes effectively to learning with a particular strength in English and mathematics. The best teaching is excellent. In these lessons, teachers question the pupils most effectively and engage them in enjoyable cooperative activities. Very occasionally, work is not well matched to the pupils' wide-ranging abilities. Most marking is helpfully detailed and data is used effectively to monitor pupils' progress over time.

2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. Relationships between staff and pupils are of the highest quality. As they progress through the school, pupils learn to be tolerant, courteous and considerate of others. Behaviour is usually excellent. The boys are extremely proud of their school. They are confident in their own abilities and aspire to excellence in all areas of school life. Excellent pastoral care is provided by all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, which contributes most effectively to the pupils' development. Routines and systems to ensure their safety on arrival and leaving at the end of the day are exemplary, as is transfer to and from recreation taken at London parks. Tutor periods provide excellent opportunities for social interaction, reflection and learning.

2.3 Leadership and management are excellent overall. The vision and direction provided at the most senior level are very clear and highly valued by staff and parents. The pupils are exceptionally well known at senior management level. Governors are knowledgeable and aware of the school's improvements and success since it moved to its new building three years ago. Holding the school to account against its aims, the governors achieve an excellent balance of accountability and involvement without interference. Governance is good and in some aspects excellent. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Policies are appropriate and requirements are met, such as those concerning safeguarding and child protection, and health and safety including fire systems. Staff appointment procedures are appropriate and usually well implemented. Currently there are too few washbasins for the number of pupils on roll due to recent increases in pupil numbers. The school development plan has a clear and appropriate agenda for further improvement.

2.(b) Action points

- (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements
(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is available through the link described in the Preface)

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to: provide an appropriate number of wash-basins for the pupils [Part 5, paragraph 23.(j), under Premises and accommodation].

- (ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that monitoring and implementation of compliance is effective on all occasions.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

3.1 The pupils' achievements are excellent.

3.2 The school very successfully meets its aim of developing the pupils intellectually and preparing them for a wide range of senior schools. In lessons and written work, pupils make good and often excellent progress. In English lessons, opportunities for paired discussions and at-length responses to challenging questions showed that they listen well and speak articulately, with authority. Pupils read accurately and with confidence when asked to do so, explaining technical terms skilfully. Written work is often neat and accurate. The most capable generate substantial amounts of excellent prose. Pupils' high order mathematics skills were apparent, as they explained in detail the differences between bar charts and line graphs, and appreciated the value of pie charts. Younger pupils use scales with confidence in science, several accurately calculating averages from measurements. Older pupils use the school laptop computers very creatively on their own independent projects on a wide variety of topics, for example generating a design for an airport and using coding to produce a short programme. Pupils display very well-developed physical skills in a range of sports which they greatly enjoy. They value the high quality relationships they have with staff and the excellent support provided both within the lesson and during support sessions at the end of the school day. Lower attainers sometimes struggle to complete tasks but they persevere and invariably make good or better progress in improving their knowledge. High attainers are particularly successful because work is so challenging. Pupils with SEND receive excellent targeted support and make excellent progress, facilitated by staff appreciation of what their needs are. All pupils speak English fluently, with understanding.

3.3 Pupils are extremely successful in gaining entry to senior independent day and boarding schools. Academic and music scholarships have been won at highly selective senior schools. Over sixty boys sing in the school choir, performing at a high level, and the school sports teams enjoy strong local success in swimming, cross-country, cricket and sailing. School drama productions are popular and much acclaimed.

3.4 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against a fixed national norm but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. The level of attainment as judged indicates that the pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. They follow a demanding curriculum, with much of the work aimed at standards a year above their chronological age. The quality of teaching is excellent and pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. They thrive in the competitive,

challenging climate. Their levels of cooperation develop as they work through the school so that, by Year 8, they achieve an excellent balance of independent and cooperative skills.

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

3.5 The quality of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.6 The broad curriculum offers appropriate subject matter for the age and aptitudes of the pupils, including those with SEND, in accordance with the school's aims. It is highly effective in covering the requisite areas of learning and provides a range of challenging experiences across all subjects. Curriculum planning is detailed and contributes strongly to the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The provision of French throughout the school, and the introduction of Latin in Year 4 enhance the pupils' linguistic skills. Dedicated facilities for science, art and music support the teaching of these subjects but the size of these rooms is slightly cramped. Two games afternoons at local parks offer children excellent opportunities for physical development whilst swimming for the younger children and rowing for the Year 7s and 8s develop fitness and co-ordination. A significant strength of the school is the Friday afternoon curriculum time, when all pupils choose from a very wide range of enriching and motivating experiences. These include both off-site opportunities, such as golf, and school-based activities like art and craft. An excellent choir extends the musical provision and offers children an opportunity for high quality collaborative learning.

3.7 Setting from Year 4 in mathematics and English, and from Year 6 for almost all other academic subjects, facilitates matching work effectively to pupils' prior knowledge and abilities. The more able children, and those identified as gifted and talented, are suitably challenged. Appropriate extension work is provided and dedicated support is highly valued by scholarship candidates. Individual education plans prepared for pupils SEND are detailed and informative.

3.8 A comprehensive range of clubs and activities throughout the week stimulate boys' interest in wider learning and supports their personal and social development. Clubs such as debating, chess and street dance offer opportunities for intellectual and physical development. The eco-warriors club enables pupils to take on responsibilities for environmental matters. They make a significant contribution to the school, for example by monitoring, and reducing, energy costs, and by planting herbs for the kitchen to use.

3.9 Curriculum documentation is thorough and well organised, supporting teaching and ensuring continuity and progression across all subjects. The school's weekly planning template is well used by staff and clearly identifies lesson activities to

engage the pupils' interest. Curriculum planning is shared in a central area making it accessible to all staff. Senior management and heads of department monitor teachers' planning to ensure that it suits the needs of pupils.

3.10 An extensive range of trips and visits enhances greatly pupils' subject knowledge, enjoyment and personal development. Residential trips are organised for each year group, varying from bush craft and sailing to opportunities for practising French and completing geography fieldwork. Opportunities also exist for sports tours nationally and internationally. A recent successful careers evening provided information for Year 8 pupils about what careers were possible for those with a scientific background. Through the use of local parks and athletic stadia, and the awareness and respect shown to local residents, the school develops excellent links with the local community.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.11 The quality of teaching is excellent.

3.12 Effective teaching clearly supports the school's aim to provide opportunities for pupils to learn and make progress and acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy. They respond exceptionally well to challenging and engaging teaching, which encourages them to contribute their ideas and cooperate with one another. Nearly all teaching observed was at least good with a significant proportion of the lessons graded as excellent. The many successful lessons were characterised by effective questioning and excellent interactions with the pupils. For example, pupils were prompted to explain how they solve particular mathematics problems and to engage in debating issues in English lessons.

3.13 Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and their conscientious and committed approach indicates a passion for their subjects, which inspires the pupils. As a result, they make excellent progress and build on their prior knowledge and skills in most lessons. A wide range of resources are used effectively to support learning, including good practical work in science, numerous worksheets in several subjects, and a variety of activities, including an interactive whiteboard challenge and flashcards in Latin. Short film clips are used well to capture boys' attention and motivate them. High level challenges were provided to extend the more able pupils, with examples of GCSE style questions set in mathematics.

3.14 The excellent interaction between the pupils and their teachers is founded on a high level of mutual respect. Teachers know each pupil they teach extremely well. Their calm manner and high expectations encourage excellent behaviour from the pupils and create a positive, exciting environment for learning. Excellent questioning is used to assess pupils' knowledge and, in the best teaching, prompts and support are

given to develop independent thought and application. Praise is used most effectively to encourage the pupils. Rewards such as house points, and the 'headmaster's good show', awarded for high quality work, are much valued and result in enthusiastic, motivated learners.

3.15 Lessons are well planned and learning objectives are shared with the pupils. Most sessions proceed at a brisk pace, providing challenge and interest for the pupils. Occasionally the pace was too fast to allow all children to gain full understanding, although their recall of information was often excellent. Detailed individual education plans guide teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs most effectively. Teachers adjust their approach and tasks in the light of the information they have, so that the pupils' specific needs are met.

3.16 The marking of books is thorough and constructive in many cases, with detailed comments and targets for improvement. In a few books it is rather rudimentary and lacks detail. A highly effective academic tracking system, based on teacher assessments and tests, enables teachers to monitor the progress of individual pupils and to identify where extra support would be helpful. Teachers are fully aware of the levels of attainment the pupils must achieve to gain places or awards to the senior schools for which they are aiming and provide work that enables them to be successful.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.

4.2 Their excellent personal development fulfils the school's aim to provide an 'education in the round', and establishes firm foundations for a balanced and accomplished adult life.

4.3 The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. They are self-confident and responsive and show a mature respect for the beliefs and opinions of others. Their self-esteem is high because their individuality is respected, nurtured and celebrated in concerts, assemblies and newsletters. They show an excellent understanding of how the spiritual dimension of life is expressed within Christianity and other world religions, gained through religious studies lessons and the weekly church service. They show a marked appreciation of the diversity of the world's beauty, whether through the sensitivity of their singing, or their care for the school snake.

4.4 Pupils show excellent moral awareness. They understand the clear code of the school community, abide by it willingly and actively support it by designing and creating school rule posters for public display. They have a strong understanding of the importance of consideration for others, reflected not only in their calm and courteous behaviour within the confines of the school, but also when in public view, such as taking their breaks in Hyde Park. Their sense of right and wrong is demonstrated in their acute concern for selecting carefully and appropriately the right charity to support, and in minor ways such as tucking chairs in tidily.

4.5 The pupils' social development is excellent as they make their way through the school. Older pupils, through the pupil leadership teams, take their responsibilities very seriously. They hear younger pupils read and aid them in organisation; they are excellent role models of friendship and respect. Pupil representatives from all forms, democratically elected by their peers, form the school council which meets weekly to discuss issues raised by the boys themselves. All pupils have a strong sense of community, for example helping to run the library, or producing their own occasional newspaper, Wetherboys. They demonstrate a strong commitment to helping others by raising funds for charities, some local and some further afield. They are friendly, well mannered and at ease with themselves.

4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. The school's London location, with its international mix of cultures promotes understanding and awareness of the traditions and customs of others. Both religious studies and personal, social and health education courses support and develop this knowledge, including trips to the local

synagogue and gurdwara. The pupils' cultural understanding is further fostered through their work across the curriculum and the many opportunities provided for them to appreciate and participate in art, literature and music. After the common entrance examinations, pupils embark on an excellent programme to promote a sense of a wider community and a knowledge and understanding of political processes and systems as they move towards adulthood.

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

4.7 The school's pastoral care is excellent.

4.8 The staff provide extremely effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the aims and ethos of the school. The increased length of tutor periods means that staff know their tutees exceptionally well; relationships are extremely positive. Successful lines of communication between all staff mean that care is carefully coordinated. The hugely popular 'peer of the week' award, selected by the boys, adds to the feeling of great care and support.

4.9 The school is highly effective in promoting good behaviour by emphasising the positive, through its variety of rewards. Sanctions are used infrequently and are all the more effective for this reason. The school has a clear policy to combat any harassment, and bullying in all its forms, and works quickly and successfully to deal with incidents as they arise. Staff show due consideration to pupils with SEND, adapting their practice as needed. The school has a good three-year plan to improve educational access for these pupils. All pupils are confident in their understanding of whom to turn to for help, including the opportunity to receive guidance and support from the school counsellor. Several pupils join the school having had negative experiences elsewhere. The high quality of care enables them to settle very quickly into school life and become fully involved in the community.

4.10 The school takes considerable care to promote a healthy lifestyle through its eating for life programme, by creating attractive menus and guiding the pupils on how to eat healthily. Afternoon registration takes place at lunchtime to monitor pupil attendance and to ensure that all the pupils eat lunch. Pupils are provided with excellent opportunities to express their views on food and other matters through the weekly meeting of the school council. In addition, the prominently positioned Red Box, where pupils can post comments, anonymously if they wish, is a constant reminder of an alternative way in which the school seeks pupils' views. Though the school lacks playing fields, it ensures that every pupil gets regular exercise and the opportunity to let off steam, whether in parks or at the local leisure centre.

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

4.11 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.

4.12 The safeguarding of pupils is effective. The safeguarding policy is clear in its written form and has regard to official guidance but required some minor amendments to bring it fully in to line. Staff receive suitable and timely child protection training at an appropriate level.

4.13 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire drills take place on a regular basis and planned training was imminent at the time of this inspection. The school has relocated its muster point to improve the safety and efficiency of any evacuation.

4.14 Careful measures are taken to protect the health and safety of the school community. This is especially pertinent in respect of the excellent arrangements for morning arrival, afternoon departure and for the daily visit to Hyde Park for breaks, when a large number of minibuses and coaches are involved in transporting the pupils. The school has appropriate risk assessments for the many school visits and all aspects of work.

4.15 Provision for pupils who are unwell or require first aid is good with an appropriate medical room and well-trained staff. The school's personal, social and health education provision, both in lessons and through the general approach of all staff, correctly emphasises helping pupils to have concern for their own welfare. Pupils with SEND are suitably catered for.

4.16 Admission and attendance records are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

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 Alpha Plus Group of governors, who have responsibility for the school, are aware of their legal responsibilities, including the need to carry out an annual review of policies. Safeguarding and child protection procedures, along with health and safety, first aid and anti-bullying are checked for compliance, and almost all statutory responsibilities are met. Staff appointment procedures meet requirements although a minor lapse in implementation occurred recently. Provision of washbasins, is below that required for the number of pupils attending the school due to recent increases in pupil numbers.

5.3 Governors are extremely well qualified. They have an excellent blend of experience and expertise, most with backgrounds in education. The senior management team members of the board, the five directors, make regular visits to discuss ongoing developments and to clarify their understanding of the school in action. Governors are appropriately involved at a strategic level and exercise prudent financial management. This is apparent in the staffing levels, excellent resources available for teaching and learning, the quality of the school building and in the achievements and personal development of the pupils. The headmaster's annual report is discussed at board level and it informs the directors' visit agenda. Governors give the headmaster a substantial degree of freedom to determine the direction for the school; they subsequently measure its success against this. Lines of communication between governors and the headmaster are clear and strong.

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

5.4 The quality of leadership and management and links with parents are excellent.

5.5 The teaching, curriculum and pastoral care very successfully promote the school's aim to develop the pupils' intellectual, physical, social and moral selves. This is seen in the pupils' excellent achievement and personal development. The boys clearly articulated their enjoyment at attending the school and how successful it was at helping them to attain high standards. The headmaster is supported by a dynamic staff team, both teaching and non-teaching colleagues, who all subscribe to the school ethos.

5.6 With the full support of governors, positive changes have been instigated since the

school moved to its new buildings in 2009. The curriculum has been improved, for example through enhanced tutor time and the availability of much improved computer technology to aid teaching and learning. The senior leadership team has been adapted to meet the needs of developments in the school. Pastoral, academic and administrative responsibilities are clearly delegated and understood. The useful separation between the junior and senior sections of the school, each with a senior leader taking responsibility, enables faster response times to any issues that are identified. Senior and middle leaders communicate well with one another and are highly effective in most of their roles. Formal communication over breakfast for all staff on two mornings a week, and informal communication each morning at this time, is very useful and efficient.

5.7 The key strategic themes identified in the school development plan provide a strong focus for further improvement in all areas of school life. Self-evaluation is thorough; it involves governors, and its findings inform future planning. Significant progress has been made in delivery of the school's aims. Responsibilities are clearly stated, as are expected outcomes, though not all success criteria are sufficiently specific. Subject self-evaluation is well linked to that of the whole school.

5.8 High quality staff have been appointed as numbers increase and induction procedures are excellent. A carefully structured, centrally-managed programme involving supportive mentors enables all teaching, support and administrative staff to appreciate the particular qualities of the school's approach to educating the pupils. All staff are supported through an annual appraisal programme, which includes senior leaders observing other staff teach, the headmaster observing senior leaders teach and the headmaster interviewing all staff. The headmaster is appraised by the governors. Enhancing in-service training is a current development plan priority.

5.9 Monitoring of the school policies which concern pupils' work, the use of assessment data and the quality of teaching and learning, is highly effective. These policies are implemented very well. Those for safeguarding and other requirements are appropriate. All staff are trained in child protection and welfare, health and safety; though historically, review of staff appointment procedures was less robust.

5.10 Parents are highly supportive of the school. Their responses to the parental questionnaires indicate that they are extremely satisfied with the education their children receive and the approach of the headmaster and his staff. They are particularly pleased with extra-curricular clubs and the Friday activity programme, the management of the school and the quality of communication. These exceptionally positive views are fully supported by inspection findings. Parents are kept extremely well informed by the weekly Wetherbuzz publication which includes fixtures, achievements, news and letters. Further documents are detailed and helpful, such as the school's aims and rules, the guide to senior school transfer, and

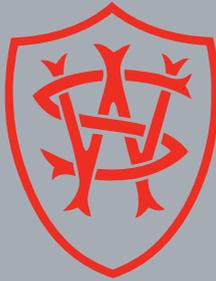
the parental handbook, which informs on key policy areas. The website and prospectus are also effective in providing excellent information for parents.

5.11 Junior and senior curriculum documents are excellent and explain to parents what is covered in all subjects for each year group. Parents are also invited to attend a useful curriculum evening at the start of each year. They receive regular updates on their child's progress with detailed subject and pastoral reports twice a year, as well as short progress reports and effort and attainment grades each half term. There are also two parents' evenings each year and a form teacher consultation in the spring term. Homework diaries provide a very useful line of communication between parents and teachers. Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in communicating with parents via email and texting, a process that is much valued for its speed and helpfulness.

5.12 The school's relationship with parents is constructive and the few complaints received are handled with care and follow the school's complaints policy. The school operates an open door policy and the headmaster makes himself readily available to meet with parents, which they much appreciate.

5.13 A very active parent and teacher association organises fetes and social occasions in support of the school and a number of different charities. The headmaster attends association meetings and he and other staff are involved in their work and the functions which they manage. Parents are invited to accompany overseas sports tours and many opt to do this, appreciating the opportunity to be involved.

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



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