



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
MOUNT KELLY FOUNDATION**

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Mount Kelly Foundation

Full Name of School	Mount Kelly Foundation
DfE Number	878/6009
Registered Charity Number	306716
Address	Mount Kelly Foundation Parkwood Road Tavistock Devon PL19 0HZ
Telephone Number	01822 813100
Fax Number	01822 813110
Email Address	hmsec@mountkelly.com
Principal	Mr Mark Semmence
Chair of Governors	Rear Admiral Christopher Snow
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	551
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (277 boys; 274 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 46 5-11: 171 11-18: 334
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 387
Number of Boarders	Total: 164 Full: 138 Weekly: 26
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Katie MacEacharn
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection Dates	17 Mar 2015 to 20 Mar 2015

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspections of the three schools before the merger were in November 2009, March 2011 and November 2012.

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.

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.

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 chair of governors and a governors' representative, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Gwen Caddock	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mrs Judith Gregory	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Headteacher, IAPS school)
Mrs Valerie Fogarty	Team Inspector (Former Head of Middle School, HMC school)
Mr Martin Morris	Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)
Mr Roger Tapping	Team Inspector (Academic Deputy, GSA school)
Mr John Tolputt	Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC school)
Mr Mark Twells	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Bailey	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Ms Elizabeth Worthington	Team Inspector for Boarding (Senior Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Kirsten Jackson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Mount Kelly Foundation is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 3 to 18, established in June 2014 following the merger of three schools, all of which had been founded in the nineteenth century. A single governing body was formed in June 2014 and the new principal took up his post in September 2014. The team appointed to lead the new school following the merger in 2014 is composed of new appointees, members of the previous senior staff and the newly formed senior leadership team in the prep school. The school is a charity, a charitable company limited by guarantee, and the governors act as trustees.
- 1.2 Mount Kelly values strong academic performance and aims to nurture, guide and inspire pupils to develop their individual skills and interests using the surroundings of the school to enrich their experiences. The school aims to develop a sense of service within a Christian tradition, to have pride in being a member of the Mount Kelly community, and enable pupils to compete at the highest level.
- 1.3 Mount Kelly occupies two sites on either side of the River Tavy outside the market town of Tavistock. It is set in 150 acres of parkland on the edge of the Dartmoor National Park. Both the prep and the senior school, known as the college, occupy historic buildings and have a range of modern facilities and access to an onsite adventure centre. The Nursery and Reception classes have purpose-built accommodation alongside Years 1 and 2 within the prep school. Pupils of all ages have access to the school's grounds which include a lake, the river Tavy, woodland, a smallholding and ready access to Dartmoor.
- 1.4 The school has 551 pupils on roll, 277 boys and 274 girls. Of these 387 are day pupils and 164 are boarders. In the prep school there are 46 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 171 in Years 1 to 6, and 334 from Years 7 to 13. Following the merger, both the prep and the senior schools have Years 7 and 8 classes. These will in future form part of the prep school, with pupils moving on to the senior school into Year 9. Boarders are accommodated in six boarding houses, one for boys and girls at the prep school, and five at the senior school, two for girls and two for boys and one mixed junior house. Day pupils all become members of a school house and take part in the daily routines alongside the boarders.
- 1.5 The ability profile of pupils in the prep school is above the national average, with a wide spread of abilities. In the senior school, the ability profile is above the national average and in some cohorts with a notable proportion of well above average. The profile for the sixth form is in line with national averages. Pupils come from a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, many from professional, business, services or farming backgrounds. At the prep school 33 pupils, and at the senior school, 19 pupils have been identified as needing support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which range from mild dyslexia to physical disability. Two pupils have an Education Health and Care plan (EHC) or statement of special educational needs. Forty-four pupils in the senior school have support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. .

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Across the school the quality of pupils' academic achievements is good and in some areas excellent. In the EYFS, from the earliest age, pupils quickly develop the key skills for learning; the youngest build strong foundations and greatly benefit from their outdoor learning. As pupils move through the school they learn a broad range of skills and subject knowledge. By the time they reach the sixth form pupils are capable, independent learners. Pupils succeed and excel in many areas of extra-curricular achievement including music, sport and drama. They greatly appreciate the many excellent extra-curricular opportunities they enjoy. Sport is an important part of the lives of pupils of all ages and, in particular, pupils excel through the specialised swimming programme. The curriculum is excellent for all ages offering an appropriate range of subjects, courses and individual opportunities all pupils. Teaching is good, now using assessment data to effectively inform planning, and well supported by very positive relationships between teachers and their pupils. As yet some inconsistencies remain in the provision of opportunities for challenging use of ICT by all pupils, in support in mainstream lessons for pupils with SEND and EAL and in the provision of stimulating challenge for all pupils.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. At all levels in the school their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth results in self-confident and courteous young people who are proud of their school, aware of their responsibilities in society and have an understanding of British values and the importance of democracy. Their development is supported by excellent pastoral care; dedicated staff offer support and encouragement and are well supported by efficient systems to ensure that information is shared and expert help is put in place when needed. Excellent standards of welfare, health and safety ensure the safety of pupils in the school through robust policies and procedures which are fully implemented. The quality of boarding is excellent and makes a significant contribution to the success and well-being of boarders at the school.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is excellent. The governing body of the new school has worked highly effectively to lead the school through the merger process and to establish a single school with high standards and aspirations for its pupils. The leadership team appointed by the board have very quickly established the priorities for development, implemented processes, and managed change with measurable success in many areas. Robust plans are under way to carry forward this raising of standards to achieve the criteria set out by the team for high quality teaching across the school in order to ensure excellent learning and achievement. The school has excellent links with parents, carers and guardians.

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 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Develop the use of ICT to support and challenge the learning of pupils of all ages across the curriculum
 2. To provide consistent support for pupils with SEND and/or EAL in mainstream lessons, ensure that the provision matches the best in the school across all subjects.
 3. Ensure that all teaching is planned to provide sufficient challenge appropriate to meet the needs of all pupils.
 4. In the EYFS, ensure that the excellent practice in some areas is consistently applied across all areas, by embedding monitoring and supervision across the setting.
 5. In the EYFS, strengthen links with parents of children by exchanging frequent written information about each child's achievements at home and school.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' academic achievement and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims to achieve strong academic performance and to ensure that pupils develop their individual skills and interests. Pupils' achievements in extra-curricular activities are excellent.
- 3.3 The EYFS provision is excellent in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Almost all children reach the expected level of development for their age with many exceeding it in many areas. Those who are at an emerging level in a few areas have been identified, and strategies to help them make good progress have been put in place. All children, including those with SEND and/or EAL are helped to make at least good progress relative to their starting points, and benefit from the caring support of both teachers and the teaching assistants. All children have made a good start in phonics; they are keen to use their knowledge and experiment with sounds. By Reception, all children have made a good start in reading with many of them reading independently. They are all keen to write about their experiences and to use writing for a variety of purposes. They are confident enough to take risks and use their own phonically logical spellings to convey their thoughts. All children in Reception are keen to count, often to nearly 100, and record numbers such as the number of paperclips picked up by a magnet. They are starting to do simple addition and, in some cases, subtraction sums up to 10. The children are highly independent, enjoy exploring their surroundings, especially in the woodland areas and role playing with adults and children. They use their imaginations when playing in the playhouse outside.
- 3.4 From Year 1, pupils across the school gain good knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum; they learn to think for themselves and to question. Pupils of all ages speak articulately, listen attentively, read widely, and as they move through the school learn to write concisely, creatively and at length about diverse subjects. Pupils work well collaboratively. They think logically, and create convincing arguments for example in a prep school debate on whether Walt Disney or Shakespeare left a more significant legacy for mankind. Pupils of all ages apply mathematical concepts appropriately and, when they have the opportunity, use ICT confidently. Pupils' achievement in creative subjects is outstanding, artwork by pupils of all ages showed strong skills and creativity. The work of sixth-form pupils in their design and technology projects shows independence, critical analysis and high levels of both originality and practical skills resulting in excellent outcomes. Across the school the achievement of pupils with SEND and EAL is strong, as they benefit from well-directed specialist support. Younger, more able pupils experience challenge in activities such as the UK Maths Challenge, debating club, and in some, but as yet not all, lessons. The most able older pupils achieve well, they experience a broadening culture of ambition, stretch and challenge.
- 3.5 Throughout the school pupils engage with enthusiasm in physical activities of many sorts. The younger pupils enjoy talking about their numerous sporting successes at all levels, in rugby, football, hockey, netball and particularly swimming. Many are successful in LAMDA speech and drama exams. Pupils have competed successfully in the Junior Mathematics Challenge with many bronze, silver, and 14 gold awards gained over the last three years. Older pupils have had many successes at all levels in the extensive sporting programme which includes some

unusual activities such as the Biathlon and trampolining as well as the specialised swimming programme with swimmers winning medals in competitions at national and international levels. Pupils have recorded successes in a wide range of other activities including chess, music and the arts, including music and singing competitions within the school and the Plymouth Speech and Drama Festival. The ESU debating competition is popular, with pupils reaching the regional finals in 2014. In recent years a significant number of sixth formers have achieved gold awards in the DofE Award scheme and have developed leadership skills in the Combined Cadet Force.

- 3.6 In the prep school, the attainment of pupils cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests, and standardised testing has only just been introduced. Pupils' attainment and progress are judged to be good from the evidence seen in work scrutiny, in lessons and in pupil interviews with inspectors. This view is supported by the achievements of Year 8 pupils. Over the past three years just over a third have gained academic awards to their senior schools.
- 3.7 The school enters pupils for GCSE, BTEC and A-level exams. In the following analysis, the former Kelly College's results are compared with national data for the period 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and have improved across the board between 2011 and 2013. Analysis of examination results obtained by pupils in 2014 when 91% of pupils achieved grade C or better, shows improvement on previous years.
- 3.8 Results at BTEC since 2007 have consistently been far above the national average as assessed by national data provided by the examination board. A level results have been above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2014, 70% of A level grades were B or better, representing an improvement on previous years. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make progress that is at least appropriate and in some years good or excellent in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND and EAL achieve in line with their peers. The majority of pupils gain university places, including universities with highly competitive entry in the UK, United States and Europe.
- 3.9 Pupils display keen interest in their work and positive attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully, are well-motivated, work well together and show support for each other; excellent behaviour enables them to focus on their learning. Younger pupils apply themselves well across a wide range of activities, and were seen at their best when working independently to consolidate skills and discover ideas for themselves. The older pupils learn to take responsibility for their learning.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The broad and balanced curriculum supports the school's aims to produce happy, confident, well-rounded and ambitious pupils and is very effective in promoting strong academic performance. The curriculum is well-planned and suited to all ages, aptitudes and abilities and includes strong specialist provision for those with SEND and EAL. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire the overwhelming majority of parents confirmed that the school offers a suitable range of subjects and activities.

- 3.12 The contribution of the EYFS provision to children's wellbeing is excellent. Staff provide an exciting, stimulating and varied programme for the children. A thorough knowledge of each individual child ensures that planning for learning, both in the classroom and outdoors, enables all children, including those with SEND and/or EAL, to gain skills which give them the capacity to learn effectively in the future.
- 3.13 In the prep school, strong foundations are established through the core curriculum with French from Reception upwards. Latin has been introduced as a popular option in Year 6. The British values of democracy and the rule of law are promoted through discussions and debates in personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious education (RE) and English. PSHE for Years 7 and 8 includes an element of careers education, introducing the range of choices available. The games programme includes the excellent Shackleton Project which builds on skills learnt in EYFS and extends outdoor learning experiences to give all pupils experience of different outdoor pursuits. The focus is on service to the school and adventure. It is extremely popular with the pupils who enjoy a range of activities which include bush craft, and kayaking. Water and mountain safety skills are a key feature.
- 3.14 In Years 7 to 11, pupils benefit from a broad foundation curriculum followed by a good range of choices at GCSE devised to meet the needs of all pupils. In the sixth form, a wide range of A-level choices is enhanced by the option of the BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport which is designed to support the education of pupils participating in the swimming programme. In Years 10 to 13, pupils are able to opt for a range of co-curricular qualifications including Higher and Extended Projects which supports their independent learning and also university applications. The school has plans to extend the range of post 16 options further with the addition of new AS and BTEC choices. The PSHE programme is well planned and wide ranging for Years 7 to 11 and continues to develop the pupils' understanding of British values and democracy, alongside careers education and relevant broader topics in preparation for adult life beyond school. In the sixth form, the emphasis is on careers or higher education advice and includes outside speakers on a wide range of topics.
- 3.15 The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent and extends and broadens the pupils' experiences. Prep pupils said there was "a fantastic range" including lots of musical choices. The options range from using the climbing wall to the debating club demonstrating their diverse interests. Boarders especially appreciated the increase in the number of choices and said they felt encouraged to participate. In the senior school there is a similar diversity of extra-curricular activities ranging from robotics to drama or Christian Union to a science discussion group. The Swim Programme caters for 87 pupils from the age of 8 upwards and pupils are extremely well supported in balancing the demands of high performance training with the requirements of the academic curriculum. Extra-curricular activities are supplemented by a full programme of sports clubs or team practices that are available at lunch time, after school or in the newly introduced Saturday School. The curriculum is further broadened for all ages by visiting speakers and participation in local and national competitions. Educational visits including regular trips to places of cultural, historical or scientific interest, such as science visits to the Hadron Collider, and geography or biology fieldwork conducted on Dartmoor, support learning very effectively. Links with the local community and further afield are promoted through service and volunteer activities organised through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme or the Combined Cadet Force enabling pupils to learn how to work with others in a wide range of circumstances.

- 3.16 A small minority of pupils raised concerns that homework tasks did not always support their learning. The inspection team found no evidence to support this view. Homework is in general carefully planned to consolidate or extend learning.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.18 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and in a significant number of lessons it is excellent, meeting the school's aims to achieve strong academic performance and maximise the ability of every child.
- 3.19 In the EYFS, all staff are fully involved in the children's activities and motivate them to do well. Careful planning and excellent use of teaching assistants ensures that each child's individual needs are met and hence all make, at least, good progress within the setting. High quality resources are used extremely well to provide children with an interesting environment to promote their learning.
- 3.20 The teaching in the prep school effectively promotes pupils' progress by delivering well-planned, relevant lessons which make good use of time within a supportive and positive classroom environment. In the younger forms teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils within the classroom. Good use is made of the wide range of resources and the excellent facilities for practical and creative subjects to consolidate and make learning exciting, and together with excellent pupil behaviour and motivation, create a strong learning environment. Pupils benefit from the considerable expertise and strong subject knowledge of specialists who teach core subjects from Year 4 upwards and French, music, drama and PE from Reception. A variety of teaching strategies and an excellent outdoor education programme are well-used to support and extend pupils' learning. The rapport that the teachers have with their pupils, and their wise and effective use of praise and encouragement, are strengths of the school.
- 3.21 In the senior school most lessons are well planned with clear objectives, appropriate pace and effective time management. The best lessons provide challenge for pupils of all abilities and work is suitably varied. A small proportion of less successful teaching did not provide this challenge or variety for all pupils and learning was at a slower pace. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and effective classroom management skills to promote excellent behaviour and secure learning. Teachers know their pupils well and work to nurture their confidence. The rapport between teachers and pupils establishes a relaxed and productive working relationship, and staff provide individual support within lessons or run valuable subject support sessions at lunchtime or after school. Pupils say how much they appreciate these opportunities. In a number of lessons seen, ICT had been used successfully to present lessons and prepare activities for the pupils. However, technology is not yet consistently used in more imaginative ways by teachers across the school either for teaching or to create tasks in which the pupils use ICT. The well-managed and well-stocked senior library and good access to computer suites provide resources which enhance learning.
- 3.22 Across the school, the needs of pupils with SEND and those with EAL are well met. In the prep school, all staff are aware of the individual needs of pupils and in general plan their lessons accordingly. Prep pupils with SEND each have a pupil passport which sets out their own devised targets, and teachers support the pupils well to meet these. Pupils in the senior school receive well-directed learning support to

enable them to succeed. In the best lessons for pupils of all ages, gifted or talented pupils are challenged with open-ended tasks or extension activities. The few less successful lessons were characterised by a lack of suitable pace to retain interest and by less well-directed planning and lower expectations of pupils' abilities with the result that pupils lost focus and made slower progress. Mainstream lessons did not always provide the specific support needed for pupils with SEND or EAL. Many lessons are planned to include opportunities for independent learning throughout the school. As a result, by the sixth form, pupils are able to confidently plan individual research tasks such as those regularly undertaken for the Extended Project Qualification and by sixth-form chemists who design their own practical investigations.

- 3.23 In the prep school, pupils' work and progress are assessed regularly. Marking is prompt and positive, mostly following the school's marking policy, but does not consistently include the setting of targets limiting the benefit to pupils. Many senior departments apply marking policies effectively and constructive comments aid pupil's progress. However, teachers do not always include advice or targets for improvement. Tracking is at an early stage in the prep school. For older pupils it is thorough at all levels with records maintained within departments as well as centralised data recording of each pupil's performance to inform planning. The school makes full provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs or with EHC plans.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 In the EYFS children are happy in the setting and enjoy what they are doing. Some children are in the early stages of managing their own behaviour independently, but all are keen to care for one another. They are courteous and have good table manners. They play co-operatively, especially outdoors, and understand the need to share and take turns. Children gain in confidence and independence. They talk to each other about what they are doing and develop their games and models together well. The children share play time with Years 1 and 2 and they know the teachers and pupils. Good transition arrangements prepare children for their next move up the school.
- 4.3 The fulfilment of the schools' belief, expressed in the pupil parent handbook, that 'values are caught rather than taught' is borne out in every area of the pupils' life at Mount Kelly. The school is successful in meeting its aims of actively promoting an environment of mutual respect in which pupils develop into mature, happy, individuals with a keen sense of their place in the wider community.
- 4.4 Pupils display an excellent sense of spiritual awareness and are highly appreciative of their beautiful surroundings. In prep school assemblies, a quiet, reflective, respectful mood is established and pupils were observed clearly appreciating Antarctica as an amazing place. Pupils across the school develop self-knowledge, are self-confident and emotionally aware and enjoy sharing their views in class, in debating and to a wider audience. Senior pupils appreciate the non-material aspects of life. They listen attentively in chapel and take part confidently; services are an effective celebration of the spiritual life of the school and its sense of community. An excellent solo singing performance was warmly applauded by the whole congregation.
- 4.5 Pupils show excellent moral judgement and a keen sense of right and wrong. In the prep school, rules are kept to a minimum and positive behaviours are reinforced and modelled by staff and pupils. Pupils are well informed, show a respect and understanding of the civil and criminal law of England and explore issues through discussions in tutor time and debating. This understanding continues through the senior years; pupils show a keen sense of fair play, and behave well. They co-operate with each other in lessons and respect each other's opinions. Across the curriculum pupils discuss moral issues thoughtfully and they express personal views with honesty and poise.
- 4.6 Pupils' social development is excellent. Since the previous inspection, many opportunities have been created for younger pupils to take on responsibility. Buddy schemes between older and younger year groups promote strong relationships between pupils. Pupils possess excellent personal skills and social confidence and feel valued members of the community. In responses to the questionnaire a small minority of pupils said that they did not have opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, however during the inspection pupils said that they relish the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. Senior pupils gain valuable experience in helping to run the school, having gained their posts by popular vote, and through leadership training. Through the school council pupils develop an understanding of how a democracy works. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of

public institutions and parents involved in the public institutions and services often talk to pupils in assemblies or lectures. Pupils are very aware of the world beyond school; prep pupils show initiative and have recently organised charity collections for Water Aid and a local children's hospice. Fundraising has enabled older pupils to build a close relationship with an African orphanage, and they support the community service scheme with enthusiasm and warmth. Overseas pupils and those with SEND speak warmly of the excellent welcome and care they receive from pupils and staff alike.

- 4.7 The quality of pupils' cultural development is excellent. Prep school pupils show enthusiasm for learning about their own and others' cultures as observed in vibrant displays of their work from a theme day on India. Pupils are able to make comparisons between different ancient civilizations, and they experience other cultures by celebrating Chinese New Year and other religious festivals from Buddhism and Islam. A high level of tolerance and respect is shown throughout the school, actively promoted in the many opportunities provided for pupils of all ages to explore different and balanced political and moral values and other faiths through literature, poetry and debates. Visits to the Houses of Parliament enable pupils to see democracy in action. In the senior school, excellent art and design and technology work shows research and understanding of many cultures. The cultural life of Britain is celebrated in many different ways: the Scottish referendum and European elections were welcomed as opportunities to explore democracy and what it means to be British. In the school's diverse community, pupils from other countries make an excellent contribution of insights from their own different perspectives. The harmonious living together of pupils from different cultures is a strength of the school.
- 4.8 The specialist swimming programme benefits even those pupils who do not take part in it, providing a permanent reminder of the time and effort it takes to achieve excellence. Non-swimmers speak with pride of the achievements of their swimming friends. As pupils move through the school they develop a strong sense of community service, moral values and are caring and supportive of one another. Older pupils are mature and articulate, reflecting the supportive, challenging education they have received. They are confident without arrogance and good listeners; they deal courteously with adult outsiders, they are well prepared for life in the world beyond school.

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

- 4.9 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care across the school is excellent.
- 4.10 The excellent pastoral care supports the school's aim that there should be special emphasis on family values in every aspect of school life. In the EYFS, excellent care is taken of all the children especially the youngest ones. All children form appropriate bonds and secure emotional attachments with carers. Staff model good team relationships which help children feel secure and develop their own good relationships. Children know that salad vegetables are good for them and are healthy to eat. They relish physical exercise and know that climbing a steep hill makes their hearts beat faster. Almost all of them are fully independent in managing their own hygiene and personal needs, and those few who still need help are treated with consideration.
- 4.11 Across the school, relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils are very positive. In the prep school, form teachers, and in the senior school both

academic and pastoral staff, provide a high level of guidance and support. They know their pupils extremely well and respond to their individual needs strongly supported by the efficient systems to share information, and by senior staff.

- 4.12 The quality of food is excellent. Pupils of all ages are taught about healthy eating in PSHE, and for older pupils in biology lessons and talks from nutritionists. Pupils are all encouraged to take regular exercise in games lessons and the wide range of outdoor and sporting activities offered.
- 4.13 The school is effective at promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying. At all levels well-respected systems for rewards and sanctions are in place. In the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils did not agree that teachers are fair at giving out rewards and sanctions. However inspectors judged systems to be efficient and fair; all rewards and sanctions are logged electronically and the tracking system allows all entries to be monitored easily. Class discussions, PSHE, assemblies and tutor time are used for anti-bullying strategies to be fully discussed. A very small minority of pupils and parents said they did not think any issues of bullying were well dealt with well. However scrutiny of evidence does not support this view; formal and detailed school records show that cases of bullying are extremely rare, that careful monitoring is in place and appropriate action is taken which is clearly recorded. In interviews pupils said that bullying was not a problem and that they knew who they would talk to if a problem arose. They also said that they have a large number of people they can turn to for support, and an anonymous box in the prep school gives another opportunity for younger pupils to give views or raise concerns.
- 4.14 The school has a suitable three year plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND. It has taken into account points raised in the previous inspection which recommended that lighting and school surfaces should be improved. There is good provision for pupils with physical difficulties.
- 4.15 A minority of pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire did not agree with the statement that the school asked for their opinions. Inspectors found this not to be the case. There are a number of committees and councils through which pupils can make their views known and raise issues. Pupils are also consulted through anonymous surveys and their views are taken into consideration in the development planning undertaken by the senior leadership team.

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

- 4.16 The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are excellent.
- 4.17 In the EYFS, staff are excellent in fulfilling their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of children at all times. A number of staff hold paediatric first aid qualifications. Risk assessments of all areas are thorough and regular checks are made of all equipment. This careful approach creates a safe, welcoming, stimulating and adventurous environment for the children's learning.
- 4.18 The school has developed a clear policy and procedures to safeguard pupils. All staff have been trained at the appropriate levels and frequencies and have received the key official guidance as required. Senior leaders responsible for safeguarding have developed a good working relationship with local agencies who offer valuable support and advice.

- 4.19 Appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards. Checks, servicing, maintenance of equipment and fire drills take place regularly, both during the day and in boarding time, and are fully recorded. Meticulous attention is paid to the health and safety arrangements across all areas of the school and careful records are kept. The school has a comprehensive risk assessment policy which is well implemented. Effective support and monitoring is provided by the health and safety committee which includes governor and staff members. The prep school has a good sick room staffed appropriately to provide care for sick and injured pupils. At the senior school, the health centre, run by qualified staff, provides excellent facilities for any pupils feeling ill. Comfortable accommodation for sick pupils is also available in two of the houses. Pupils also benefit from the support provided by the many qualified first aiders on the staff of the school. Pupils training for, and taking part in, sporting activities are supported by specialist physiotherapy staff. Appropriate provision is made for pupils with specific educational or physical needs.
- 4.20 The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and correctly stored for the previous three years.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders at Mount Kelly are confident, engaging and polite. They display a calm, confident but respectful manner. Boarders are extremely proud of their houses and the school. They play an active role in the management of their individual houses, through positions such as student head of house and head of boarding. They also contribute to the wider school community as members of the school council, the food committee and as more senior pupils, if appointed as monitors. Boarders do not experience discrimination of any sort, are highly supportive of each other and make every new boarder feel welcome. Those who participate in the physically demanding elite swimming programme are admired by their fellow boarders for their dedication and tenacity. Boarders are keen to display their understanding of world issues and participate in local, national and International charity events. The pupils have considerable respect and admiration for all the staff who work with them.
- 4.23 Boarders at Mount Kelly are very happy, they feel safe and appreciate the mechanisms which have been put in place to ensure their security. Appropriate security measures are in place which do not intrude on the privacy of boarders. The boarding houses are efficiently protected to prevent intrusion and are solely for the use of boarders. All adults not employed by the school who are resident in boarding accommodation have undergone the required checks and have signed an appropriate residency agreement. All houses have excellent systems to ensure the staff are aware of where students are at all times and permission must be obtained for every excursion or exeat. Boarders say that their voice is heard and that staff treat them with respect. They are confident that they can contact a member of staff at any time. The boarders have access to a number of additional support services, including the college chaplaincy, professional counselling and an independent listener. All houses display a comprehensive list of contact details for support organisations. Day, boarding and flexi-boarding students live and work together in a pleasant and supportive environment. Academic development is monitored by tutors who work closely with learning support teams and the house staff to keep students on track for success.

- 4.24 The quality of care and provision is excellent. A rolling programme of refurbishment of the boarding houses is under way. The quality of work in the finished houses is outstanding, providing exceptional facilities in all areas. All boarding houses benefit from speedy responses to maintenance requests. All boarders appreciate the speed and efficiency with which their laundry is managed. Boarders are keen to personalise their rooms and are happy with their surroundings. They have appropriate access to mobile phones and the internet to enable them to contact their families. The boarding staff have frequent informal communication with parents as needed and regular informative formal reports are sent as part of the whole school reporting system. Younger pupils' electronic valuables are stored securely overnight, and all pupils have a lockable space for their personal items.
- 4.25 Boarders keep fit in many ways, they participate in numerous major sports including rugby, hockey, netball, cricket and swimming. They also enjoy activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and personal endurance challenges such as the Ten Tors event. There are numerous activities for boarders during the evenings and weekends and they also enjoy the privilege of 'down time' Sunday including brunch.
- 4.26 The school operates an excellent system for the administration of health care. The storage, distribution and recording of all administered drugs, controlled or otherwise is excellent. The school nurse, the team of matrons and house staff are diligent in all aspects of their respective duties. Meticulous records are kept in houses, the health centre and on the school's central electronic information system. Numerous members of staff are first aid trained. Individual medical records are confidential, but medical staff have made appropriate information sheets available to all staff to ensure the safety of boarders at all times regardless of the activity in which they may be involved. The rights of boarders as patients are respected. Boarders have full access to a local GP practice and private dental and orthodontic services. The matrons and house staff arrange appointments for specialised medical services.
- 4.27 Meals are of a consistently high standard, and excellent provision is made for special and specific dietary needs, recognised in 2014 when the catering team won their company's school meals award for excellence. Boarders enjoy their meals. Each house is supplied with daily provisions for evening snacks.
- 4.28 The welfare and safeguarding of boarders is excellent, and all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding (NMS) have been met. All policies have been updated and recently reviewed. All the required staff recruitment checks have been made to meet the safe recruiting policy, and the safeguarding and child protection policy is robust. The designated senior person has undertaken appropriate training, and all staff are trained at least annually with induction in place for new staff. All boarding staff have accurate job descriptions setting out clear roles and responsibilities. Houses are always supervised by an appropriately qualified adult. House staff undertake and record all fire drills in accordance with school and boarding policy. The health and safety team make regular checks on the house fire systems, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers. Any issue which arises as a consequence of a planned or non-planned evacuation of all buildings are reported to this team for action.
- 4.29 Boarders understand the school's high expectations with regards to behaviour and in particular its anti-bullying stance. Considerable efforts are put into the education of pupils about the serious consequences of bullying. Boarders report that there are very few instances of bullying and when any issue does arise, they are confident that the matter will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. Those appointed to

positions of responsibility within the houses receive full training and are monitored to prevent any misuse of their positions.

- 4.30 Leadership and management of boarding are excellent. A new and well-defined management structure has been introduced for boarding. The strong leadership is extremely well supported by the boarding staff team who work tirelessly for the benefit of the boarders. Staff have undertaken a valuable range of training courses. They meet weekly to discuss issues such as pupil concerns, boarding development and aspects of adherence to NMS. Minutes of these meetings demonstrate that the staff share the school's best boarding practices, cementing the school ethos and ensuring consistency across the boarding houses. A comprehensive and effective transformation of the quality of the boarding provision has been achieved in a comparatively short time.
- 4.31 The governing body is kept abreast of developments within the boarding community by regular reports and plays an active role in assessing boarding need and future direction. A member of the senior team is responsible for updating governors about changes to regulatory requirements. All houses undertake an annual review of their practice to meet the NMS and extra reviews as changes in policy demand.
- 4.32 Almost all boarding parents who participated in the pre-inspection questionnaire said their children enjoyed boarding and believed boarding was well organised and managed effectively, and most parents were of the opinion that boarding enhanced their child's progress and development.
- 4.33 All the recommendations from the previous boarding inspection have been fully met.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governors provide highly effective oversight of the school and discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and safeguarding of the pupils' welfare appropriately, fully supporting the aims of the school.
- 5.3 The members of the governing body formed at the merger in 2014 offer a comprehensive range of skills and expertise. Under new leadership appointed in 2013, the governing body made a detailed analysis of the school's needs and took decisive action to ensure that rapid progress was made to implement the recommendations of the previous inspections. They ensured the success of the planned merger of three schools which took effect in September 2014, by the appointment of new, highly qualified and experienced staff to lead the new school and ensured that they met their legal responsibilities for safeguarding, for safe employment procedures and for policy implementation. The board has received and approved a comprehensive range of policies and procedures and undertaken a rigorous annual review of the child protection policy and its effectiveness, meeting the legal requirements. Safe recruitment of high quality staff is a priority. The valuable work of the sub-committees provides governors with further insight and opportunities to focus on particular aspects of the school's operations. In particular, the safeguarding sub-committee, working with the designated senior person (DSP), ensures ongoing monitoring of safeguarding issues and reports regularly to the full governing body.
- 5.4 Recently, the governing body commissioned a professional review of the progress made in governance and has followed the recommendations made. This has ensured that the governors now offer further challenge and support to the new leadership team throughout the school. Their detailed knowledge of the school is developed through frequent, regular contact with senior leaders and by the work of governors who have specific responsibilities, providing strong support for the work of the school.
- 5.5 There is strong governor involvement with EYFS and one of the governors, on the education standards committee, helps in EYFS and is well known by staff and pupils. Governors with relevant experience and expertise have delivered training focused on the teaching and learning aspects of inspection. A new governors' induction and training programme has been in place since 2014.
- 5.6 The school's leadership provides governors with informative papers at regular governors' meetings and has undertaken, with their support, ongoing development planning, including the long term plan, Mount Kelly 2019, and meticulous research and critical analysis of the progress of the strategies put in place to improve standards. Careful financial planning is supporting the high quality refurbishment of boarding accommodation. Planning consent has been obtained and plans are well advanced for the construction of a 50 metre swimming pool to further develop the specialist provision for swimmers at the school and across the country. The governors are constantly evaluating the progress made and the successful outcomes of strategies to improve the school.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.8 The leadership and management of the EYFS provision are excellent. Everyday management is highly effective. The team members are keen to develop common standards and have put in place strategies to strengthen good communication within the setting. However, monitoring to spread areas of excellent practice to all areas is not yet fully developed. Planning and assessment are extremely sensitive to the needs of the children, helping them all to make good progress. The school and staff are excellent in fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguard children. Good systems are developing for self-evaluation within the setting with a clear and ambitious vision for the future. Policies and procedures for supervision, performance management and continuous professional development have ensured that staff have the training to provide a safe, welcoming environment for the children's learning. Some of these are still in the process of development. This has meant that fully effective monitoring and evaluation leading to consistency and continuous improvement for the setting is not yet in place.
- 3.24 Working with the governors, the senior leadership team has undertaken a full review of all policies since September 2014 to ensure that procedures are robust in all areas, including health and safety, safeguarding, and safe employment. All the required checks on staff have been made and fully recorded as required. This team has successfully set out the new ethos for the school in the statement called 'the Credo'. This has been adopted across the school and is informing all the developments taking place and ensuring that pupils are well educated in lines with the aims of the school. The previous areas of excellence of the school have been recognised. They continue to flourish and result in continued good academic standards, excellent pastoral care and high standards of personal development for pupils who value the support and opportunities given to them by the school.
- 5.9 A clear management structure with well-defined roles and a regular pattern of fully minuted meetings has enabled the team to plan securely in all areas and to make rapid progress in implementation of policies resulting in significant improvements in standards in many areas of the school. The wide range of strategies introduced has resulted in improvement across the school as recommended in previous inspections, including significant progress in developing the quality of teaching. Highly effective strategies are underway for continued improvement to achieve the high standards set out by the leadership team. The Mount Kelly Care plan, an holistic strategy to improve the quality of the care and welfare of pupils, is an example of the importance the school places on this aspect of their education. The structure and focus of middle management has been redeveloped and strengthened, the next stage of the development plan is now in progress to bring the work of all departments up to the standard of the best.
- 5.10 Leadership and management at all levels is successful in securing, motivating and supporting staff of good quality, an appraisal scheme is now in place and is identifying opportunities for continuing professional development. All staff joining the school take part in a comprehensive induction programme, which includes safeguarding training. All staff are appropriately trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, including safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety.

- 5.11 The school has excellent relationships with parents, carers and guardians.
- 5.12 There are excellent partnerships with parents of pupils in the EYFS, especially when children are identified as needing extra support in their learning. Parents are welcome in the setting and are keen to share children's achievement at home through the 'wow!' board and when talking to staff at the beginning and end of each day. However parents cannot at present communicate or receive information about their child's achievements on a daily basis.
- 5.13 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of parents were pleased with the progress that their child was making. Most parents agreed that the school offers an appropriate range of subjects and extra-curricular activities and felt their child was happy, safe and well looked after in the setting.
- 5.14 In the prep and senior school parents are warmly welcomed. There are regular social informal events and prep school pupils and parents can attend the early morning breakfast club. These informal gatherings allow easy communication between parents and teachers. In the senior school if house parents and tutors have any concerns they contact parents quickly. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents did not feel that the school handled their concerns well. The evidence gathered during the inspection shows that the school has many ways in which parents can raise informal concerns and that the school responds quickly. Formal records examined during the inspection show that the school has an appropriate complaints procedure which has been used fairly.
- 5.15 Parents have excellent opportunities to be actively involved in school life. In the senior school some parents give talks on a wide range of topics including careers and some help with activities and expeditions. In the prep school, a number of parents listen to pupils reading. Some parents joined a working party to help put forward their suggestions about the merger of the school, and prep school parents have had many opportunities to discuss the recent developments. Each form in the prep school has a parent representative who regularly attends meetings with the school's leadership and minutes of these meetings are sent to all parents. The Parents' Association is actively involved in organising social events for the school, such as quiz nights, parent parties and the ball.
- 5.16 Parents receive excellent information about the school. In the prep and senior schools weekly newsletters ensure excellent communication with parents. The senior school has an 'every day is an open day' philosophy to allow prospective pupils and parents to visit the school while it is in operation. A detailed prospectus, a parent pupil handbook and other comprehensive documentation provide a great deal of useful information. The website which includes a social media page, is informative, and supplies all the required information and provides a calendar of forthcoming events and all relevant policies. All parents have had access to the Mount Kelly Strategic Plan.
- 5.17 According to the results of the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents did not feel that they were given sufficient information about their child's progress. The inspection team investigated this claim, but found it to be inaccurate. The inspectors found the reporting system in both the senior and prep school to be thorough including both full and interim reports. The senior school interim reports contain attainment, effort and target grades and tutor comments, and full reports contain detailed comments with useful advice by all subject teachers. Parents also

receive information on their children's progress in at least one parents' evening per year for each age group.

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