



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

BLUNDELL'S SCHOOL

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

1 TO 2 MARCH 2016



School's Details

Full Name of School	Blundell's School
DfE Number	878/6011
Registered Charity Number	1081249
Address	Blundell's Road Tiverton Devon EX16 4DN
Telephone Number	01844 252 543
Email Address	info@blundells.org
Head	Nicola Huggett
Proprietor	Cedric Clapp
Age Range	11 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	600
Gender of Pupils	Boys and Girls
Number of day pupils	Total: 217
Number of boarders	Total: 383 Full: 136
Pupils' Ability	Standardised data provided by the school indicates that the ability of the pupils is above the national average.

School's Details

Pupils' Needs	The number of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is 18. Most of them have difficulties with cognition and literacy. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Eighty-four pupils have English as an additional language, of whom 66 receive support for their English.
History of the School	Founded in 1604 by provision made in the will of Peter Blundell, a successful cloth merchant, the school moved to its present site on the outskirts of the town of Tiverton in 1882. Originally a boys' school, it became co-educational in 1993.
Ownership and Governing Structure	The school is a charitable trust with a body of governors who are also the trustees.
School Structure	The seven houses of the school each accommodate day and boarding pupils. There is one co-educational house for pupils in Years 7 and 8, and another for pupils in Year 13. Two houses are for girls from Years 9 to 12 and three for boys of the same age.
Inspection Dates	1 to 2 March 2016
Other Useful Information	In 2006, the school acquired its prep school, which is located adjacent to the main school, taking over buildings that were originally the school sanatorium.

About the Inspection

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards (“the standards”) in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school’s accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996.

This inspection also contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (“boarding NMS”). It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding NMS. It identifies any standards which the school does not meet and requires action to meet them. Findings are distributed across sections relating to the eight Parts of the standards.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards, including the boarding NMS, following their inspection may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards and any qualitative concerns identified at its previous inspection.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school’s compliance with the standards, including the boarding NMS. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified.

The inspection does not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as:

- (i) the school’s aims;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) compliance with data protection requirements;
- (iv) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (v) contractual arrangements with parents;
- (vi) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Where necessary, National Curriculum nomenclature is used to refer to year groups. Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Independent School Standards Regulations](#), [National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

SUMMARY EVALUATION

The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015 and associated requirements and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1

Quality of education provided

At GCSE in the years 2012 to 2014, performance has been above the national average for maintained schools. In the sixth form, A-level results in the years 2012 to 2014 have been above the national average for sixth formers in maintained schools.

The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupil performance is in place.

The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1 - 4] are met.

PART 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens. Boarders' views are actively encouraged and their opinions and concerns are appropriately considered by staff. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.

The Regulatory standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 17 and 19 are met.

PART 3

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place. Boarders do not experience discrimination, and their care is sensitive to their needs.

An appropriate induction process for pupils new to boarding is implemented, and suitable provision is made for boarders' medical and health care, their food and drink and for managing boarders' laundry and possessions. Boarders have suitable contact with friends and family and access to a programme of activities. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.

Regulatory standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6 - 16] and the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 and NMS 2-4, 6-12, 15 and 16 are met.

PART 4

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required. Visitors to boarding accommodation are appropriately supervised.

Regulatory standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17-21] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 5

Premises of and accommodation at schools

Suitable toilet, changing and showering facilities for pupils and appropriate accommodation for their medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play. Boarding accommodation is adequate for the needs of all boarders, and safeguards and promotes their welfare.

The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22 – 31] and NMS 5 are met.

PART 6

Provision of information

A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for those with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, and its results in public examinations, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website. A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published by the school.

The standards relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] and NMS 1 are met.

PART 7

Manner in which complaints are handled

Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful, and identifying those relating to the boarding provision.

The standards relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 18 are met.

PART 8

Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Appropriate leadership and management of boarding ensure that the required policies and records are maintained and effectively monitored.

The standards relating to leadership and management of the school [Paragraph 34] and NMS 13 are met.

About the inspection

)

The inspectors observed a small sample of lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with teachers, senior members of staff and trustees. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Deborah Forbes

Reporting Inspector

Mr Fergus Wilson

Compliance Team Inspector
(Housemaster, Society of Heads school)

Mr Jonathan Cuff

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Pastoral Deputy Head, ISA school)

Mrs Kate McCarey

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Former Assistant Head, HMC school)