Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

For Schools with Residential Provision

Stamford High School

November 2022

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School's Details

School	Stamford High School			
DfE number	925/6027			
Registered charity number	527618			
Address	Stamford High School St Martin's Street Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 2LL			
Telephone number	01780 484200			
Email address	headshs@ses.lincs.sch.uk			
Head	Mrs Vicky Buckman			
Chair of governors	Mr Nick Rudd-Jones			
Principal of the Stamford Endowed Schools	Mr William Phelan			
Age range	11 to 18			
Number of pupils on roll	586			
	Day pupils	513	**Boarders**	73
	Seniors	418	**Sixth Form**	168
Inspection dates	9 to 10 November 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

1.1 Stamford High School is an independent, day and boarding school for female pupils. It was founded in 1877. The school is owned and governed by a charitable trust, Stamford Endowed Schools and is one of the three constituent schools of the foundation, the others being Stamford School and Stamford Junior School, which were inspected at the same time. Boarders are accommodated in four houses, all located in the town within a short walk from the centre of the school.

1.2 Since the previous inspection, a programme of refurbishment has been completed and a dedicated pastoral space has been created.

What the school seeks to do

1.3 The school aims to create a happy, exciting and supportive environment in which learning is the priority, and where young people are inspired to achieve their best in all aspects of school life, to develop their intellectual curiosity, and to become respectful, positive members of their school and wider communities.

About the pupils

1.4 Pupils come from a range of professional, military and farming backgrounds, mostly from families living within a 40-mile radius of the school. Many of the boarders come from overseas. Nationally standardised test data provided by the school indicate that the ability of the pupils in the senior school and sixth form is broadly average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 165 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, which include dyslexia and other difficulties, 154 of whom receive additional specialist help. No pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language for 24 pupils, whose needs are supported by their classroom teachers. The school has identified 86 pupils as being the more able and lessons are modified for them and for those with special talents in sport, music, drama and art.

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2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the National Minimum Standards for Boarding ('boarding NMS'), where applicable. Additionally, inspections report 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. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

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 and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

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 specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

Key findings

2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2022, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

2.2 The school's GCSE and A-level results in the years 2018 to 2021 confirm that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).

2.3 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 pupils' performance is in place. Boarders have access to a suitable programme of activities.

2.4 Pupils receive relationships and sex education, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.

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

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

2.6 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. Boarders are supported to develop good relationships with fellow pupils and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect. Any prefect system operating in the school is suitably managed.

2.7 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] and NMS 13, 17 and 21 are met.

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

2.8 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.

2.9 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. Boarding staff are appropriately trained and deployed.

2.10 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], 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 3, 5–12, 15, 16 and 20 are met.

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

2.11 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.

2.12 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] and NMS 19 and 22 are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

2.13 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' 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.

2.14 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] and NMS 4 and 7 are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.15 A range of information is 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 any 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, 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.

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

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.17 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.

2.18 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] and NMS 14 are met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.19 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.

2.20 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] and NMS 2 are met.

3. Inspection Evidence

3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended form meetings. Inspectors visited boarding houses the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Pamela Johnson	Reporting inspector
Mrs Amy Fleming	Compliance team inspector (Deputy head, ISA school)
Mr Carl Bingham	Team inspector for boarding (Director of boarding, IAPS and HMC school)