



HATHEROP
CASTLE PREP
SCHOOL &
NURSERY
INSPECTION
REPORT



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
HATHEROP CASTLE SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Hatherop Castle School

Full Name of School	Hatherop Castle School		
DfE Number	916/6012		
EYFS Number	EY378401		
Address	Hatherop Castle School Hatherop Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 3NB England		
Telephone Number	01285 750206		
Fax Number	01285 750430		
Email Address	hmpa@hatheropcastle.co.uk		
Head	Mr Paul Easterbrook		
Proprietor	Mr Sam Antrobus		
Age Range	3 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	191		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (100 boys; 91 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 112
	3-5 (EYFS):	53	11-18: 26
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	177	
Number of Boarders	Total:	14	
	Full:	6	Weekly: 8
Head of EYFS Setting	Miss Catherine Gore Browne		
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls		
Inspection Dates	08 Mar 2016 to 11 Mar 2016		

PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI integrated inspection was in March 2010 and ISI EYFS and boarding intermediate inspections took place in October 2013.

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

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

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), 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 proprietor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding accommodation 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 Desmond Dunne	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Clare Turnbull	Team Inspector (Head, IAPS school)
Mr Mark Anderson	Team Inspector (Former Head Teacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Kia Jackson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Hatherop Castle is an independent boarding and day school for boys and girls aged 2 years 6 months to 13 years old. The school moved to its present site in the Cotswolds in 1947 as a girls' senior school. In 1990 the school merged with a local nursery school and in 1992 became a stand-alone prep school when the senior school closed. In 2014 the school joined the family-run Wishford Schools group. The proprietor is the chairman of this group and is supported by an advisory board which comprises five experienced serving and former independent school head teachers.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a stimulating, secure and safe environment with a wide-ranging curriculum that promotes learning so as to successfully prepare children for transfer to their first choice senior schools at either ages 11 or 13. Emphasis is placed on helping each child to find success whilst developing consideration, confidence, tolerance and patience. Accommodation is Elizabethan in origin with later additions and is set in 22 acres of countryside. The headmaster has been responsible for all aspects of the education provided for 25 years. Since the previous inspection the school has extended information and communication technology (ICT) provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), created a new learning support room and refurbished large parts of the building, including boarding house accommodation.
- 1.3 The school is non-selective and takes in a broad ability range. At the time of the inspection there were 191 pupils on roll of whom 100 were boys. The EYFS comprises 53 children and there are 138 pupils in Years 1 to 8, of which 14 are full time, weekly or flexi-boarders. Day pupils and many boarders come from the surrounding towns and villages at a range of approximately 25 miles. Most pupils are of white British origin. A very small proportion of pupils is from ethnic minority groups and speak English as an additional language (EAL). A small number of boarders come from further afield. The school has identified 18 pupils as having some form of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive extra help. Currently there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need or education health care plan.
- 1.4 National Curriculum 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 (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Kindergarten	Nursery
Transition	Nursery
Reception	Reception

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in achieving its aims to provide a stimulating, secure and safe environment with a wide-ranging curriculum that promotes learning so as to successfully prepare children for transfer to their senior school. Pupils' achievements from their various starting points are excellent. An effective partnership between the proprietor, school leaders, teachers and parents ensures that pupils are well educated. The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of learning and is highly effective at meeting the needs of the pupils. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities take place in the school and local community where pupils' personal qualities can flourish. Teaching across the school is excellent. The EYFS provides children with a good start to their education. Across the school, teachers know their pupils well and the atmosphere in classrooms is friendly and purposeful. Recent developments in using assessment information to track pupil progress have been successfully implemented, but not all teachers are yet making effective use of this information and although there is good practice, not all staff are providing useful feedback to pupils about how to improve their work.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development and the school's pastoral care are both excellent. In the EYFS children are happy and confident and are willing to share and work co-operatively. There are many examples where the pupils' strong social awareness of each other's individual differences and a celebration of pupils' personal achievement takes place. The well-being of all pupils across the whole school is promoted extremely well by staff and systems to check health and safety across the school are rigorous and efficiently documented. The quality of boarding is excellent in terms of both accommodation and the provision of care including welfare, health and safety. Boarding is effectively led and well organised. Parents and pupils expressed great satisfaction, in both questionnaires and through comments, about the boarding element of life at the school.
- 2.3 Excellent governance has significantly influenced strategic development of the school. The proprietor fulfils all legal responsibilities extremely well across all sections of the school and ensures that pupils are effectively safeguarded. He is guided by an advisory board that plays an active part in the school's development. The school leadership, at all levels, has benefited from working in partnership across a group of three schools linked through proprietorial organisation. School leadership has responded very effectively to the recommendations from previous inspections. Staff promote effective links with parents, who are very positive about how well the school looks after its pupils. Parents are satisfied with all aspects of the education and care their children receive, and are very supportive of the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure teachers share good practice on how pupils respond to marking and feedback about how to improve their work.
 2. Ensure that the newly implemented system of collecting assessment information is used consistently by all teachers to challenge pupils of all abilities.

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 Pupils of all ages demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum in response to excellent teaching and a broad curriculum.
- 3.3 In EYFS children thoroughly enjoy all aspects of their learning whether it is making a sandwich for a friend or a bird feeder. In Nursery, they can count out six glasses for their café and can recognise their own names and those of their friends. Reception children can do simple addition, know the names of many 2-D shapes and can write their friends' names with some beginning to write simple sentences. Those very few children whose writing and numeracy skills are still emerging are quickly identified and helped to make excellent progress. Children reach at least the expected levels of development, with most of them exceeding these levels. They have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the world, such as the name of the river Thames in London.
- 3.4 In Years 1 and 2, literacy and numeracy skills are excellent. Pupils listen well and express themselves fluently in oral and written communication. They are courteous listeners, rarely interrupting each other in group work. Pupils are able to discuss factual information about topics such as the celebration of the Queen as the longest reigning monarch. They enjoy mathematics activities, including the use of money in real-life situations to buy their mid-morning snack.
- 3.5 In Years 3 to 8, pupils confidently use literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. They identify tone, mood and atmosphere when analysing poetry in English lessons. In mathematics they develop skills in the construction of triangles using a compass and complete investigations to determine the frequency of different coloured coverings to chocolate sweets. Pupils show strong understanding in complex science topics, such as the particulate nature of matter and make good use of this information in other subjects, such as physical geography.
- 3.6 Pupils' work in art, drama and computer studies is excellent. Across a number of year groups in art they confidently produced three dimensional models, when working with a safe plaster-of-paris alternative to produce masks. They also used logical thought well, when using computer-aided design software to print three dimensional objects. The pupils' creative skills can be seen in the way they use spatial awareness to produce modern-day artwork that is on display around the school.
- 3.7 The pupils' attainment in Years 3 to 8 cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be above average in relation to national expectations for their age. Lesson observations, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews confirm this judgement. This level of attainment indicates that pupils of all ages and abilities make excellent progress from their starting points and in line with pupils of similar abilities. At all levels of the school, pupils with SEND and EAL make excellent progress as a result of the individual support that they receive from teachers. More able pupils attain at levels appropriate to their ability and make excellent progress in science, music and art.

- 3.8 Pupils' excellent progress across the year is particularly evident in the amount of work produced and in the quality of their written work. Pupils are keen to learn and their participation in lessons is excellent. Respect within the classroom is striking and pupils show a very mature approach to their learning. Older pupils transfer successfully to their first choice of senior independent or maintained school.
- 3.9 The school were winners of the junior/preparatory award for Excellence and Innovative Provision and the pupils won the ISA Excellence in the Arts award, both in 2015. The pupils also enjoy success in regional competitions, such as robotics and achieve excellent standards in other extra-curricular activities, public speaking festivals and speech and drama awards. They successfully compete, sometimes at county and national levels, in a variety of sports, including fencing. Others develop their physical skills by representing the school in team sports and athletics. Pupils develop leadership skills through woodland residential outdoor pursuits.
- 3.10 Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. All pupil questionnaire responses indicated that they like school. They are well motivated, focused and engaged in the activities provided and display a love for learning. They are quick to take the initiative in seeking additional assistance from staff in and outside class in order to support their learning when necessary. Pupils appreciate the dedication and patience of their teachers, and act with a correspondingly high degree of maturity.

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

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The EYFS curriculum is enhanced by specialist teaching in music, French, PE and games. It is enriched by imaginative, stimulating and creative themes which reflect the children's interests, such as space exploration or when outdoor woodland lessons take place.
- 3.13 Across the rest of the school the curriculum covers the requisite areas and fully supports the school's aims to offer every child a wide ranging curriculum that successfully prepares them for their first choice senior school at either 11+ or 13+. Curriculum schemes of work are suitably designed so that they do not undermine fundamental key British values, and opposing views are presented in a balanced way when covering political issues. A diverse and well-structured personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) programme covers respect for all people, and is taught in citizenship lessons and through assemblies. The school combines specialist subject teaching well with the thematically planned curriculum provided and recent additions include Spanish, cookery and horticulture.
- 3.14 In all year groups the curriculum maintains a strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics. Independent learning skills are developed well and pupils demonstrate these in a range of subjects. Pupils of all ages, use a wide range of ICT across the curriculum, demonstrating that the school, including EYFS, has met the recommendations of previous inspection reports. They are provided with a diverse range of opportunities to express themselves creatively in areas such as drama, music and art. These are fully integrated within the curriculum with frequent involvement in local and regional festivals for all year groups and annual musical drama productions. The school is in the process of building a performing arts centre which will open later in the year. All pupils and the vast majority of parents agreed strongly that an appropriate range of subjects, areas of experience and a good range of activities are provided.

- 3.15 Pupils of all abilities have an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and sports clubs, with boys and girls mixing together well during clubs. Other weekly after-school clubs include robotics, gymnastics, chapel choir, tennis, touch typing and ballet, alongside homework clubs. Pupils have many opportunities to organise their own activities and develop leadership and organisational skills as well as specific personal interests to develop individual talents, be they musical, sporting or creative. The school takes every opportunity to foster an appreciation of learning outdoors across the 22 acres of countryside land that is available to them, such as woodland learning for pupils up to Year 2, and a purpose-built outdoor adventure area.
- 3.16 The school has close ties with the village church and pupils attend weekly services led by the parish vicar. School leadership write monthly articles for the parish magazine. The school also provides a venue for the local holiday club and amateur dramatic society who perform Shakespearean plays in the school grounds. The pupils raise funds for numerous national and regional charities on a termly basis, including a local hospice. During the school year pupils benefit from numerous trips and outings which extend their learning beyond the classroom. These include an annual residential visit to Normandy and north Cornwall as well as regular theatre trips and visits to historical sites, such as Warwick castle. There are international links with schools in countries, such as Kenya.
- 3.17 The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is strong. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and effective support is put in place. The progress of all pupils, including EAL and SEND pupils, is closely and regularly monitored.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.19 Teaching in the EYFS is always at least good and frequently excellent. Teachers have high expectations and know the children extremely well, readily adapting activities to their interests and abilities. As a result the children are motivated and engaged in all aspects of their work. Excellent relationships within the setting give the children the confidence to try new things and to develop their skills for the future. Teachers and adults work exceedingly well together and are diligent in using their assessment of each child to plan carefully targeted next steps for their learning. In all areas of the setting, the teaching uses a wide range of high-quality resources imaginatively to stimulate the children's interests and creativity, thus meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection report.
- 3.20 Across Years 1 to 8, the quality of teaching is excellent with a significant proportion of the teaching being of the highest quality. Throughout the school, the teaching is a strong contributory factor to the excellent progress made by the pupils. Well planned lessons take into account the needs of the pupils. Teachers provide appropriate support and challenge, employ varied resources, manage lessons with an appropriate pace and use a range of effective teaching strategies. Small class sizes and high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour enable class tutors and subject teachers to ensure lessons are happy and purposeful. Teaching promotes tolerance and respect and is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues.
- 3.21 Teachers have strong subject knowledge and they teach with confidence using a range of methods that allow different learning styles to be accommodated. Clear

instructions and individual attention from the teachers allows the pupils to make rapid progress within planned lesson activities. Resources, both physical and electronic, are well prepared and support pupils' learning. Many classrooms are set up to foster independence because they enable pupils to confidently access resources, which in turn encourage strong learning habits. The pace of most lessons is excellent and learning is always purposeful. A few pupils, particularly boys, said in the questionnaire that homework did not help their learning. When questioned by inspectors they said that sometimes, either too many easy and repetitive tasks were set, or the work was too difficult for them to do in the agreed amount of time allocated. Inspectors found evidence to support this view in the pupils' books.

- 3.22 The school has recently introduced assessment systems to guide lesson planning, particularly in relation to prior learning. Although numbers of class teachers were seen making effective use of this available information, this was not observed to be consistent in all year groups and subjects across the school. Marking is up-to-date and personal in the style of the individual teacher. Excellent examples include clear and detailed written guidance for development. In contrast, some marking simply acknowledges that the work is done, or comments on the effort pupils have made, and does not promote progress in a targeted way. When helpful guidance is provided pupils' value the assessment and feedback that they receive.
- 3.23 Able and gifted pupils were given more complex tasks in some lessons, alongside specific projects and whole-school theme days. These provide effective one-off extension activities and independent learning approaches for pupils of different abilities and, thereby, met the recommendation for extending the more able in the previous inspection report. Teachers are very aware of those pupils with SEND and sensitive and appropriate support is given to ensure that all needs are met fully in lessons. Quiet, helpful and unobtrusive support was witnessed by effective teaching assistants in a number of lessons.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Children in EYFS are very keen to make a positive contribution and readily take on responsibility, even in Nursery. In Reception they are all keen to help with tidying and washing up. Excellent relationships within the setting give the children the confidence to try new things and to develop their skills for the future. They co-operate well in group and paired work and listen to one another in circle time. They share and help by passing on equipment to another child who may need it. The natural respect for the children, shown by the staff, helps them in turn to respect one another and to tolerate each other's differences, for example in Nursery when some of them have just woken up. There is an extremely good and thorough system to prepare children to transfer to the next class with transition children visiting the reception class once a week. Reception children welcome the younger children and help them to settle. They share their toys and equipment and even help them to use their dressing up clothes.
- 4.3 Across the school, pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. Pupils develop a respect for each other and have a strong respect for individual personalities and differences amongst their classmates. The school takes active steps to promote the personal development of the pupils, including values such as the rule of law, individual freedom and democracy. The school has a planned word of the week programme that is discussed in form sessions as well as assemblies by the school leadership and the local vicar, and these regularly reflect British values. They are compassionate with others and are reflective and confident in their own abilities and areas of development. The excellent, creative 3D work and art displays around the school support the pupils' development of aesthetic values.
- 4.4 Throughout the school the pupils' moral development is excellent. They show a well-developed sense of right and wrong and are extremely supportive of each other both in and out of the classroom. They have a clear understanding and appreciation of the support offered by their peers, the older pupils and staff. Powerful classroom displays and conversations reinforce the pupils' mature sense of right and wrong. Posters displayed around the school on anti-bullying, the values of co-operation, consideration, consistency, common sense and courtesy, as well as "recipes for friendship", influence pupils' thinking and they make reference to them when talking about good conduct. Their excellent moral awareness is reflected in their desire to help others through a number of fundraising events every year. A new and clear system of rewards and sanctions has been implemented which is universally understood by the pupils. The records are accurate and allow for careful tracking of pupils by staff on a regular basis.
- 4.5 Pupils of all ages develop an excellent awareness of their own and other cultures. Many opportunities are created for the pupils to gain knowledge about a variety of cultures and faiths. A recent visual electronic link with street children in Kenya resulted in them realising how much they had in common, as well as their differences. Pupils have a good understanding of the range of institutions and services in England, as was shown in pupil interviews and in their work to celebrate the history of Britain across the 64 years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, which were on display throughout the school. Boarders from overseas have been able to share their culture and faith with the other pupils and this allows for a deep and natural

understanding of the world to be gained. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are excellent. This accounts for the warm relationships which exist between pupils and promote mutual respect, harmony and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- 4.6 The pupils' social development is excellent. They are confident, very socially aware and emotionally mature for their age, thereby helping to develop their self-esteem. Pupils relish opportunities for responsibility, are proud of the success of their peers and they are welcoming and courteous to visitors. They appreciate the democratic process of elections and they talk of their roles with pride, for example being a 'buddy' for the younger pupils, or member of school council and have a clear understanding of their responsibility. The pupils value and look forward to the more senior responsibilities available in Year 8. Year 8 pupils enjoy the privilege and independence of their own common room which provides them with comfortable accommodation and excellent opportunities for developing independent skills such as making their own drinks at break times. Pupils are confident in expressing their opinions and the Hatherop Award encourages and inspires the children to be aware of, and to enjoy, their own journey of personal development. They receive praise and reward and therefore see the benefit of involvement in all aspects of school life. By the time they leave the school the pupils are confident and show an impressive, deep, natural and thoughtful awareness of the needs and feelings of others.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Each child, in EYFS, has a key person who helps with the assessment of their work and liaises with parents. Outstanding relationships enable staff to be excellent models and support the children in developing their own friendships and support for one another. Children feel safe and secure in the setting and learn to lead healthy lifestyles by monitoring their heart rate after exercise and through the healthy options offered at snack and lunch time. They know that vegetables and watermelon are healthy choices. They learn about personal hygiene and how a good bedtime routine helps them sleep well.
- 4.9 Pastoral care is managed by well-informed staff who show genuine concern for individuals in accordance with the school's aims. All parental questionnaires' said that their child is happy, safe and well looked after. Pupils are well known by the staff and their individual needs are well provided for. The school places a strong emphasis on ensuring that there is a positive and genuine family atmosphere and that every individual pupil feels cared for and valued.
- 4.10 Able, gifted and talented pupils receive a high level of support and are enabled to achieve their full potential. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, and those with EAL receive excellent support for their individual personal and social needs and take part in all aspects of school life. High aspirations are strongly encouraged and all pupils, whatever their needs and abilities, are successfully shielded from any discrimination and achieve extremely well.
- 4.11 Members of staff know their pupils extremely well. An exceptionally supportive and caring ethos permeates the school and is supported by effective record keeping. The 'buddy system' ensures that the younger pupils all have positive role models amongst the older pupils. Pupils' confidence is developed through the opportunity to

take on numerous positions of responsibility and an extensive reward system. The school strongly promotes an active and healthy lifestyle. School meals and snacks are very nutritious and varied which encourages the pupils to develop, and understand the importance of a healthy diet.

- 4.12 Pupils are fully aware that bullying or any form of harassment is wholly unacceptable and will not be tolerated. They receive effective and appropriate guidance with regard to 'e-safety' and cyber bullying.
- 4.13 Pupils' views and opinions are taken into account through the school council and suggestion boxes which are available in all classrooms. Pupils feel able to discuss any concerns with their teachers. They consider that Hatherop Castle is 'their' school and their thoughts and opinions are highly valued.

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 Two members of staff are trained at the appropriate level as designated safeguarding officers who ensure that the school, including EYFS, has twenty-four hour availability for both day and boarding pupils. All staff receive an induction programme on appointment and annual follow-up training includes regular updates on the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, including a check that they have read and understood requirements. Recruitment checks for new staff, supply staff and volunteers, are conducted in a timely manner and the central record of appointments is maintained accurately. EYFS is well staffed and children's welfare is promoted effectively. There is a comprehensive code of conduct appropriate to the school for all members of staff. Safeguarding arrangements are reviewed on an annual basis by the proprietor with arrangements to prevent radicalisation and extremism. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents said that the school keeps their children safe.
- 4.16 Comprehensive risk assessments and regular checks are carried out for activities undertaken by the pupils. Equipment is checked and appropriate training of all staff takes place, including the safe use of mobile phones and cameras. External visits and trips are thoroughly assessed to evaluate potential risks at appropriate intervals. Well written policies relating to welfare, health and safety are in place to meet requirements, including a policy for the safe use of the internet, and these are reviewed regularly. The whole school site is a designated no smoking area. Effective and well-monitored systems for fire safety are in place with regular fire drills.
- 4.17 Arrangements to ensure pupils are well cared for when they are ill are very good. Pupils who need regular medical attention or feel unwell during the day are looked after in a well-equipped and conveniently located surgery in the heart of the main building. The security of medicines is appropriately managed and meticulous records kept. A large number of staff are qualified in first aid, including two qualified in paediatric first aid in EYFS. Medical kits are kept in designated and easily accessible areas to ensure that care is swiftly provided for children.
- 4.18 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years. Prompt and regular attendance is promoted. Registration of pupils is carried out with care and recorded electronically in an efficient manner. Any unexpected absences are followed up quickly by administrative staff who make timely contact with parents.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The overall quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders develop confidence and flourish in a lively and safe environment where their individual welfare and well-being needs are identified and fully met. The full boarders enjoy enriched opportunities to interact with others of different backgrounds and cultures. They appreciate and respect one another, and celebrate character and skills. Relationships are close in this familial community and the boarders benefit from individual adult attention. First time boarders are welcomed and the more experienced boarders naturally assume responsibility within the house, when the opportunity arises. The aims of boarding, available on noticeboards and in information to boarders and parents, are clearly achieved and boarding house values and behaviours are familiar to all. The child-friendly handbooks and encouragement of the staff ensure that the boarders are fully inducted and settle into boarding quickly.
- 4.21 Boarders are confident, articulate and well-mannered. They are at their ease in boarding and show off their accommodation with pride. Relationships are friendly among boarders and with staff. They enjoy their boarding experience and talk about it with enthusiasm. In conversations during the inspection, boarders described how, if they were feeling homesick, staff and their friends would care for them and cheer them up. They could not recall any bullying and even unkindness is rare. Boarders also said that they could talk to any of the house staff on any personal matter or to air concerns or opinions. They look forward to 'chat night' when suggestions are discussed and evaluated and they spoke about improvements which have come about through this process.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are encouraged to be fit, healthy, considerate and kind. They feel safe and are well looked after. Their behaviour is exemplary and they thrive in the nurturing atmosphere. There is an extensive refurbishment programme in progress and, currently, areas of the accommodation vary from high quality new condition, through to more basic and needy areas. The dormitories are comfortable, and homely. The refurbished bathrooms are clean, practical and well-equipped to ensure boarders' privacy. There are attractive common rooms where boarders can relax and socialise, as well as a variety of play areas and activities including crafts, board games, and entertainment equipment. A phone booth with landline, access to mobile phones and visual communication systems ensure ease of communication with parents. Boarders benefit from the wide-ranging extra-curricular provision of afternoon clubs, evening and weekend boarding activities. The variety of trips in the weekend programme is well-conceived and particularly appreciated by the boarders. They also look forward to the lighter evenings and more frequent opportunities for playing games outside in the extensive grounds.
- 4.23 The catering provision is excellent. The well-qualified and committed team serve an impressive range of high quality meals. The menus are varied and nutritious, and take into account individual dietary needs. The kitchen and storage areas are clean and efficiently managed. The dining room is attractive, and well-kept. Ample snacks and drinking water are available outside mealtimes, and it is possible for young boarders to learn to make snacks independently in the small common room in the boarding house. Medical matters are overseen by an experienced and approachable matron. The storage and administration of medication is careful and appropriate. There are excellent communications between her and the house staff

so as to ensure proper care of any boarders who are ill. Privacy and confidentiality are respected. Record-keeping is thorough. The day accommodation includes a surgery, a toilet and a small administration office which doubles as a day rest-room. There is also a comfortable sick bay room, which could be used for isolation. Appropriate care is taken of the boarders' possessions. The laundry provision is effective. There are systems in place to manage valuables such as mobile phones. Pocket money and passports are stored under lock and key. Personal and stationery supplies can be provided as necessary while boarders are at school.

- 4.24 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent and ensure that robust procedures are in place to ensure the safety of boarders is promoted and managed effectively. All the required safeguarding checks of staff are completed at the time of appointment and meticulous records kept. The school's anti-bullying and behavioural policies are fully implemented. Excellent relationships are evident across the community and boarders feel secure and confident that any concerns are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are known by all boarding and support staff, and the proprietor. Each individual is known by staff and their whereabouts are carefully monitored while still allowing boarders to develop independence and responsibility for themselves.
- 4.25 The school's database is used effectively for the monitoring of pupils' progress academically, socially and emotionally. This, and effective communications between staff and parents, contribute to the boarders' happiness, well-being and success. Relationships with parents are strong and communications are easy and frequent. Safe internet use is ensured by appropriate electronic systems. Comprehensive health and safety, risk assessment and fire safety policies and procedures are effectively implemented. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for the boarding areas. Access to the main school building, which includes the boarding area, is secure and carefully controlled. Regular reviews and evaluation inform improvement plans.
- 4.26 The quality of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent and is shown in the quality of the relationships and personal development of the boarders. It reflects the strong relationships between the house staff and their team which includes all the senior leaders of the school. All staff involved directly with boarders have job descriptions, induction, mentoring and regular review, and there are opportunities for ongoing professional development. The senior manager is well-qualified and committed to regular reflection and evaluation of the boarding provision and its development. This self-evaluation benefits from the involvement, interest and support of the proprietor. The school has addressed the recommendations of the previous boarding inspection. In conversations during the inspection and in the pre-inspection questionnaire, responses of the boarders and their parents were overwhelmingly positive.

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 is significantly strong and has provided a new lease of life for the school. The proprietor provides very effective oversight of regulatory requirements for the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements, and welfare, health and safety across the whole school, including EYFS. Confident professional relationships ensure that the proprietor and school leadership work extremely well together in support of the schools aims. The long tradition of academic excellence is valued; as is the need to ensure that the personal development of pupils is promoted and supported throughout their lives in the school.
- 5.3 Acting as a corporate body, the proprietor and school leadership fully understand their legal responsibilities, including child protection and welfare, health and safety throughout the school. The proprietor uses a central team of experts in the fields of finance, human resources and marketing to support the future development of the school. Firm financial control ensures the school has sustained an extensive programme of refurbishment and new construction work for the benefit of the pupils. A separate advisory board of five experienced serving and former independent school head teachers is well informed by the proprietor and school leadership. They visit the school to check on provision and pupil outcomes. As a result the advisory board is able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide advice about next steps for pupils' academic and personal development. Plans for the future direction of the school are debated effectively by both the advisory board and school leadership.
- 5.4 The proprietorial governance across six schools means that regular reports from each school's leadership, presentations from leaders at all levels and shared good practice amongst staff across the partnership provides excellent support and challenge that encourages a strong stimulus for growth and improvement within Hatherop Castle School.

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 Within the EYFS safeguarding is thorough in all aspects. All staff have received recent training in child protection and prevent. The classrooms (both indoor and outdoor) are safe, welcoming and interesting providing a stimulating environment for learning. There is a very clear and ambitious vision for improvement which builds on the present excellent practice. The setting has good systems for regular self-evaluation and reflection to ensure continuing progress. The educational programmes are effectively monitored by the managers and by the senior management team. A thorough appraisal system for all members of staff involves observations, meetings, target setting and review and means that areas for development are quickly identified and addressed through continuous professional development. Systems for supervision of staff are regular and supportive and help

staff to support the children within their group and also their parents. Clear identification of training needs have enabled staff to develop their careers within the setting. The setting has made good progress since the previous inspection and has met all the recommendations in it.

- 5.7 The leadership of the whole school ensures that the school is a harmonious community where staff, parents and pupils work together well. Parents and pupils confirm this view. Leadership has been restructured since the previous inspection into a senior leadership team that makes strategic decisions and a senior management team that ensures operational procedures are implemented well across the school. School leadership ensures that all subject leaders, class teachers and non-teaching staff are held to account for their respective roles, particularly in relation to the education and well-being of the pupils.
- 5.8 Leadership at all levels strive to improve the quality of the pupils' learning through reflective self-evaluation and have put in place systems that significantly influence school improvement. Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and the strong pastoral system impacts on the excellent standards of pupils' personal development. The school has addressed the recommendations from previous inspections and pupils benefit from readily accessible resources, a wide range of ICT experiences and better provision for the more able, alongside recommended improvement to boarding accommodation.
- 5.9 School leadership is successful in securing, supporting and developing high quality staff. All new staff undergo rigorous induction, which makes sure that they are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Subject leaders provide informative subject documentation and effective support to staff across the school and are willing to explore new initiatives that may benefit the progress and attainment of pupils. The school appraisal procedures link staff performance to the positive attitudes of learners and the progress they make from their starting points and helps identify professional development needs.
- 5.10 The school keeps accurate data on pupils' progress and can show how the new recording of assessment is used by class teachers to develop new subject skills for pupils and deepen their knowledge and understanding. The recorded assessment is used by leaders to monitor and track individual pupil progress.
- 5.11 The school seeks parent's views through its own questionnaires and responds to these through updated policy and practice. For example, parents' comments from a previous in-house survey to improve the range and means of communication with them were taken seriously. They are provided with a range of information on the school website including various weekly blogs, a newsletter and a termly calendar of events. Parents confirmed this through their questionnaire responses, which show that almost all are satisfied with information about their child's progress and a large majority say information about the school's procedures and routines is readily available. The school are also exploring ways to provide a 'simple email' reminding parents of the commitments and equipment needed for their child that week.
- 5.12 Prospective parents can find out about the work and life of the school through the website and by attending open mornings. New parents are provided with a helpful and informative welcome booklet. All parents receive an annual magazine, can attend 'Year ahead' meetings and have the opportunity to join working parties that take place frequently, on specific aspects of the school including areas of the

curriculum. Transition meetings between each stage of a child's education take place at relevant times during the year.

- 5.13 Parents commented very favourably on the manner in which any concerns are quickly dealt with in accordance with published procedures. Parents praised the leadership on how well they know and understand each individual child and are prepared to give time to listen. The school resolves complaints according to its policy and examination of records since the last inspection demonstrates that care and sensitivity have been used appropriately.
- 5.14 Parents receive a half-termly grade sheet in addition to a twice yearly report which gives a very detailed description of their child's work in each subject. Some of these descriptions provide a pertinent insight into the way in which each child approaches their work and their areas of success. However, some reports for the younger pupils do not provide sufficient information about how a child might improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 5.15 There are a wide variety of excellent opportunities for parents to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children through formal and informal meetings with teachers and also when parents come to school to support events. The Parents' Association has raised valuable funds, from social events and activities that promote a family atmosphere, for non-essential items to enhance the children's experience of learning, such as lighting equipment for the new performing arts centre. Parents also help with open mornings, school trips and by giving talks about their work.

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

HATHEROP CASTLE PREP SCHOOL & NURSERY

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