



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

WELLINGTON COLLEGE

BOARDING WELFARE INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

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| Full Name of School | Wellington College |
| DfE Number | 867/6001 |
| Registered Charity Number | 309030 |
| Address | Wellington College Crowthorne Berkshire RG45 7PU |
| Telephone Number | 01344 444000 |
| Fax Number | 01344 444002 |
| Email Address | info@wellingtoncollege.org.uk |
| Master | Dr Anthony Seldon |
| Chairman of Governors | Sir Michael Rake |
| Age Range | 13 to 18 |
| Total Number of Pupils | 1019 |
| Gender of Pupils | Mixed (630 boys; 389 girls) |
| Number of Day Pupils | Total: 217 |
| Number of Boarders | Total: 802 |
| | Full: 802 Weekly: 0 |
| Inspection dates | 31 Jan 2012 to 02 Feb 2012 |

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in May 2008 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Children's social care/Boarding School.

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.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

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|--------------------|---|
| Mr John Dunston | Reporting Inspector |
| Mr Alex Balls | Team Inspector for Boarding (Senior Housemaster, HMC school) |
| Mrs Jo-Anne Duncan | Team Inspector for Boarding (Headmistress, GSA school) |
| Mr Richard Feldman | Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, HMC school) |
| Mr Jeremy Wyld | Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, HMC school) |

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Wellington College is a Christian foundation, remaining open to and respectful of pupils from all religious faiths. Its values are based on a commitment to leadership, service and an international outlook. The school aims to be one of Britain's, and the world's, leading and most inspiring co-educational schools for boarding and day pupils, vibrant and challenging, opening the minds and hearts of all in the community. It endeavours to provide a transformative experience, developing to the full each of the pupils' 'Eight Aptitudes', including their intellectual, artistic, sporting, spiritual and social intelligences, while seeking to ensure that each grows to understand that serving and caring for others bring the highest rewards in life and the greatest likelihood of long-term happiness and fulfilment. The school is a company formed by Royal Charter in 1853. The Queen is the school's Visitor. The governing body is responsible for the well-being of the school as a whole, taking or endorsing strategic and financial decisions, monitoring the school's finances, and appointing the Master. There are seven sub-committees. The governors come from a wide range of backgrounds, including business, education, the forces and the professions.
- 1.2 The school opened in 1859 as a memorial to the first Duke of Wellington to educate the orphans of serving officers, an aim that continues to be supported by the school's Foundation. The school caters for pupils between the ages of 13 and 18 and is located in Crowthorne, Berkshire, about 30 miles west of London. There are 1019 pupils in the school, of whom 457 are in the sixth form and 802 are boarders. There are 489 boys in the boarding community and 313 girls. Of the 113 boarders from overseas, 49 are from the Far East. There are 13 pupils who come from families with a services background.
- 1.3 There are seventeen houses in the school, of which fifteen are boarding houses, two houses specifically for day pupils having been introduced since the previous inspection. Ten boarding houses are for boys and five are for girls. Two houses, Apsley for girls and Hardinge for boys, are specifically for boarding pupils in Years 12 and 13; all others have boarders in Years 9 to 13. Pupils in Beresford, Stanley and Talbot have morning and evening meals in the house; all other dining takes place centrally. Each house is run by a housemaster or housemistress supported by a team of academic and pastoral staff. Boarding is under the overall supervision of the Deputy Pastoral.
- 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 table.

| School | NC name |
|----------------------|---------|
| 3 rd Form | Year 9 |
| 4 th Form | Year 10 |
| 5 th Form | Year 11 |
| Lower Sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper Sixth | Year 13 |

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. Complete the refurbishment programme in order to bring the standard of all accommodation, furnishings and facilities up to that of best. [NMS 5]

(iii) Progress since the last inspection

2.3 Four recommendations were made by Ofsted at the time of the previous boarding inspection in May 2008. These related to the storage, administration and recording of medication, and to a staffing policy for the boarding houses and the supervision of boarders by staff. All of the recommendations have been fully implemented.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS (NMS)

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 The induction process for all boarders is supported by detailed guidance in house handbooks. There is a wide range of staff for boarders to turn to for guidance and support. A network of prefects and 'buddies' also exists to help new boarders settle in. Boarders may contact the school counsellor confidentially with any difficulties or concerns. A wide range of appropriate external helplines and contact information is readily available to boarders. [NMS2]
- 3.3 Appropriate policies are implemented for the care of pupils who are unwell, including first aid and medical emergencies. These reflect boarders' rights and confidentiality. Medical centre staff are sufficient in number and suitably qualified and trained. Access to other local medical services is also available. Following a recommendation from the previous Ofsted inspection, the school has made effective changes to the secure storage, administration and recording of medication, including arrangements for boarders who bring in their own, and for self-medication. [NMS3]
- 3.4 Boarders can contact their parents and families in private, including internet access in houses. Proportionate systems are in place to promote, monitor and control the responsible use of electronic communications. [NMS4]
- 3.5 Most boarding houses are appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, and decorated to a high standard, especially the newer houses and those recently refurbished. Decoration in some of the older houses looks worn, but a programme of refurbishment has begun. The accommodation and furnishings are suitable for the number and ages of boarders and include study facilities. Boarders can personalise their areas in the house. Boarding accommodation is suitably protected from unauthorised access and the systems used are seen by boarders as reassuring rather than intrusive. [NMS5]
- 3.6 Boarders are provided with a variety of meals that are of high quality, nutritious and appropriately labelled for those with special dietary needs. Healthy snacks, the house kitchens, a school cafe and easy access to drinking water are also provided for boarders. [NMS8]
- 3.7 Laundry arrangements organised by matrons and housekeepers ensure that boarders' clothing is carefully looked after. Boarders can obtain a range of personal and stationery items in the school's shop. Boarders' valuables can be kept safely in the house. [NMS9]
- 3.8 An exceptionally wide range of activities is provided for all boarders outside teaching time during the week, with a reduced programme at weekends, including sports, trips, lectures, concerts and plays both in and out of school, as well as opportunities for stillness. Boarders have access to safe recreational areas both indoors and outdoors, and also to a suitable range of local facilities. [NMS10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Arrangements made by the school ensure that boarders' welfare, health and safety are protected. Security measures are in place and their effectiveness is monitored. Reasonable precautions are taken to ensure the safety of electrical equipment in the houses. Staff have regular training in health and safety, and in child protection. [NMS6]
- 3.11 The school complies with all requirements in relation to fire safety. Fire alarms are tested regularly and evacuation arrangements are clearly displayed in the houses. Regular fire practices are carried out and recorded. All staff are trained in fire safety awareness. [NMS7]
- 3.12 Suitable child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and implemented. Links are maintained with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff are regularly trained in child protection, as are pupils in Year 13. The school's designated person is the Deputy Pastoral. Detailed records are kept of any concerns. A designated governor receives appropriate training. All visitors are checked in and receive safeguarding information on arrival. [NMS11]
- 3.13 The school has a clear policy that successfully promotes good behaviour and combats bullying. The policy is supported by the 'Eight Aptitudes' and core values that are evident in all aspects of school life. The school actively promotes a culture of respect and any incidents of suspected bullying are dealt with immediately. Boarders indicated that bullying is very rare and that they feel safe in their houses. Parents shared this view overwhelmingly in the pre-inspection questionnaire. [NMS12]
- 3.14 Recruitment of staff follows rigorous procedures, and policies are effectively implemented. Some administrative errors have occurred in the single central register of appointments in the past, but the register is now meticulously maintained and checked. Appropriate arrangements are in place for all adults living on the same premises as boarders but not employed by the school. All visitors to boarding houses are supervised in their contact with boarders. [NMS14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A detailed statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is available to parents and staff. Its impact is evident in the pupils' respect for each other and their affection for the school. In a number of recent internal and external surveys, parents confirmed their strong satisfaction with information received from the school. [NMS1]
- 3.17 The management and leadership of boarding and its development are the responsibility of the Deputy Pastoral and are outstandingly clear. Academic staff also have house positions or other pastoral roles, strengthening links between the academic and residential aspects of boarding life. Wide-ranging training enhances provision further. Records required by the NMS are fully maintained and monitored. [NMS13]

- 3.18 Staff working with boarders have job descriptions and regular appraisal. Induction is arranged for new staff, and those involved in boarding have suitable opportunities for training and development. Boarders are adequately supervised outside teaching hours, both in and out of school, and confirmed that they can always have access to a member of staff in the house at night. This was a recommendation from the previous Ofsted inspection. There are arrangements to ensure that staff know the whereabouts of boarders, and they are aware of the procedure to follow should a pupil ever be missing. [NMS15]
- 3.19 Boarders are aware of the importance the school places on equal opportunities. Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination and specific induction is provided to those from overseas. All activities are open to both boys and girls, who are represented proportionately on school committees. [NMS16]
- 3.20 Opportunities exist for boarders to express their views both informally and through more formal school and house forums. Boarders appreciate being able to express their views directly to house staff without ever worrying that they might be penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS17]
- 3.21 The school has a clear complaints procedure that meets all requirements. Central records are kept of any complaints. The pre-inspection questionnaire indicated a very high level of satisfaction among parents with the way concerns are handled by the school. [NMS18]
- 3.22 Prefects are trained and monitored in their duties by senior staff to counter any possible abuses of their role. Regular discussions between prefects and staff result in effective guidance and direction. Younger boarders commented positively during the inspection on their relationship with prefects. Boarders indicated that any sanctions imposed by prefects were measured and appropriate. [NMS19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS20]