



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

## **FARLEIGH SCHOOL INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## Farleigh School

Full Name of School	<b>Farleigh School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>850/6015</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>307340</b>		
Address	<b>Farleigh School Red Rice Andover Hampshire SP11 7PW</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01264 710766</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01264 710070</b>		
Email Address	<b>office@farleighschool.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Father Simon Everson</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Tim Syder</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>435</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (237 boys; 198 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>283</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>45</b>	11-13: <b>107</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>329</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>106</b>	
	Full:	<b>26</b>	Weekly: <b>48</b> Flexi: <b>32</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>19 November 2013 to 22 November 2013</b>		

## 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 2009.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**‘exceptional’ that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology (‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘inadequate’) as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and other 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 Rod Sharman	Reporting Inspector
Mr Edwin Brown	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS prep school)
Mrs Jane Grubb	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS prep school)
Mrs Susan Webb	Team inspector (Head, IAPS prep school)
Mr Richard Yeates	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS prep school)
Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years
Mr Richard Gibbs	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Farleigh School was founded as a Catholic preparatory school for boys in 1953 by Jocelyn Trappes-Lomax at Farleigh House near Basingstoke. The school moved to its present location some three miles west of Andover in 1982. The school is housed in a Georgian country house surrounded by 55 acres of parkland and woodland. The school became an educational trust in 1965 and operates under a board of governors. Since the previous inspection, two teaching blocks have replaced dated science laboratories and temporary classrooms. In addition, extensions have been made to changing rooms.
- 1.2 Farleigh School seeks to provide an education for boys and girls of different abilities where they are able to achieve well and to develop a life-long love of learning. Central to the school's ethos is a belief that all people are held to be made 'in the image and likeness of God'. This ethos underpins the school's pastoral support and the provision for those with special educational needs and learning difficulties. Opportunities are provided to enable pupils to flourish in academic, sporting, cultural and social pursuits.
- 1.3 The school provides education for 435 pupils (237 boys and 198 girls) aged between 3 and 13. Forty-five children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Most pupils come from professional and business families. A small number come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The boarding accommodation is located in the main building. One hundred and six pupils board; of these seventy-four are full or weekly boarders and thirty-two are flexi boarders. The boarders are drawn from military backgrounds and from homes in London, the home counties and overseas. The average ability of pupils, as indicated in standardised tests taken by pupils is above the national average, within a wide range of ability. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. Sixty-nine pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom have support. Seven pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and all receive support.
- 1.4 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 quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is excellent. From the EYFS upwards pupils are very well educated in line with the school's aims. Pupils' attainment is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. They make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The pupils' attitudes to their work and learning are exemplary. The broad curriculum is excellent and complemented effectively by the rich provision of extra-curricular activities. Shortcomings in relation to inconsistency in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in subjects identified at the previous inspection have been remedied. In the EYFS, the quality of provision for outdoor learning hinders children's progress. The quality of teaching is excellent and contributes highly to the pupils' achievement. Teachers are enthusiastic and supportive, and lessons take place in an atmosphere where pupils seek to do their best, reflecting the school's explicit ethos. Teaching is well planned to ensure that the pupils' interests are captured and it moves at a brisk pace. Support for pupils with SEND, those with EAL and those who are gifted and talented is excellent. A comprehensive range of tests is used to assess and track the pupils' progress. Marking provides pupils with targets; however, the quality of the targets varies.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. The school's Catholic ethos is reflected across all aspects of the school community, including the EYFS and boarding. Boarding provision is excellent and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Boarders report that they are well looked after and welcome the access to a range of appropriate adults to discuss their personal issues. Pupils develop into mature and thoughtful individuals, ready for the next stage of their education. They benefit greatly from the excellent quality of the pastoral care, which is complemented by excellent systems for welfare, health and safety. Relationships across the school are outstanding and based on mutual respect, reflecting the school's ethos.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. Highly effective strategic planning and prudent financial management are demonstrated in the facilities provided and in the high calibre staff. Governors have an excellent understanding of the education the school provides. They exercise their monitoring function efficiently and are effective in discharging their legal responsibilities, including the safeguarding of pupils. Governors undertake an annual review of safeguarding. The quality of leadership and management is excellent, providing a clear educational direction for the school. The strong and supportive leadership and management enables all pupils to reach high levels of achievement. The role of the heads of department has been strengthened. Liaison with the pre-preparatory department has improved. Links with parents are excellent and, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents expressed their overwhelming satisfaction for the education and support provided by the school.



## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Draw up a policy for the consistent use of target setting which takes account of the most effective practice already in place within some subject departments.
2. Improve the quality of the outdoor learning provision in the EYFS.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' learning and achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 The excellent level of achievement represents the successful fulfilment of the school's aim for all children to enjoy opportunities to flourish in academic, sporting, cultural and social pursuits.
- 3.3 Children make a good start in the EYFS and make good progress in relation to their starting points. In Nursery children speak with increasing clarity. They enjoy listening to stories and joining in. In Reception, children have a secure knowledge of the sounds letters make. They read simple sentences and start to build and write words phonetically. Children proudly announced the answer to 'one less than 15' as 14 and then one volunteered that 'one less than 63 is 62'. All children manipulate small tools and pencils with dexterity and control their bodies well during physical exercise. They make independent choices, take up different challenges and enjoy new opportunities. Their creativity is shown as they play instruments in preparation for a play, and they enjoy painting and printing.
- 3.4 Older pupils are successful in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills in their academic work and in their extra curricular activities. Pupils are highly articulate both in lessons and when speaking in public. They confidently express their opinions and effectively argue their point of view in discussions, for example, about whether money can bring happiness. They read fluently and are keen to read for pleasure and for research. When reading in public, they do so with confidence. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and their peers, showing respect for the opinions of others, reflecting the school's ethos. Pupils write with great fluency and with due attention to correct spelling and grammar. They write confidently in a wide range of styles; for example, older pupils write thoughtful accounts in history about the Black Death and its impact on medieval life. Younger pupils write imaginatively about characters in fairy tales. Pupils show high levels of competence in physical education and games.
- 3.5 Pupils show a logical approach to their work across the curriculum. They readily apply their considerable mathematical skills effectively in other subjects when appropriate. The pupils' use of ICT is well advanced, a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. They readily use the internet for research. Achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent. Pupils show high levels of skill in the creative arts. Pupils are skilful when singing and playing musical instruments, and in their drama productions. Achievement in physical pursuits is excellent.
- 3.6 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests. On the evidence available, including scrutiny of pupils' completed work and their responses in lessons, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils who are particularly gifted or talented make rapid progress in relation to pupils of similar abilities. Pupils with EAL or SEND make a high rate of progress. Pupils are highly successful in gaining places, and a good range of scholarships, in senior schools.
- 3.7 Pupils are highly effective learners and have exemplary attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn and improve the standards they attain. They use their initiative and eagerly undertake the tasks they are given. Pupils settle to work quickly and

make the best use of time. A strong feature of their learning is their willing co-operation with each other.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The school's values lie at the heart of the curriculum. The shared ethos of the school is embedded in the curriculum and its policies. Catholic belief underpins the work and traditions of the school and is fundamental to its ethos and approach to all aspects of school life. Detailed planning in each subject ensures that the curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities, and covers the requisite subjects. Pupils are often taught in classes with pupils of similar abilities (setting) to enable all pupils to be suitably challenged.
- 3.10 The EYFS setting makes good provision for meeting the needs of the range of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Activities are usually interesting. The children are enthusiastic and enjoy participating, for example when they play mathematical games. Careful planning ensures that children have good opportunities to listen, talk, form close relationships, learn both independently and with adult support, and develop physical skills. Reading is strongly encouraged and early writing skills are well provided for in Reception. Opportunities for children to develop ICT skills are satisfactory. Teachers implement the curriculum fully but opportunities for outside learning are hampered by the restricted facilities available. Assessment and planning are good. Parents and carers appreciate the detailed information they receive about their children, and the way they are included in their children's learning.
- 3.11 Since the previous inspection the role of the head of department has been better defined so that the curricular links between the pre-prep and the prep departments have improved considerably.
- 3.12 The curriculum strikes an excellent balance between the academic subjects, creativity, the expressive arts and physical education. The curriculum offers the academic rigour demanded to meet the expectations of the entry requirements of senior schools. Additional subjects such as French, Latin and the provision of a food technology room, further enhance the provision. Close attention is paid to personal, social and health education (PSHE). A particular strength and a significant improvement since the previous inspection is the use of ICT across the curriculum.
- 3.13 Pupils with SEND benefit from excellent support. Identification of their additional needs is efficient with prompt screening and appropriate help provided. Where necessary, pupils are provided with an up-to-date individual education plan. The school keeps track of all their progress through careful monitoring and record keeping. Pupils who are gifted and talented are challenged and achieve highly. Pupils with EAL gain from support in learning spoken English which is carefully matched to their needs.
- 3.14 The provision and range of extra-curricular activities are excellent and effectively complement and enhance the curriculum. High-quality opportunities are provided to develop pupils' creative and sporting skills. Pupils choose from a wide variety of activities, for example from camp fire singing to the Farleigh X-Factor. Pupils' independence is developed through day and residential visits. Further enrichment is provided by eminent speakers who visit the school. The links with the community are excellent and in particular with pupils' close involvement with a local special

school. All these aspects of the school's daily life result in a very broad and holistic education in line with its ethos.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.16 This quality represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching successfully meets the school's aim to enable pupils to flourish academically. In the EYFS, teachers' skilled questions challenge and effectively extend the children's thinking. Across the school, pupils are consistently encouraged and supported to make the most of their intellectual, physical and creative talents. Teachers' high expectations for their pupils enhance their learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and supportive, and lessons take place in an atmosphere where pupils are motivated and engaged and seek to do their best, reflecting the school's explicit ethos. Pupils are well supported as teachers make the best use of the small class sizes, and know their pupils individually, taking account of their differing needs. Teachers' knowledge is used to good effect in the planning and careful resourcing of lessons, which take due account of what pupils have learnt before.
- 3.17 Teaching makes good use of a wide range of teaching methods and a variety of activities in lessons which capture the pupils' interest. In an imaginative English lesson, pupils watched a video clip of a lottery winner prior to making a judgement whether winning the lottery had been a good thing. A significant feature of the teaching is the way that pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. Lessons are well paced as teachers make the most of the time available and this promotes behaviour of a high standard. Previous learning is consolidated by brisk questioning at the start of lessons. Teachers make good use of open-ended questions to challenge pupils to think for themselves. Pupils' learning is enhanced significantly by the considerable subject knowledge of subject specialists and of class teachers.
- 3.18 A significant improvement since the last inspection is the imaginative use made of tablet computers and interactive white boards. Lessons are often enhanced by the use of judicious clips of video. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and behaviour is of a very high standard. The pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very supportive of the teaching they receive. The parents' responses were highly supportive of the challenge provided for able pupils. Teaching demonstrates high expectations of pupils and provides high-quality support for pupils with SEND. Highly effective use is made of the learning support assistants and teachers who have specialist knowledge in supporting such pupils. Teaching meets the provision set out in pupils' statements of special educational needs. The few pupils with EAL are provided with helpful support which builds their confidence in spoken English.
- 3.19 Work is marked regularly and pupils are given written comments of praise and encouragement. Pupils are provided with targets to aim for. The quality of the targets varies considerably. At its best, pupils are provided with a clear challenging target for improvement. Where the targets are less useful, they are often concerned with the presentation of work rather than on improving the skills and knowledge within the subject. Pupils value the individual oral feedback they receive in addition to marking.

- 3.20 A comprehensive and detailed range of standardised assessments is used from the end of Reception to Year 8. These provide useful information on all aspects of the pupils' achievement. Information from assessments is carefully collated within a secure system for tracking the pupils' progress. Colour coding in the school's data base readily identifies pupils whose progress is below that predicted by teachers, who then provide necessary support.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal development is well advanced, reflecting the ethos drawn from the school's explicit Catholic heritage. The school strives to encourage and educate pupils to live out the values of the school within themselves.
- 4.3 Children's personal development starts extremely well in the EYFS. Children display high levels of confidence and are happy to work and play independently or in groups, to co-operate, share, concentrate and to respond to challenges. They form trusting relationships with other children and with staff. In Kindergarten, they take turns and cooperate well; those in Reception take on responsibility and take on classroom responsibilities. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 4.4 Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They are aware of the non-material aspects of life. Pupils regularly participate in services, themed assemblies and Mass in the chapel, which is the centre of the spiritual life of the school. Pupils display an exceptional confidence and self-awareness. They demonstrate sensitivities about religious faith in general and the Catholic faith in particular. Pupils express with confidence, their ideas, thoughts and feelings, demonstrating empathy for others less fortunate than themselves. They discuss their own faith experiences and their influence on their own lives. Pupils gain an understanding about different faiths and religious festivals.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate excellent moral development. They have a clear and demonstrable understanding of what is right and wrong. A strong sense of respect, courtesy and compassion pervades the school. Pupils have a well-developed and clear personal moral code. Older pupils show a good understanding of and insight into racism, and named Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King as exemplars and role models. Pupils use a computer program effectively to consider and reflect on their behaviour and its consequences for others. Pupils clearly demonstrate a set of shared moral values which is underpinned by the distinctive ethos of the school. They display a truly exceptional commitment to supporting a range of charities both locally and further afield, including support for charities that look after those with SEND. The school's main annual charity successfully supports street children in Colombia.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is extremely well developed. They display a self-confidence and maturity beyond their years. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of citizenship and life in the wider world and show a high degree of social awareness. They take on a range of responsibilities such as being prefects, and carry out their duties with a calm confidence and authority. Pupils clearly understand the importance and contribution of their service to the school community. A notable aspect of the pupils' social development is the obvious care taken by older pupils for younger children and all pupils relate very well with adults and visitors.
- 4.7 Pupils' cultural development is outstanding. Many activities in school help pupils to develop their cultural awareness. For example, pupils learn about Italian culture when they write letters to their Italian pen pals. Pupils develop cultural awareness

through the excellent opportunities provided in subjects such as drama, art, history, music and Latin. They develop awareness of their own cultural heritage and traditions through visits to numerous places of interest, both locally and further afield. They are strongly supported in their cultural development by contact with boarders who come from another country. Many activities enhance their cultural development, from creative arts to campfire singing.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Pastoral care is excellent and makes a key contribution to the outstanding personal development of the pupils. The school amply fulfils its aims in providing warm pastoral care of the highest standard that is appreciated by pupils and parents, as indicated in their responses in the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- 4.10 In the EYFS, children are encouraged to understand how to keep themselves safe, the importance of eating healthily, the need to practise good hygiene and that physical exercise is good for them. A regular series of meetings each week ensure that the pastoral needs of all children are reviewed, recorded and acted upon. Consequently, all children are extremely well known by their key persons and other staff and care levels are exemplary.
- 4.11 The management of pastoral care is exemplary. Relationships between teachers and pupils are extremely good, as are those amongst the pupils themselves. The school is highly successful in nurturing good behaviour through an emphasis on personal reflection, which is central to the ethos of the school. A few parents expressed concerns about bullying. Inspection evidence does not support their views. Pupils commented that in their view instances of bullying were rare. Pupils trust staff to deal swiftly with matters they raise. Comprehensive attention is paid to the prevention of bullying through PSHE, assemblies and the school's pastoral team. Effective arrangements are implemented to deal efficiently with unacceptable behaviour. Pupils understand the sanctions and rewards system and feel that it is fair.
- 4.12 A wide range of physical activities both in and out of curriculum time offers pupils ample opportunity to develop healthy lifestyles. From the EYFS onwards they acquire a good appreciation of healthy living, for example through their PSHE programme, and teachers monitor and encourage them to eat a healthy diet. The school provides a nutritious choice of diet and social interaction is encouraged at meal times.
- 4.13 At the school council, pupils represent their peers, sharing their ideas for school development. Pupils feel that their views are listened to and that the school is receptive. The school has a suitable plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 In the EYFS, the setting's contribution to children's well-being is excellent. The staff work as a close-knit team and the 'key-persons' system provides excellent care for the children. Kindness and thoughtfulness towards others, and high levels of mutual respect, ensure that children feel happy and safe. High priority is given to health and safety through favourable staffing ratios and through reminders to children about

safety issues. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly. The friendly atmosphere both in the EYFS and pre-prep ensures that children are confident to move from one year group to the next.

- 4.16 In the whole school, including EYFS, close attention is paid to safeguarding pupils and promoting their health and well-being. The policies and procedures for safeguarding all pupils are secure and are implemented fully. The designated persons for child protection have received the required training and provide a good resource for all staff. All staff have appropriate and regular training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities for the pupils under their care. Useful links have been made with local agencies. A designated governor has a specific concern for safeguarding and meets regularly with the designated person.
- 4.17 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Fire prevention systems are checked regularly. Regular fire drills take place and staff have received appropriate training. Clear risk assessments for all aspects of school life are reviewed regularly. A health and safety committee meets regularly and any necessary action is taken. Comprehensive provision is made in the medical room and in the sick rooms in the boarding houses for pupils who are sick or injured. School visits are planned carefully, with due attention to pupils' health and safety.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately for three years. Suitable systems are implemented to check on the whereabouts of pupils. Thorough checks are made by the office staff if a pupil is absent and the school has not been notified in advance.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The school comprehensively fulfils its boarding aims in providing a safe and healthy environment allowing pupils to develop as individuals with a significant sense of community. Boarding makes a strong contribution to the distinctive atmosphere of the school. The very positive ethos of the school fosters considerable loyalty and pride in the boarders. The school had no recommendations to act on from the 2010 Ofsted Inspection and all National Minimum Standards are met.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent and a very strong sense of community exists amongst the pupils; boarders feel completely integrated into the school. This reflects a strong commitment to harmony and tolerance, with boarders regarding the staff as good role models. Relationships across the boarding community are excellent and demonstrate that both weekly and full boarders regard their boarding unit as their term-time home. It is clearly evident that boarders enjoy each other's company and acknowledge the beneficial effect that boarding has on their independence and self-reliance. They appreciate the opportunity to do prep in orderly surroundings and also relish the various activities on offer, such as cookery, swimming, table tennis, art and football. Social gatherings such as a Colombian dinner and the Farleigh X-Factor are valued occasions and promote unity and enhance the residential experience. Flexi-boarding is encouraged and many pupils convert to boarding at the end of Year 7 to gain the full benefit of life at the school in preparation for the next stage in their education.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The promotion of boarders' health and arrangements for medical care is a priority. Pupils feel that they are well looked after and readily confirm that there is access to a range of appropriate adults



to discuss personal issues; these include Gap Year students, academic staff, house parents, an independent listener who also attends Mass on Sundays with the boarders and the two school doctors. Whilst a few pupils expressed concerns about the food, boarders report that the quality of food on offer is very good and nutritious and their suggestions are respected by the catering department. The senior boarding houses have facilities for the preparation of toast and drinks in addition to the main school kitchen and the junior boarders meet for tea and cake every afternoon in their common room. The school doctors and the matrons, both qualified nurses, provide an excellent service for boarders who are injured or unwell. A confidential counselling service is provided for those in need. Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute to the life of the school and benefit enormously from the excellent facilities and activities on offer. The school grounds are much appreciated by boarders as a learning and recreational environment, with Farleigh Fortress, the fields and the Arboretum being very much enjoyed in good weather. Investment has been made in the recent upgrading of boarding accommodation, and the ongoing programme of refurbishment is planned to ensure continuing improvement. The accommodation is secure. Information for parents is disseminated by regular emails and newsletters enabling them to feel involved in the lives of their children whilst at school. Pupils report that contact with parents is readily available through telephones, email and the internet. Some also correspond by post.

- 4.23 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent, with procedures and practices ensuring that the safety of boarders is promoted well and managed effectively by boarding staff at all levels. Evacuation drills are practised every term in boarding time, and flexi-boarders are instructed in this when they first come into boarding. Effective anti-bullying and behavioural policies and procedures are in place and boarders are acutely aware of the inappropriateness of bullying behaviour. All boarding house staff and adults associated with boarding are up to date with safeguarding training. They know the procedure to follow should an incident occur or a disclosure be made. The whereabouts of boarders is monitored and registers are taken every evening in the boarding houses. The missing person policy is known by all staff. Clear sanctions for any misbehaviour are well understood by all, although serious incidents are rare. Good behaviour and achievement are recognised and rewarded, for example with the presentation of awards in school assemblies for those who accumulate a certain number of merits. Assistant staff, Gap Year students and a number of non-resident staff are integral to the organisation of the houses and contribute effectively to the personal development of boarders. Pupils appreciate their contribution and feel that boarding staff are approachable and willing to provide help or offer guidance as necessary. Boarders praise the homeliness of boarding and the vast majority of parents and boarders responded favourably about boarding in the pre-inspection questionnaire.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents and boarders were appreciative of the provision. Boarding houses are well led by highly professional and dedicated house staff teams, including matrons, who are well regarded by the boarding pupils. All boarding staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the strong and very positive relationships between boarders and staff is a real strength of the boarding community. House parents meet regularly with the head of boarding and learning support to discuss the needs of individual boarders as well as to plan activities. Boarding documentation and policies have been progressively reviewed and self-evaluation has been introduced as a tool to support the long-term development of boarding in the school.

Training for boarding staff is provided in-house but staff are encouraged to attend external courses, such as the annual Boarding School Association Matrons' Conference. All boarding staff are familiar with school policies and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding. Boarders are routinely encouraged to contribute their views on their quality of life and they feel that they have a voice at both house and school level through prefects and the school council. The school ethos and the core principles of the Catholic faith play a central part in boarding and all boarders, whatever their background, are encouraged to take part in Sunday Mass and other celebrations of faith, and the staff lead positively by example.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance ensures that the school is successful in achieving its core aims and that it maintains its Catholic ethos. Governors have a wide range of useful skills that are used effectively in their oversight of the school's activities. An effective committee structure is in place. Individual governors pay careful attention to the EYFS and boarding. Strategic planning and prudent financial management are evident in the development of the school site since the last inspection and in the high quality of staff and resources provided. A particular strength in the governance is the regular commissioning of research to provide highly useful data on which to make their decisions. A recent review of the views of parents new to the school has proved to be of considerable use.
- 5.3 Experienced leadership enables governors to have an excellent understanding of the education and standards the school seeks to provide and the ethos that is to be maintained. Governors support the school extremely well through their knowledge of the school and the challenge they provide for its leadership and management. They regularly visit the school and record their views using a carefully prepared document. Governors are well informed by the reports from the head and presentations from staff on their specialist areas of responsibilities. Governors undertake training on significant aspects of their responsibilities, especially in child protection.
- 5.4 Governors take their responsibilities for child protection, welfare and health and safety seriously to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Policies and their implementation are regularly reviewed. The safeguarding procedures are reviewed annually by the governors and the outcomes are recorded in the minutes. In line with its aims, pupils' welfare is central to the ethos of the school and its governance.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The aims of the school are central to the work of the leadership team. This enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well and develop a love of learning. Leadership at all levels, including boarding and the EYFS, is highly effective in modelling the ethos of the school. The leadership places spirituality at the centre of school life, which contributes to the strong academic and personal development of all pupils. An atmosphere of reflection, respect and courtesy is palpable among pupils and staff.
- 5.7 Leadership and management in the EYFS are good. In the short time that the head of the pre-prep has been in post, important improvements have been put in place. Policies have been updated, schemes of work are being reviewed, assessment has been amended and further training and development targets have been identified. The new short-term school development plan identifies accurately where improvements are still needed in the EYFS and includes developing the outside learning environment.

- 5.8 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Boarding houses are well led by highly professional and dedicated house staff teams. Boarders appreciate the provision made for them. Teamwork is excellent.
- 5.9 The safeguarding of pupils throughout the school, including in the EYFS and boarding is rigorously undertaken. The comprehensive staff development programme includes training in child protection, safer recruitment and welfare, together with health and safety. Staff induction is carefully organised and monitored so that all staff new to the school are fully aware of safeguarding matters and those of health and safety.
- 5.10 Leadership at all levels is highly effective in providing clear educational direction. The delegation of leadership and responsibility is developing successfully and provides rigorous oversight. Senior staff in the pre-prep and prep departments meet together regularly, an improvement since the last inspection. This facilitates smooth transition for pupils and helps develop and implement the school's effective policies. Leadership is highly skilled in preparing children for the next stage of their education.
- 5.11 Extensive improvements have been made to the roles of middle management since the last inspection. The most effective teaching is more widely adopted. Heads of department review their subjects comprehensively and undertake lesson observations and scrutinies of pupils' completed work. School policies are more consistently and effectively applied. Departments have developed useful strategies to help pupils improve their work through marking and target setting. The usefulness of these is hindered by a lack of consistency between departments. The work of heads of department makes a significant contribution to improvement in teaching and learning.
- 5.12 The highly reflective ethos ensures extensive self-evaluation and constant review, including in the EYFS. In addition, senior staff are building a long-term strategy to ensure that the school is ready for future challenges and educational developments. This enables the school to recognise and retain its strengths while forming a clear direction for the future. Staff are consulted and encouraged to contribute ideas to inform the strategy.
- 5.13 Careful attention is paid to teachers' contributions and workloads. This ensures that staff use their skills, energy, enthusiasm and interests to enhance the broad experience of pupils. Staff professional development is a high priority for management. The school actively recruits staff who contribute strongly to its ethos, values, breadth and quality of provision. A thorough overhaul of the appraisal system provides useful feedback, enabling staff and school training needs to be closely linked.
- 5.14 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were highly supportive of the education provided by the school. They were particularly appreciative of the progress their children are making, the high standard of behaviour and the attitudes and values of the school. Parents whose children are in the EYFS were highly appreciative of the education and pastoral care provided. In boarding, parents were very supportive of the provision their children receive.
- 5.15 A range of helpful information is available for parents. A detailed handbook is provided. Parents whose children board receive a boarding handbook. In addition other helpful information is provided, such as a guide to learning support. A parents'

consultation evening is provided each year, together with two written subject reports, giving clear information on the progress and achievements of pupils. Reports on pupils' effort and achievement are sent twice a term. Parents of children who are in the EYFS, or who board, are kept well informed of their child's progress. They appreciate the good communication between school and home.

- 5.16 The school publishes a high-quality termly newsletter together with a weekly electronic newsletter. The school has recently enhanced its system for informing parents electronically of sports fixtures details, arrangements and cancellations. The school works hard at maintaining effective communication with parents and a recently commissioned research study on new parents' views and perceptions of the school is an example of this commitment.
- 5.17 Parents, including those whose children are in the EYFS or who board, have many and varied opportunities to be involved with the school. Staff and parents worked together to produce the recent Jubilee Jamboree, which was a great success. Events such as 'grand-parents' day' and Farleigh Fireworks are highlights of the year. Mass on Sundays is well supported by parents and families. A Catholic enquiry group offers parents an opportunity to learn about and to consider aspects of the Catholic faith. Parent volunteers act as class representatives and they give loyal support to a number of social events during the school year.
- 5.18 The complaints policy is suitable and readily available to parents. The school handles the small number of concerns of parents promptly and with sensitivity. The highly efficient and caring school office staff answer parents' queries with consideration and due attention.

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