



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
PORT REGIS PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

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Port Regis Preparatory School

Full Name of School	Port Regis Preparatory School
DfE Number	835/6010
Registered Charity Number	306218
Address	Port Regis Preparatory School Motcombe Park Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 9QA
Telephone Number	01747 857800
Fax Number	01747 857810
Email Address	office@portregis.com
Headmaster	Mr Benedict Dunhill
Chair of Governors	Mrs Lucy Nelson
Age Range	3 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	360
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (222 boys;138 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 19 5-11: 148 11-13: 193
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 156
Number of Boarders	Total: 204 Full: 139 Weekly: 65
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Ailsa Boardman-Hirst
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	17 June 2014 to 20 June 2014

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 November 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, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

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

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', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Bridget Windley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Timothy Cannell	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Elizabeth King	Team Inspector (Former Head of Pre-Prep, IAPS school)
Mrs Frances Mwale	Team Inspector (Academic Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mr Alex Osiatynski	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Jason Hyatt	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Deborah Newman	Team Inspector for Boarding (Principal, Society of Heads school)
Mrs Val Holloway	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Port Regis Preparatory School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of three to thirteen. Founded in London in 1881, it moved to Broadstairs in 1921 and then to its present site of over 150 acres just outside Shaftsbury in Dorset in 1947. The school's buildings are a mixture of old and new, from a nineteenth century Tudor mansion to the modern architecture of a music school and an academic centre, which overlook a central lake. Facilities also include a technology centre and a fully equipped theatre. Boarders are accommodated in five boarding houses, and the pre-preparatory classes (Reception to Year 2) and Nursery are housed in their own secure area. Port Regis operates as a charitable trust, governed by a board of governors known as the Council of Management. Since the previous inspection, new appointments have included the current headmaster, two deputy heads, the chair of governors and the school's first chaplain.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, there were 360 pupils on roll, of whom 138 were girls and 222 boys. Nineteen children were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for those under the age of five, with eight attending part-time. There were 45 pupils in Years 1 and 2, 144 in Years 3 to 6 and 152 in Years 7 and 8. Two hundred and four pupils board, with the proportion of boarders increasing as the pupils become older. The EYFS and Years 1 and 2 are managed by the head of the pre-preparatory department, with the head of the preparatory school (Years 3 to 8) having overall authority. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. The school has identified 44 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and provides specialist support to them all; no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Thirty-two pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), some of whom join the school for a short period from Spain and others of whom attend for longer periods from countries such as China and Russia. As necessary, these pupils are provided with appropriate specialist support.
- 1.3 The school is a Christian foundation, although pupils of all faiths are welcomed. The majority of pupils come from white British backgrounds, with just under a fifth having international cultural origins. Most pupils come from professional, farming or business families, with over half living within a 20-mile radius of the school. There are also approximately ten expatriate pupils, most of whose parents work in the forces, The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, international banks or law firms.
- 1.4 The school aims to provide a physical, emotional and intellectual environment, in which every child can fulfil his or her potential. Five aspirational core values are identified — hospitality, generosity, perseverance, reconciliation and respect — and it is intended that these will extend in various ways into all areas of school life.

- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school from the Nursery to Year 2 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school from Years 3 to 8 and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
F form	Year 3
E form	Year 4
D form	Year 5
C form	Year 6
B form	Year 7
A form	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 From the EYFS onwards, pupils of all abilities are highly successful in their learning and personal development, and the school provides them with a high quality of education. The pupils' excellent standards of achievement in academic work are reflected in an exemplary range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils benefit from a vibrant, rich curriculum whose breadth and content prepare them thoroughly for their senior schools. The recommendation from the previous inspection to extend opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) skills in their day-to-day work has been fully implemented. Most teaching is of excellent quality, with some stimulating practice observed during the inspection. In all year groups teachers display excellent subject knowledge. Specialist support for pupils with SEND or EAL is excellent, and through the setting system the more able pupils are offered suitably challenging tasks. Assessment is thorough and highly effective in tracking pupils' excellent progress. The overall quality and standards in the EYFS are excellent and the recommendation from the previous inspection for children to move freely between indoor and outdoor activities has been fully realised.
- 2.2 From the EYFS onwards, pupils' personal development is excellent. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is strong; they respect each other and collaborate very well. The pupils have a keen awareness of their responsibilities to others less fortunate and they fully appreciate their own and others' cultural heritage. Day-to-day practice in the safeguarding of pupils is secure, and welfare, health and safety policies and procedures are strong. The boarding provision is of high quality and outcomes for pupils are excellent. In discussions with boarders from overseas, a very small number commented that full integration into the boarding community takes time. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a minority of pupils expressed concerns with homework, rewards, sanctions, opportunities to give their opinions, the safety of belongings, snacks, food, and the balance of free time and activities. From thorough investigation through sampling meals, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of records, inspection findings did not support these views.
- 2.3 Excellent governance ensures that all pupils are well educated, and the governors are committed to the success and development of the school. They successfully foster the aims of the school to provide a physical, emotional and intellectual environment in which every child can fulfil his or her potential. Leadership and management throughout the school are excellent, and the high standards of pupils' achievement and personal development noted at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. A comprehensive development plan sets out the school's vision for the future. The recommendation from the previous inspection to improve the consistency with which reports include guidance for further progress in pupils' work has not yet been met. Links with parents are excellent and, as shown in the almost entirely positive responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents are highly satisfied with 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 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that all reports provide guidance for pupils' further progress.
 2. Strengthen procedures for integrating boarders from overseas more swiftly into the boarding community.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school successfully meets its aims to enable pupils to create an intellectual environment, in which every child can fulfil his or her potential. Pupils have an extremely wide range of knowledge, understanding and skill for their age in all subjects of the curriculum, well supported by the exemplary range of extra-curricular experiences that the school provides.
- 3.3 Throughout the EYFS, children are particularly strong in numeracy and literacy, and are able to express themselves clearly. In the Nursery some children are able to write their names and recognise numbers to ten. Children in Reception write in simple sentences using their phonic knowledge. They work confidently with numbers and they understand simple addition and subtraction, many working with numbers beyond 30. By the end of the Reception class most children have made excellent progress across all areas of learning in relation to their starting points.
- 3.4 From Year 1 onwards the pupils are notably articulate and they apply their speaking and listening skills confidently in lessons and discussions. As pupils move through the school, they read and write with increasing fluency and in a range of contexts. Their mathematical understanding is strong, as is their grasp of scientific concepts. Achievement in the humanities and in ancient and modern foreign languages is high. Pupils use ICT to good effect in a range of subjects. Music and sport are strengths of the school. Excellent levels of creativity are evident, from the outstanding artwork seen in lessons and on wall displays, to the extremely high standard of pottery and woodwork produced in lessons.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve excellent standards across a broad range of areas. Individual pupils enjoy significant success in poetry, mathematics, history and general knowledge competitions, as well as at county and regional level in athletics, golf, cricket, hockey and swimming, and at national and international level in gymnastics. Younger pupils excel in dance examinations and older pupils in gaining awards in speech and drama. The majority of pupils play at least one musical instrument, and pupils perform with great skill in choirs and instrumental ensembles through the many concerts and productions staged by the school.
- 3.6 Pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but on the evidence available from the observation of lessons, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related expectations. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make a high rate of progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve as well as their peers, evident in their reading tests and assessment scores. The progress of those identified as academically more able is high as a result of early identification and of setting by ability. Almost all pupils are successful in gaining entry to the senior school of their choice. Many gain scholarships in a range of areas, including academic performance, music, design and technology, ICT, art and sport. In the EYFS, the excellent educational programmes ensure that the setting meets the needs of all the children who attend, including those with SEND. All children reach the expected levels of development and the more able frequently exceed them.

3.7 Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to learning and they are well motivated. They show exemplary behaviour and particular care for each other. They have confidence in their abilities and in putting forward their ideas. They demonstrate good initiative to work independently and they co-operate well with others. In the EYFS, all children are well motivated and eager to learn, and they respond to school life with great enthusiasm and enjoyment.

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

3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.

3.9 The curricular and extra-curricular provision from the EYFS onwards is excellent, and it strongly supports the school's aim to provide education of the highest quality. Its richness in content enables pupils of all abilities to reach their potential and to be thoroughly prepared for entry to a wide variety of senior schools. In the EYFS, the quality of provision for children of all abilities is excellent. On a daily basis, children participate in an excellent range of play and learning opportunities. Staff provide a rich and stimulating learning environment, with a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities that take place both inside and outside. Outdoor learning, utilising the extensive grounds, plays a key part in children's development and they have many opportunities for exploration and investigation, including in their woodland learning environment. This fully meets the EYFS recommendation from the previous inspection.

3.10 The curriculum, which is suited to all ages, abilities and needs, covers effectively all National Curriculum subjects, and also offers classics or Greek, with Spanish as an alternative to French. In religious studies (RS), Years 7 and 8 follows the school's own moderated syllabus. The exciting life skills programme includes study skills instruction for Year 8, and covers themes such as safety, relationships, communication skills and handling praise or criticism.

3.11 From the EYFS, pupils are introduced to specialist teaching, which increases as they progress through the school. Setting for some subjects is introduced in Year 3, and classes for potential scholars are established in Years 7 and 8, providing these pupils with more advanced and challenging work. More able pupils throughout the school have access to a wide range of opportunities. Pupils with EAL are assessed on arrival and are taught in small groups or on a one-to-one basis by a specialist EAL teacher. Pupils with SEND are identified at an early age and benefit from a tailored individual learning support profile that indicates the work undertaken in their support lessons and includes achievable targets.

3.12 Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have dedicated ICT lessons and use various software packages. Further up the school, a booking system for the five ICT suites enables staff to incorporate computer-aided learning into lessons. Pupils study art and pottery in small groups, creating skilled and imaginative pieces for prominent display around the school. Solutions to real design problems are planned on computers and executed through fashioning objects from varied materials, including plastics, metal and wood. Music is taught in the school's music centre, which includes excellent facilities to house wind, brass and string ensembles, a school orchestra, choirs, and samba and swing bands.

3.13 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, and the school's outstanding facilities allow sports and the creative and performing arts to flourish. Additional facilities which enhance the curriculum include a nine-hole golf

course, a rifle range, extensive playing fields, squash courts and a heated swimming pool. Extra-curricular activities, which are referred to as 'hobbies', provide exciting opportunities for new experiences, developing skills and mastering talents. Fully endorsed by parents and enjoyed by pupils, these range from golf to gymnastics and 'whizz bang' science to cookery. Participation is monitored and reported to parents by pastoral tutors.

- 3.14 The curriculum is enhanced by a varied programme of trips, talks and visits that include fieldwork in Dorset and departmental trips to Europe. Other opportunities for learning off-site include participation in events at senior schools, such as technology days, which add further enrichment. Careers guidance features in the form of lectures and visits by selected speakers from a range of professions. Stimulating talks have included topics on becoming an army chaplain and on building high speed racing cars.
- 3.15 Community links have been fostered within the locality in many ways, including the building of a park in a nearby village and fund raising for its church. Contributions have been made to the air ambulance service and the pupils have collected harvest food for a local women's refuge. The local community is invited into school to see Christmas and summer productions.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Throughout the school, teaching makes a substantial contribution to the pupils' learning and progress. Teachers bring considerable commitment, vision and great willingness to support the pupils. They share with the pupils an infectious enthusiasm, founded in exemplary subject knowledge that reflects the school's ambition to cultivate a culture of excellence.
- 3.18 Almost all of the teaching is delivered at a brisk pace, and with a sharp focus, and it demonstrates flexibility and fun. Teachers' expertise enables them to provide frequent, detailed explanations and highly skilled, challenging questioning, deepening the pupils' understanding. This approach readily captures and maintains the pupils' attention, enabling purposeful and secure learning. Occasionally, activities do not match the range of capabilities of the pupils sufficiently well. In subjects such as RS, valuable opportunities are provided to foster independent enquiry and reflection, whilst challenging activities are set. In the EYFS, the skilled and experienced staff work as a close-knit team and are excellent role models.
- 3.19 The excellent rapport between teachers and pupils generates a positive atmosphere in which pupils develop self-confidence and learn highly effectively. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' attitudes and behaviour in class and around the school. They have responded fully to the recommendation of the previous inspection to extend opportunities for pupils to use ICT skills in their day-to-day work.
- 3.20 An excellent learning support department provides a comprehensive raft of assessments and monitoring procedures, including a baseline test for all new pupils. The well-resourced unit provides calm, encouraging surroundings for individual lessons and small group work. Highly qualified staff within the unit provide an excellent service for pupils with a wide range of needs, including SEND or EAL. Collaborative, detailed profiles for support are made available for all teaching staff to

achieve the best outcomes for pupils. The vast majority of teaching shows good awareness of these pupils' needs.

- 3.21 Assessment systems are extremely detailed and comprehensive, providing both formal and informal feedback. The school makes extremely good use of assessment, and the excellent new set of assessment tools is enabling it to monitor and track pupils' progress and to predict outcomes for them in great detail. This information is then used to identify significant trends in individual pupils' learning and progress. Marking of pupils' work is regular and usually thorough. It often provides supportive commentary, with the best recognising what pupils have achieved and helping them to see how to improve their work. Targets for individual development are applied in some subjects, enabling pupils to reflect upon and evaluate their work. Pupils regularly receive verbal feedback, which provides further opportunities for constructive comments. Homework is regularly set to support learning, although a small minority of pupils' responses to the questionnaire indicated concerns regarding its value. Having discussed this issue with pupils in interviews and acknowledged the school's recent audit of homework, inspectors found no evidence to support these views.
- 3.22 From the EYFS onwards, teachers use high quality and plentiful resources extremely well to support the pupils' learning. Interactive whiteboards are readily available and are used regularly as an exciting teaching aid.

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 five core values of the school, introduced by the present leadership, of hospitality, generosity, perseverance, reconciliation and respect are integrated into the daily life of the whole school. The religious studies department focuses closely on spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of education. In the EYFS, children clearly understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and they understand the five core values. They co-operate and share easily, learn to respect each other and understand their differences. The teachers prepare them well for the transition to their next class.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual development is strong, enhanced by the recent introduction of a chaplaincy. Christian worship is a part of school routine and the chapel also provides a helpful space for quietude and reflection. Pupils are confident, eloquent and self-aware. They write about and discuss sophisticated topics such as apartheid and the leaders of the American civil rights movement. In their interactions with each other and with adults, both during the day and in the boarding houses, pupils demonstrate that they are emotionally mature for their age, and they are encouraged and assisted to resolve any conflicts they may have with one another.
- 4.4 Pupils' moral development is excellent. From an early age they demonstrate a clear sense of right and wrong. Their behaviour is excellent and they have a strong concept of moral and ethical values. Pupils are praised for their good behaviour, whether through house points gained, which are generally linked to one of the core values, or through the citizen awards given in each form for sustained effort in being kind and generous and helping others. The life skills course encourages pupils to make the right choices in potentially difficult situations.
- 4.5 Excellent social awareness is evident as the pupils demonstrate their caring and responsible attitudes about the school. They enjoy a range of opportunities to take on roles of responsibility. They can serve as form, sports, dormitory or school captains, representatives on the school council and head choristers, and as head boy or girl. Pupils gain an effective understanding of local and national institutions through visits and current affairs discussions. They are very aware of those less fortunate than themselves and raise funds for a number of good causes both near and far. The summer fete, a plethora of sponsored events and participation in a range of charitable activities are co-ordinated by a committee that includes pupils. Pupils' most substantial fund raising in the current year has been for a building project in a Kenyan school. Pupils develop excellent economic and social awareness; for example an assembly highlighted avoiding wasting food in their daily lives and the food poverty of many people around the world. Younger pupils learn about caring for the environment, while in English older pupils learnt about politics when analysing Barack Obama's inaugural speech.
- 4.6 Pupils have a strong understanding of and respect for other faiths and cultures. The multi-cultural aspect of the school, reflected in the range of nationalities represented, is recognised by the school community as a strength. Pupils successfully foster harmonious relations with those from traditions different from their own. Teachers have received excellent training in order to promote their awareness of specific

cultural differences. An extensive range of educational visits at home and abroad enables the pupils to gain a further insight into cultural differences.

- 4.7 Pupils have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Staff are guided by good pastoral arrangements; the five core values are central to the support and guidance provided to pupils. Regularly updated comprehensive anti-bullying, discipline and behaviour policies are implemented effectively. Pastoral tutors are primarily responsible for the pastoral well-being of the pupils and this system is seen as highly successful by both parents and pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils are excellent; pupils say that they are confident to go to any adult in the school for help or advice. Pertinent information regarding any concerns about pupils is quickly disseminated to all staff at weekly meetings and the minutes are available to all on the school's central information system.
- 4.10 Pupils' physical fitness needs are exceptionally well met through their use of the extensive school grounds, and they understand the importance of regular exercise. They also have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating. Pupils develop good habits through a varied and nutritious lunchtime menu and they are encouraged to eat well by the supervising staff in the dining room.
- 4.11 The school's disciplinary approach emphasises the encouragement of exemplary behaviour, with a clear set of rules that are understood by pupils. In responses to the pupils' questionnaire, a small minority indicated that the issuing of rewards and sanctions is not always fair. Inspection findings did not support this view. Inspectors found that the school has devised excellent monitoring systems to observe the distribution of sanctions and rewards and successfully promotes consistency. The school's anti-bullying policy makes clear that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils say that bullying behaviour is rare and that they feel safe in school. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 Pupils are able to put forward their views through the school committee, to which a representative from each form is elected. A small minority of pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that their opinions are not always heard, though in interviews they explained that this is because they had not yet had the opportunity to serve on this committee.
- 4.13 In the EYFS all children are assigned their own key person, who ensures that their needs are met. Courtesy and kindness are given priority so that all children develop positive relationships and feel happy and safe. They are aware of healthy lifestyles and personal hygiene, for example carefully washing their hands before eating.

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 Throughout the school, the welfare of all pupils is promoted most effectively and staff deployment ensures that they are appropriately supervised at all times. Good child protection and staff recruitment arrangements have regard to official guidance and the safeguarding of pupils is given high priority. All staff, including non-teaching and ancillary staff, have undergone the required level of training, which is regularly updated. The inter-agency training for those with a designated safeguarding role is carried out by the local safeguarding children's board, with which the school has good relationships.
- 4.16 A comprehensive health and safety policy is monitored effectively. All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. The school consults an advisory body in matters of fire safety. Fire exits are kept free from obstruction and their signage is clear throughout the school. The fire safety manual provides detailed guidance and regular fire drills are held. Daily checks ensure that any hazards or faulty equipment are removed or repaired without delay. Risk assessments are comprehensive; potential risks on the school site, and on visits out of school, are carefully evaluated.
- 4.17 Procedures in case of accidents and for the administration of first aid are comprehensive. All members of staff are trained in first aid and an appropriate number have a higher level qualification. The required numbers of EYFS staff have paediatric first-aid qualifications. The school makes good arrangements for pupils who are unwell during the day. The school's arrangements take full account of pupils with SEND. Admission and attendance registers are completed accurately and stored appropriately.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.19 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders have excellent standards of personal development. They are confident, articulate and courteous, and the core values of the school are central to their behaviour. Boarders enjoy being part of the boarding community and say that there are a number of adults they can approach if they have a concern. There is an effective induction process for new boarders, who are all allocated a 'shadow' boarder. New boarders receive useful information before they arrive at the school, informing them about all aspects of boarding, along with a friendly letter from their shadow. In interviews, a very small minority of boarders from overseas explained that it had taken some time to feel fully integrated into the boarding community. Boarders are keen to express their views and they do this through the suggestion boxes in boarding houses, house meetings and the school committee. The positive behaviour of the boarders is underpinned by an effective reward system, where they can earn 'dorm' points and value cards. They are proud to contribute to the smooth running of their boarding houses, taking responsibility for laundry and changing their bed linen.
- 4.20 Year 8 boarding pupils aspire to being dormitory captains, where they can take responsibility for a group of younger boarders. In their questionnaire responses, a small minority of boarders indicated dissatisfaction with the ease of contacting home. Inspectors found that landline telephones are available in every house, mobile

telephones can be used by older boarders and parents can be contacted from day rooms during the school day. Email access is also available in boarding houses. Boarders enjoy a wealth of extra-curricular and recreational activities, which make excellent use of the school's extensive facilities and grounds. A few boarders reported in their questionnaire responses that they would like a better balance of free time and activities. In interviews, they clarified that they were referring to the weekend, with the younger boarders wanting more activities and the older ones expressing a request for more free time. From consideration of the timetables, inspectors found that the balance is appropriate. For boarders who choose to stay at school over the weekend, a varied recreational programme is planned, including cultural trips, visits to local attractions and well-planned activities on site.

- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The relationships between boarders and the staff are a strength of the school. Houseparents and other boarding staff take a genuine interest in the well-being of the boarders. Academic tutors and boarding staff communicate effectively to ensure positive outcomes for boarders, both socially and academically. The 16 Gap Year students who are involved in all areas of school life make significant contributions to the lives of the boarders and act as older sisters and brothers. Boarding accommodation is comfortable; younger boarders sleep in larger dormitories with a dormitory captain, whilst older boarders enjoy more privacy in individual spaces known as 'cubies'. Appropriate numbers of toilets, showers and bathrooms in the boarding houses are provided and are hygienically maintained. The boarders enjoy relaxing in their comfortable common rooms and the new 'attic facility' in one of the boarding houses has been well received. Boarders can seek privacy in their boarding houses and have access to safe recreational areas where they can choose to be alone if they need time to themselves.
- 4.22 Trusting relationships develop amongst the boarders although in their questionnaire responses and in interviews, some reported a casual approach to the borrowing of personal items. Boarders commented that boarding staff address these issues when they are raised. Boarders can readily access items of stationery from the day room, staffed by the Gap Year students. Mealtimes are relaxed occasions that are enjoyed by the boarders in their spacious and welcoming dining room. Many of the staff live on the school site and attend meals with the boarders, creating a strong family environment. Regular forms of worship take place, providing for the range of religious beliefs amongst boarders.
- 4.23 The catering staff know the boarders well and cater for any boarders with special dietary needs. Menus are varied and nutritious, and food is attractively presented. During interviews and in responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders indicated that they would like more snacks to be provided on weekday evenings and expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of food. Having sampled a range of meals and viewed the snacks on offer, inspectors found no evidence to support these views.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. Requirements are fully met for safeguarding, with a clear policy and efficient recruitment procedures. All staff have appropriate training in safeguarding and the procedures are stringent and well monitored. Staff are aware of the process involved for safeguarding, supported by a wallet-sized card for all staff which summarises key information. There is a robust approach to the prevention of bullying, and the subject is not identified as a concern amongst the boarders.

- 4.25 The health centre is well resourced and the fully qualified, registered school nurse is on call 24 hours a day. Boarders have access to a range of medical and other health services, including good links with a local GP who visits twice-weekly and access to a local dentist and optician. The health centre offers appropriate accommodation for the care of boarders who are unwell in separate gender sick bays. Boarders who are unwell are either looked after in their own houses or in the health centre.
- 4.26 Boarding accommodation is secure, with external key codes on all doors and window locks, and alarms on external doors are linked to the houseparents' flats. The effective system of registration enables boarding staff to know the whereabouts of the boarders at all times. The pastoral tutor system is a strength of the monitoring and care of boarders' welfare. Tutors oversee the boarders, ensuring that they are well looked after. Tutor record sheet are completed in monitoring this process, although currently the records are not centralised. Detailed risk assessments for fire safety are clear and regular fire practices are carried out within the boarding houses.
- 4.27 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. The school has met all of the National Minimum Standards for boarding. Policies for boarding are suitable and staff are aware of appropriate procedures. The head of boarding effectively oversees all aspects of boarding, leading a team of dedicated houseparents. Boarding is well organised and staffed, and boarders know who is on duty at all times. Boarding is supported by efficient ancillary staff, adding to the overall care given to the boarders. Boarding staff give their time willingly, listen to boarders' views and assist in their all-round development. Clear signs and policies ensure that the boarding process is smooth in its operation. A member of the governing body responsible for boarding visits regularly and reports each term to the board on related matters.
- 4.28 An effective appraisal system supports the professional development of boarding staff, which is complemented by a clear programme of in-service training. Weekly meetings for houseparents are led by the head of boarding, covering issues concerning the welfare of the boarders and the general running of the houses. Houseparents inform tutors of the daily needs of boarders, ensuring a seamless link between the boarding and academic aspects of the school. The views of the boarders and their parents are taken into account by the school. Responses to the parents' questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of boarding.

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, the Council of Management, provides a highly effective oversight of the school and ensures that its aims are firmly maintained. Its members have a valuable blend of experience and expertise, and provide excellent direction, support and impetus to ensure that the school delivers a high standard of education for the pupils in its care. The governors exercise prudent financial control and have ensured that the school benefits from high quality accommodation, resources and staff. They have a clear oversight of the strategic plan for the development of the school, and they are aware of agreed priorities and the progress being made towards meeting them.
- 5.3 Regular minuted meetings are held for the full council and for various sub-committees. Additionally, smaller working parties are set up as and when necessary to manage particular projects or issues. Governors visit the school at its major events and for an annual 'blue sky' day, during which they focus on specific issues and meet informally with staff. Members of the education committee regularly receive presentations from heads of department about their curricular areas, whilst the governors with responsibility for boarding and the EYFS frequently visit these sections of the school and report their findings back to the full council. Such activities ensure that the governors are conversant with the school's activities, needs and opportunities. Regular, high quality training ensures that governors are kept abreast of current educational standards and developments.
- 5.4 The Council of Management is entirely successful in discharging all its statutory responsibilities. The governors receive regular training in child protection. The review of safeguarding is undertaken annually and the policy is revised following thorough questioning and debate. Governors demonstrate strong commitment in overseeing health and safety arrangements.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are highly effective in enabling the school to achieve its overall aims. From the EYFS onwards, the safeguarding and welfare of the pupils are given high priority and the school ensures that it provides a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment. The checks required to ensure the suitability of staff are carried out thoroughly and the school's central register of appointments is appropriately maintained.
- 5.7 Excellent educational direction is set by the leadership. The new leadership posts have added a significant and effective direction further to enhance and develop the quality of the pupils' achievement and personal development. The distribution of responsibilities covers all aspects of the school's management. The middle management team carries out specific duties that allow for all areas of the school to function effectively.

- 5.8 Excellent strategies to monitor the ongoing work across the school are implemented appropriately by the leadership team. This allows them to identify both the strengths of the school and areas for further development. From this, good quality school improvement planning clearly identifies an appropriate number of objectives and a clear vision for the school over the next few years has been set out. Regular meetings of the EYFS team provide opportunities for self-evaluation. A clear development plan shows a strong commitment to share effective teaching practice, to encourage stimulating and ambitious teaching strategies and for the future development of facilities.
- 5.9 The school takes care to select staff of high quality and with strong subject knowledge. An excellent staff handbook has been produced, along with a very comprehensive staff induction checklist, to be signed when completed. This ensures that all new staff have seen the relevant policies and had the appropriate training. All staff are well trained and supported in their individual roles. In addition, the recently introduced appraisal system for staff, including the leadership, is of high quality and plays a significant role in individual staff development. The quality of teaching is monitored through regular lesson observations by heads of department and members of the leadership team. Regular opportunities are available for staff to reflect on the most effective practice with their departmental colleagues. Intra-departmental and peer observations are in place, allowing for such practice to be shared and any training needs are identified. For all staff, including those in the EYFS, frequent external and internal training opportunities promote continuous professional development. The school also hosts national conferences for directors of studies and teachers of English, providing further opportunities for training.
- 5.10 High quality policies and procedures for various areas of school life are regularly updated and promote equality. Teachers, classroom support assistants, Gap Year students and non-teaching staff are deployed effectively and make a significant contribution to pupils' welfare and learning, including those with SEND or EAL. Staffing levels are excellent and good support is given to all pupils as appropriate. A very good structure for communication amongst staff ensures that all pupils are fully supported in their learning and development.
- 5.11 The school's links with parents are excellent and an open and accessible culture ensures that they feel welcome. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents indicated that they are extremely positive about all aspects of school life. They were particularly pleased with the opportunities available to pupils through the extra-curricular programme, the exchange of information between school and home, and the overall progress that pupils make.
- 5.12 Parents have numerous opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children and frequently meet staff on an informal basis. From the time that pupils begin school, parents become fully involved and are updated as to the progress that their children are making. The school is highly successful in establishing early, highly positive relationships. Throughout the school, parents' meetings are held regularly to inform parents about their children's progress and the curriculum. In addition, within the EYFS, information is made available for parents on notice boards, and passed on at handovers and through termly curriculum updates. Every fortnight parents are invited to a weekly 'praise assembly' that involves the EYFS and Years 1 and 2, whilst the parents of older pupils may attend a celebration assembly each Saturday morning followed by a social lunch.

- 5.13 The Friends of Port Regis group comprises parents representing each year of the school from Reception to Year 8, who aim to bring the school community together and to raise funds for charitable causes. It hosts various social events for parents and for families, and over the years has raised a significant sum of money for the school's chosen charities and also for the school to buy equipment or to support specific projects. Parent forums are in place for all year groups. Parents of younger pupils have been welcomed to preparatory school events in order to strengthen links. Any minor concerns from parents are dealt with quickly and efficiently. The formal arrangements for parents' complaints are thorough and in line with the school's published procedures.
- 5.14 The written reports provided for parents on individual pupils' progress are very helpful and informative, and the best examples identify next steps for improvement, although such guidance is not provided by all staff. This was a recommendation from the previous inspection and has not yet been fully met.
- 5.15 Further means of communication with parents are offered through weekly email messages and a newsletter each half term. The annual magazine is colourful and interesting and it records significant events and successes during the year. The school's prospectus and website provide clear and detailed information for parents, as does the parents' handbook, which is issued to all families new to the school. The website provides appropriate access to the required policies and procedures for the parents of current and prospective pupils. It includes considerable detail about school events, as well as well-produced, relevant information for those who may wish to join the school. The school's use of social media provides an excellent overview of the exciting activities on offer for pupils.

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