



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

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King Edward VI School

Full Name of School	King Edward VI School
DfE Number	852/6006
Registered Charity Number	3062972
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Head Master	Mr Anthony Thould
Chair of Governors	Mr Brian Gay
Age Range	10 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	974
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (584 boys; 390 girls)
Numbers by Age	11-18: 974
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 974
Inspection dates	13th to 16th November 2012

PREFACE

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

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, 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 Jones	Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Boulton	Team Inspector (Director of Academic Administration, HMC school)
Mrs Mary Ireland	Team Inspector (Headteacher, HMC school)
Mr Rick James	Team Inspector (Vice-Principal, HMC school)
Mr Anton Kok	Team inspector (Director of studies, HMC school)
Lady Lisa Laws	Team Inspector (Headteacher, GSA school)
Mrs Ann Prior	Team Inspector (Deputy Headteacher, ISA school)
Mr John Parsonage	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Roderick Spencer	Team Inspector (Senior Master, HMC school)
Mr John Tolputt	Team Inspector (Former Headteacher, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 King Edward VI School is a selective independent day school founded in 1553. Since 1938 it has been on its present site near the centre of Southampton. The school has playing fields on site as well as extensive grounds with playing fields and sports facilities some distance from the school, to which pupils travel by coach or minibus.
- 1.2 Most pupils join the school at the age of eleven in approximately equal numbers from maintained primary or independent preparatory schools. There are additional points of entry at the ages of thirteen and sixteen. Pupils are selected through an interview, a report from the head of the previous school and the results of an entrance examination with GCSE grades used for sixth-form entrants. Some forty pupils leave from Year 11 each year and approximately twenty enter the sixth form from a mixture of maintained and independent schools.
- 1.3 The total number of pupils is currently 974 of whom 737 are in Years 7 to 11 and 237 in the sixth form. Altogether there are 584 boys and 390 girls in the school. The pupils come from as far away as Salisbury, Fareham and the New Forest. Many travel by the school's own bus service. They are mostly from professional and business families. The range of backgrounds is extended through the school's bursary scheme. Pupils are predominantly of white British origin, with a small proportion of other cultural backgrounds, mainly from local Asian and Chinese communities.
- 1.4 The school aims to maintain and extend academic excellence, to foster in every pupil a sense of personal worth, to help each achieve his or her potential and to offer an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. It seeks to develop and sustain close links with the community and to encourage all its pupils to become responsible members of society. The school emphasises the importance of contact with parents.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is significantly above the national average. Sixty-one pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and eighteen of these receive specialist learning support from the school. A further seventeen pupils receive specialist learning support in literacy but have not been formally assessed as having specific learning difficulties. Thirty-six pupils have a first language other than English but only two of these require language support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Senior School

School	NC name
First Year	Year 7
Second Year	Year 8
Third Year	Year 9
Fourth Year	Year 10
Fifth Year	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 King Edward VI is a thriving and highly successful school at which pupils gain a rich and varied educational experience. The school meets its aims in full. Academic achievement is excellent at all levels for boys and girls, and this shows in the pupils' attainment in external examinations and in the standards they usually achieve in lessons. Wider achievement is excellent and is enabled by the extensive and vibrant enrichment programme provided by all departments and energetically supported by staff. Achievement in extra-curricular activities, including sport, music and drama is of a very high standard. Teaching is good overall with a significant proportion being excellent and a small proportion being no better than sound. The highest levels of pupil achievement are underpinned by excellent teaching. Where teaching is less than excellent this reduces the capacity of pupils to achieve at the highest level.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent and fully meets the school's aim of developing self-confidence and independent young people who have a strong sense of community. The school's extensive range of extra-curricular and charitable activities makes a very significant contribution to the school's aim of encouraging pupils to become responsible and reflective. The school is meticulous in its approach to safeguarding and child protection and has all the necessary arrangements in place to manage the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The pastoral work of the staff is key to pupils' excellent personal development and to meeting their needs. Relationships both between pupils and with staff are very good and pupils are very positive about their time in school.
- 2.3 Governance is excellent, being suitably focused on educational development, with safeguarding given a very high priority, and financial guidance that is outstanding. Leadership and management are good with some excellent features. A high standard of leadership from the senior team has promoted significant initiatives which have led directly to the many areas of excellence. Work on the development of the quality of teaching has also had a positive impact. Links with parents are excellent, and parents express very strong support for the school.
- 2.4 The school has met the recommendations from the previous inspection.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement:
1. Ensure that the quality of all teaching is raised to the standard of the best practice.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievement and learning in curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are very well educated, in line with the school's aim to maintain and extend academic excellence and to help each achieve his or her potential. Standards of achievement have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils demonstrate high levels of subject knowledge and understanding in most lessons. Pupils in all year groups have excellent literacy skills. Spelling is of a very high standard, pupils are able to analyse texts and develop sophisticated arguments in essays, and they are confident and adept in speaking and listening. Creativity is very well developed through lessons in English, art, music and design technology.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate highly developed skills in independent thought and reasoning. Individual research forms an integral part of many courses and is particularly demonstrated through the Extended Project Qualification in the sixth form. Numeracy skills of a very high calibre are developed, both in mathematics and in other subjects including science. Excellent application by pupils of information and communications technology (ICT) was observed in a variety of lessons although in a few areas pupils were less confident in its use. The range and level of physical activity is excellent.
- 3.4 Most pupils continue their education at highly selective universities in the UK covering a wide range of courses.
- 3.5 Pupils' achievement in sports and other extra-curricular activities is excellent. Sporting successes are extensive across a very wide range of activities and there are consistently high levels of achievement in music and drama. These represent both individual and collective achievements at an outstanding level.
- 3.6 The following analysis relates to 2009 to 2011, the most recent three years for which comparative data is available. GCSE performance was well above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. IGCSE results in mathematics and geography have been higher than worldwide norms (and for mathematics where UK benchmarks exist, higher than UK norms). A-level results have been well above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2010 girls' results were far above the national average for girls in maintained schools; similarly in 2011 boys' results were far above the national average for boys in maintained schools. The level of attainment at GCSE, and the nationally standardised progress data that is available, indicates that pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability, and they generally make very good progress in most of their lessons and written work. In some of their lessons they make good but not excellent progress, reflecting some variability in the extent to which teaching builds upon the pupils' abilities.
- 3.7 Achievements by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very good. Pupils enjoy much success in mixed ability groups across the curriculum. Gifted and talented pupils also achieve very well, contribute well to class discussions and argue cogently, making excellent progress.

3.8 In almost all classes, pupils have positive attitudes to their work. They are well-motivated learners able to study independently but also able to collaborate to good effect. Pupils are usually well-behaved in class and take an active part in discussion, asking and answering questions. Pupils participate very enthusiastically showing genuine enjoyment and perseverance. The most able relish additional opportunities to extend their learning although this is not offered in all lessons. Pupils are able to reflect on their achievements and comment thoughtfully upon one another's work. These opportunities fulfil the school's aim of fostering a sense of personal worth. In the questionnaires pupils expressed a very positive view of their academic progress, the range of activities open to them and the level of staff support they received.

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 is broad, balanced and flexible, with the school taking great care to meet the pupils' subject preferences wherever possible. The curriculum provides effectively for all the areas of learning and contributes significantly to the pupils' achievements. It is successfully combined with the extra-curricular programme to fulfill the school's aim to promote academic rigour, intellectual challenge and service to others.

3.11 Throughout the school, pupils are able to develop an extensive range of skills. All pupils study biology, physics and chemistry at IGCSE. The school offers a good range of modern foreign languages as well as Latin, Greek or classical civilisation. There is excellent provision for the fostering of the pupils' aesthetic and creative development through music, art and drama. Pupils' choices of option subjects are carefully guided at each key stage. The school has successfully introduced the IGCSE for all core and a number of optional subjects. In the sixth form, pupils are able to choose from a wide range of subjects at both AS and A levels. Sixth formers can take the Extended Project Qualification, which enables them to explore in depth an area of academic interest to them. Members of the sixth form also benefit from Open Forum, a programme of stimulating lectures which encourage them to think more deeply about themselves and the world around them.

3.12 The curriculum provides excellent support and intellectual stimulus for pupils of all abilities. Those with SEND are identified at an early stage and receive extra support within the classroom. Specialist help is also available. Staff have access to regularly updated information and guidance. For more able pupils, the school provides opportunities for extension work within the classroom, and outside it through mathematics competitions and creative writing in English. Setting in some subjects also supports their academic needs.

3.13 Pupils' personal development is enhanced by a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Pupils' learning is effectively supported by the library, which is well stocked with printed material and electronic resources.

3.14 The quality of the careers advice provided by the school's guidance department is now excellent, and meets the recommendation to improve careers guidance made at the previous inspection. Valuable opportunities for work experience are available.

3.15 Many pupils take advantage of the extensive range of educational visits, including overseas, which offer a significant learning experience.

3.16 The school's extra-curricular programme is outstanding. The school offers all its pupils an exceptionally wide and diverse selection of clubs and activities. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is a particular strength of the programme. Learned societies enhance pupils' intellectual development by enabling them to consider and debate historical, scientific, ethical and religious issues. Drama and music are outstanding, and many pupils benefit from the wide range of sports offered within the programme. Pupils also take advantage of the school's close links with the local community, which include joint activities with local state schools. The school raises considerable sums each year through its charitable giving. Many of the clubs and activities are linked to the curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.17 The quality of teaching is good overall.

3.18 Teaching generally meets the aim of the school to extend academic excellence. The previous inspection recommended that the development plan should focus on priorities for teaching and learning to ensure that all departments work towards the achievement of these priorities. The school has taken steps to focus on these priorities and to introduce new ways of making teaching more effective and to achieve the highest standards in all lessons, but as yet the programme does not make a full impact across all areas of the school.

3.19 The great majority of teaching seen was good and a significant minority was excellent, whilst a lesser proportion was sound and a very small proportion unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching is seen where lessons are very well planned to meet the full range of learning needs, have a brisk pace and are exciting and challenging for the pupils who are, in turn, keen to learn to the best of their ability in all areas of the curriculum. For example, a Year 7 music lesson on samba produced an exciting build up with all the pupils actively engaged, while in Year 13 science, sixth formers argued cogently in a debate about the evidence for global warming, showing independent thought and developing their understanding of a contentious topic. In the excellent lessons, pupils were made fully aware of their progress by means of positive feedback and responded very well to this. Less effective teaching occurs when the management of pupils' learning is weaker, too much reliance is placed on note-taking from the board, underperformance in class is not always identified and pupils' 'off task' chatter is not sufficiently challenged. A small minority of teaching does not do enough to ensure that pupils concentrate fully.

3.20 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, which many impart enthusiastically. Teaching promotes lively discussion in the classroom, as seen in a Year 10 drama lesson, where pupils commented with enthusiasm and insight on a recent theatre visit. Time is used well, as is a variety of topics and resources. Pupils' exercise books are well kept, tidy and the standard of marking is excellent in some departments although less good in others. Assessment data is available centrally and is communicated to teachers to track pupils' progress.

3.21 Most teaching enables the pupils to make consistently good progress and assessment further promotes high standards. However, some lessons do not do enough to provide intellectual challenge for the most able pupils. Teachers work to engender enjoyment of learning and have a good rapport with the pupils. There is an expectation of a high standard of written work, frequently met. Teachers are well aware of the number of gifted and talented pupils within the school and there is

evidence of work set to meet the needs of the most able, but it is not routinely embedded in all lessons. Pupils with particular learning needs are well catered for with work tailored to their individual needs.

- 3.22 The school has invested heavily in technology. All classrooms have well-used interactive whiteboards and ICT is consistently and expertly used in many subject areas.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development meets the aims of the school to foster a sense of personal worth and is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. As pupils move up the school they develop into confident and articulate young people with high self-esteem and a willingness to express their views. They have excellent communication and inter-personal skills and can socialise with ease with people from a wide range of backgrounds. They are reflective and self-critical, recognising their own strengths and weaknesses. They have a keen sense of fair play and demonstrate care and thought for others, with many senior pupils helping and supporting younger groups.
- 4.3 Pupils show a generosity of spirit and appreciate the circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves. The strong ethos of community service is evident with high levels of participation in volunteering and charitable fundraising. Sixth formers work with disadvantaged children in South Africa and Romania, whilst others organise a residential course locally for young carers. A variety of partnerships with local primary schools operate for pupils in Years 10 and 11 such as a reading scheme. Pupils have a keen interest in promoting sustainability and run an active Green Team, which gained the Green Flag Award, and also support the Green Power Club which designs and makes fuel efficient cars. They have developed an easy approach to pupils of different nationalities and show a sound understanding of cultures other than their own. Pupils regularly participate in meetings which highlight global human rights issues.
- 4.4 Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities for leadership, from prepositors and prefects to house and music captains, and relish their responsibilities. In many cases they have taken strong initiatives in organising activities and events, for example when a sixth form girl recently set up and organised a chamber choir which performed locally and at a major London venue.
- 4.5 The pupils' well-developed aesthetic and spiritual awareness is demonstrated through high quality music and drama performances and their thought-provoking artwork which is displayed around the school. They also participate in a variety of activities such as Christian Union, Muslim prayer, Thought for the Day and assemblies. Pupils speak of the feelings of awe they experienced on residential trips to locations such as Alaska, Thailand and Mexico.
- 4.6 Relationships between pupils are generally friendly and relaxed, including between those of different nationalities and ethnicity. Boys and girls appear happy and comfortable. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and supportive. Pupils find PSHE lessons, which include guidance on internet safety, relevant and interesting and enjoy the many outside speakers. They develop their own set of values, while respecting and appreciating those of others, and are able to explain and defend their views during classroom discussions, for example during a psychology lesson on the criminal justice system and one in economics on the ethics of the banking system.

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

- 4.7 The school's arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The support for pupils is excellent and pastoral structures include a high level of communication between all those concerned. The school's computerised record system provides ready access to pupil profiles for the pastoral team and is used extensively to co-ordinate support. Teachers and form tutors know their pupils extremely well. Inspectors noted positive relationships between staff and pupils, and this was confirmed by pupil questionnaire responses and pupil interviews. Pupils are very clear that they always have a member of staff they can turn to if they are worried or concerned. The food provided by the school is popular, and healthy food options are always available and clearly labelled for allergy sufferers. The timetable provision for exercise is good and the extensive extra-curricular programme offers many opportunities for physical activity.
- 4.9 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour. The behaviour code, and the system of rewards through the merit system are reinforced by an effective PSHE programme. A small minority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they felt teachers were not always fair in the way they allocated rewards and sanctions, though inspectors found no evidence to support that view. Sixth form lower school prefects work with tutor groups and provide valuable role models. Pupils report that bullying or harassment is minimal and is dealt with quickly and constructively by the school. Staff maintain accurate records of any incidents allowing overall patterns of behaviour to be identified. The school has a suitable plan for meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities and those with statements of special educational needs.
- 4.10 The school takes very seriously its duty to seek and act on the views of its pupils. A high number of improvements to the school and school activities have been put in place as a direct response to pupil opinions. Initiatives include the well-organised school council, the pupils' Green Team, focused on practical energy-saving and 'eco-friendly' initiatives in school, consultations on school uniform and the design of lockers and regular surveys of pupils' views of the school. A proportion of those pupils who completed the inspection questionnaire felt that the school did not listen to or respond to their views, but inspectors did not find evidence for this view.

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

- 4.11 The school's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.12 These arrangements have regard to official guidance, with a suitable strategy for safe recruitment and appropriate arrangements and training of staff for child protection. All the required policies relating to welfare, health and safety are in place, implemented and regularly reviewed. All measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards with meticulous arrangements for practical safety throughout the school and appropriate risk assessments undertaken for activities in school and during trips and visits. A well-equipped medical centre staffed by qualified nurses provides for pupils who are ill or injured, and suitable provision is in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Admission and attendance registers 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 excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body provides excellent and constructive oversight for educational standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, buildings and resources, and is fully committed to the aims and ethos of the school. The governors are highly effective in discharging their safeguarding responsibilities, putting the welfare, health and safety of the pupils at the heart of all they do and carrying out an annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements. A comprehensive development plan, rewritten every three years, informs long term planning. Prudent financial control has ensured that the school has the resources to provide first class facilities whilst remaining debt-free.
- 5.3 Governors bring significant financial experience and a valuable range of expertise to the board, which is optimised by the sub-committee structure. This allows governors to have the time to scrutinise the policies of the school to ensure both compliance and improvement. The governors have a very good insight into the workings of the school and attend a wide range of meetings and events, including visiting lessons and meeting pupils and are seen as an important part of the school community. They are informed by regular and comprehensive reports about the school's activities and staff observers attend all governors meetings. Governors, particularly the chairman and vice-chair, work very closely with the head and the bursar, providing a strong source of advice and support, whilst having a clear appreciation of the line between the strategic and operational. They have effective mechanisms for evaluating the work of the head and the bursar, and one governor oversees the school's committee which ensures regulatory compliance. The work of the governing body is reviewed on a three-year cycle by a professional association specialising in governance and feedback is provided to reflect on and improve practice. New governors are provided with comprehensive induction arrangements and well-chosen training to allow them to carry out their duties with diligence and care.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.5 Good leadership and management ensure that the school's aims are met, including preparing pupils for a rapidly changing world, pursuing high academic achievement, and the provision of very good opportunities to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, of excellent provision and maintenance of facilities and of an excellent standard of pastoral care. This high standard of leadership provides excellent personal development for the pupils. The professional approach of senior leadership is balanced by care for individual members of staff, and those involved in management listen as well as lead.
- 5.6 A continuous review process of every aspect of the school's work using self-evaluation and external review helps the school to identify management needs. Using this and other information, including the recommendations of the last

inspection, the senior management team have set priorities and are working towards meeting them to excellent effect in almost all areas. Arrangements for the management and organisation of bursarial duties, health and safety, and premises and accommodation are excellent.

- 5.7 The implementation of plans to improve the quality of teaching and learning is well established. A number of innovations have already been put in place although the school is aware that there is more to be done. Senior managers have taken steps to support faculty and department managers in this area but there is additional support work to be done to bring all teaching in the school up to the standard of the best.
- 5.8 Chains of command are clear, managers are accountable and there is strong element of structure and transparency to management. The leadership of the school is successful in applying safe recruitment policies, and in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high quality staff. The school ensures that staff are suitably trained for their roles in safeguarding and welfare, health and safety to meet the needs of pupils.
- 5.9 The recent introduction of an annual professional development review at departmental level helps to strengthen the role of middle management and encourages mutual lesson observation and the monitoring of pupils' learning in each subject. The full effect of this is yet to be felt, but planning for it has been good and it provides a useful addition to the longer established three yearly reviews. The latter is a more comprehensive procedure involving the whole work of a teacher, including work outside the classroom, and ending with a meeting with the head. This is highly effective in enabling the head to remain informed about the work of the whole school as well as the performance, insights and aspirations of individual teachers.
- 5.10 Professional reviews also feed into thorough and detailed development planning. Plans are made widely available so that the educational direction of the school is clear to everyone, including parents and pupils.
- 5.11 Regular improvement of facilities has made very good use of the space available on site so that provision for sport, for example, is excellent. Management of non-teaching staff is highly effective, supporting the work of the school in all areas and dealing efficiently with necessary maintenance. The cleanliness and tidiness of the site makes it a very pleasant place in which to work and learn. The grounds are well maintained, both at school and in the superb Wellington sports facility.
- 5.12 The school's relationship with parents is harmonious and positive. Responses to the questionnaire distributed as part of the inspection process show that parents feel their children receive a good education and inspectors agree. A small minority of parents did not feel the school encouraged them to be involved but inspectors found that there was a number of opportunities available and that many parents were involved in the life of the school. In turn, all the school's representatives who were asked on this point, stated unequivocally they found parents very supportive. The excellence of this relationship helps to foster links between the school and the community.
- 5.13 The school website contains the required information for parents, is impressively maintained in order to be up to date, and is a particularly valuable method of contact. Regular newsletters and information booklets provide another method of communicating with parents, and keeping them informed of developments in the life of the school.

- 5.14 A small number of parents who answered the questionnaire said that they were not satisfied with the information they were given about their child's progress, but this is not borne out by the evidence seen by inspectors. Since the last inspection, efforts have been made to sharpen the focus of reporting. The framework is based on clearly stated style and content instructions, and reports by teachers are made available through the school's internet-based information system. Reports contain subject specific suggestions for each pupil indicating areas for improvement. Reporting on pupil progress occurs twice yearly, and a meeting for parents with teachers provides the third opportunity in the year.
- 5.15 The parents' association contributes directly to school activities, in particular the extra-curricular and charitable work done in the school. It also organises a programme of social events for parents, supports sports events through its hospitality team, and aims to engage with all areas of the school community. The school has provided a number of opportunities for parents to be involved in discussions and offers training in handling adolescent development and parenting issues.
- 5.16 A parental complaints policy is in place, is available on the school website, meets requirements and is followed when necessary.

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