



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Marlborough College

Full Name of School	<b>Marlborough College</b>
DfE Number	<b>865/6013</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309486</b>
Address	<b>Marlborough College Marlborough Wiltshire SN8 1PA</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01672 892400</b>
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Email Address	<b>master@marlboroughcollege.org</b>
Master	<b>Mr Jonathan Leigh</b>
Chairman of Governors	<b>Lord Malloch-Brown KCMG PC</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>928</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (556 boys; 372 girls)</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>37</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>891</b> Full: <b>891</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>3 Mar 2015 to 5 Mar 2015</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). 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 2014, as amended. 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.

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 judgement.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with a representative of the governors, 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 medical centre. 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**

Mr Rodney Fox	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Elizabeth Bassett	Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemistress, HMC school)
Mrs Ruth Coomber	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Boarding, HMC school)
Mrs Hilary Moriarty	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Head, GSA school)
Mr Michael Tonks	Team Inspector for Boarding (Second Master, HMC school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Marlborough College was founded in 1843 to educate the sons of Church of England clergymen. It retains a strong association with the Anglican Church, although today it is a co-educational boarding school for over 900 pupils from the ages of 13 to 18, welcoming all faiths. The school is an educational charity governed by its trustees, known as the Council.
- 1.2 The school aims to guide pupils towards the discovery and development of their abilities and talents in the broadest sense, through the academic curriculum as well as through the broad spectrum of the co-curricular provision. Its pastoral aims draw on the principles of responsibility, respect and rigour, at the heart of its educational philosophy. It seeks to enable pupils to develop the personal resources to be good and to be happy. A key aim of the co-curricular provision is for all pupils to find areas of excellence and/or interest that will stay with them well beyond leaving school.
- 1.3 The school occupies an extensive site on the edge of the market town of Marlborough in Wiltshire. The original buildings, which date from the eighteenth century, have been augmented throughout the school's history to meet contemporary needs. Boarders stay in one of fifteen houses, accommodating those in Years 9 to 13. Six are for boys, five for girls and four accommodate boys in all years, with girls in Years 12 and 13. Each of the houses has its own premises within easy walking distance of the main school buildings and its own resident staff.
- 1.4 The leadership has been in post since September 2012. A fifth girls' boarding house was opened in 2012 as part of a continuing development of boarding accommodation.
- 1.5 Of the 928 pupils in the school at the time of the inspection, 405 were in Years 12 and 13, 230 boys and 175 girls. All except 37 were boarders. Most pupils come from business or professional families living in the south of England. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified 155 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, mostly dyslexia or dyspraxia, of whom 90 receive specialist support. Seventeen pupils who speak English as an additional language receive help with their English language skills.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Shell	Year 9
Remove	Year 10
Hundred	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 2013.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Provide greater support for house staff with the assessment and portable appliance testing of boarders' electrical equipment.
2. Improve communication procedures between houses and the medical centre so that there is greater awareness of which medicines and over-the-counter remedies are being kept and used in the houses.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by ISI in March 2012. That inspection made no recommendations for improvement that were relevant to boarding welfare or provision.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New boarders are given an appropriate induction programme that starts before they arrive and continues through their first half-term. Boarders are confident that they have a wide choice of staff, including their tutor and housemaster or mistress, to whom they can turn for guidance with personal issues. An independent listener is available and suitably advertised by the school. His contact details and other helpline numbers are evident in all boarding houses. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 A suitable range of policies and procedures for the care of boarders who are unwell is established, but effective monitoring of the use of medicines and over-the-counter remedies is hampered by unclear communication procedures between the houses and the medical centre. The medical centre is suitably staffed by qualified nurses and the accommodation is appropriate for the co-educational needs of the school, including sufficient provision for isolation. Access to specialised medical services is readily available and the school facilitates making appointments and arranging transport. Prescribed medications are only dispensed to those for whom they are intended. Boarders may self-medicate, following suitable risk assessment. Medical confidentiality and, where appropriate, the right of boarders as patients to give or withhold consent for treatment, are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders have sufficient and varied means to make contact with parents and families. Boarders replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in interviews were clear that communication with family and friends is easy. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All sleeping areas are appropriate and such accommodation in mixed houses is separate and effectively managed. Boarding houses have suitable areas for private study and recreation. The washing facilities available are sufficient and provide appropriate privacy. Heating, lighting and ventilation are suitable and premises are suitably cleaned and maintained. Appropriate measures are taken to adapt accommodation and facilities for boarders with restricted mobility. Boarding houses are suitably furnished and designed to meet the needs of those living in them. Boarders may personalise their areas if they wish. Effective measures are in place to ensure that unauthorised persons do not have unsupervised access to boarders' or their houses. Any use of CCTV does not intrude unreasonably on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In questionnaire responses and interviews, a very large majority of boarders were satisfied with the quality of the food. Meals are healthy, nutritious and meet boarders' individual needs, including those with special dietary requirements. In both central and house dining, accommodation and facilities are clean and hygienic, including those areas where boarders can prepare their own snacks. Boarders have suitable access to drinking water. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 The central laundry facility ensures that boarders' needs are adequately met, and dedicated areas for the safe storage of items in the houses ensure their safe return. Boarders can use the school shop or visit the town to purchase personal and stationery items. Boarders confirmed that their possessions, including valuables and money, are safe and that they are able to secure such items. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 The comprehensive range of activities for boarders occurs throughout the week and at weekends, and appreciation of this was expressed in the questionnaire responses



of both parents and boarders. The extensive site and premises offer a variety of safe places where boarders can be alone if they wish. The school does not place unusually onerous demands on boarders. Through the use of the internet, television and printed media, boarders have ready access to information relating to national and international issues. Use of the internet is suitably filtered to safeguard boarders. [NMS 10]

### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 A wide-ranging health and safety policy is effectively implemented, to promote the safety and welfare of all users of the school site. Procedures for the portable appliance testing of school equipment are appropriate but those for pupils' equipment are overly reliant on visual inspection by untrained house staff. The school's premises and facilities are appropriately maintained so as to minimise any health and safety hazards. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies fully with fire regulations. Fire safety equipment is regularly checked and suitably maintained. Fire evacuation practices are held every term in all houses, including during 'boarding time'. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school's safeguarding policy has recently been amended to bring it fully into line with the most recent regulations and guidance. All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding and understand the procedures to be followed in the case of concern about a pupil. Records are carefully and securely kept. A designated governor liaises closely with the school's child protection officer. The full governing board scrupulously reviews both the policy and its implementation annually, although their minutes are not sufficiently explicit about their adoption of the policy and affirmation of its effectiveness. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school has a suitable range of policies to promote good behaviour and combat any bullying. Pupils at all levels of the school report that bullying is uncommon and well managed if it does occur, confirmed in school records. A small minority of pupils responding to the questionnaire felt that some staff use sanctions and rewards unfairly. Inspection of school records did not reveal any evidence to support this view. Staff and boarders understand the procedures and policies to promote good behaviour and recognise their importance. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Recruitment checks on new staff and other adults working with boarders are carried out rigorously and recorded carefully on a single central register. Persons over 16 who are neither on the roll nor employees of the school but who live on the same premises as boarders are required to undergo checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service to ensure their suitability. They are also required to enter into a written agreement with the school which sets out the terms of their accommodation and the school's expectations of their conduct, and that of any visitors that they may have, with respect to the safeguarding of boarders. Visitors to boarding houses cannot gain access without being admitted and taken to the member of staff on duty. The school does not appoint guardians on behalf of parents. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The school has a clear statement of boarding principles and practice that is available to parents and is widely accessible to all staff and pupils through the termly calendar booklet. It is evident in practice, for example, through the creation of a pupils' charter by the prefects, which reflects the boarding principles. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The senior leadership team, which includes the head of boarding, and the house staff work closely together to provide clear management, leadership and development of boarding. Effective links are made between academic and pastoral staff. Boarding staff have appropriate experience and the opportunity for further training to develop their professional skills. All the necessary records are maintained and monitored, and policies are reviewed and updated as appropriate. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All those working with boarders receive job descriptions that clearly define their roles. Staff and volunteers are suitably inducted when new in role and appropriate opportunities are provided for further professional development. Any role of spouses within boarding houses is made clear. Staff supervision is appropriate for the age, number and needs of the boarders, and the types of activities being undertaken. Clear staff duty rotas are published so that boarders always know who is responsible for them. A suitable procedure to follow if a boarder should go missing is established and known by staff. Boarders can easily contact staff at night if there is a need. At least one member of staff sleeps in each house at night. Staff accommodation is appropriately separated from the boarders, and any access to this is suitably supervised and controlled. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders say that they do not experience discrimination. Individual needs and special circumstances are recognised and the school takes appropriate measures to accommodate them. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A minority of boarders responding to the questionnaire felt that the school does not sufficiently seek or respond to their opinions. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Boarders have a variety of ways in which they may contribute their views. Boarders in Year 9 are surveyed in their first term, house and school councils meet regularly, and the food committee meets the caterer to discuss menus. Invitation lunches enable groups of boarders to talk directly to senior members of staff. Boarders were consulted in the construction of the school's strategic plan. In interviews, boarders reported that their views are taken seriously. Communication between house staff and boarders is open and relaxed. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school has an appropriate procedure for dealing with complaints. Any issues are usually resolved quickly and informally. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of school life. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Prefects are carefully selected and have clear duties. They receive appropriate training, and guidance from senior staff that continues in office. They are active in arranging school social events, including as a contribution to the induction of Year 9 boarders. Prefects may not impose sanctions but refer concerns to staff. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]