



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**REGULATORY COMPLIANCE INSPECTION  
ROCHESTER INDEPENDENT COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Rochester Independent College

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Full Name of School      | <b>Rochester Independent College</b>                                                                                                                             |
| DfE Number               | <b>887/6004</b>                                                                                                                                                  |
| Address                  | <b>Rochester Independent College<br/>Star Hill<br/>Rochester<br/>Kent<br/>ME1 1XF</b>                                                                            |
| Telephone Number         | <b>01634 828115</b>                                                                                                                                              |
| Email Address            | <b>admissions@rochester-college.org</b>                                                                                                                          |
| Principals               | <b>Mrs Pauline Bailey<br/>Mr Alistair Brownlow<br/>Mr Brian Pain</b>                                                                                             |
| Proprietor               | <b>RIC Trading Ltd</b>                                                                                                                                           |
| Age Range                | <b>11 to 19</b>                                                                                                                                                  |
| Total Number of Pupils   | <b>291</b>                                                                                                                                                       |
| Gender of Pupils         | <b>Mixed (168 boys; 123 girls)</b>                                                                                                                               |
| Number of Day Pupils     | Total: <b>234</b>                                                                                                                                                |
| Number of Boarders       | Total: <b>57</b><br>Full: <b>44</b> Weekly: <b>13</b>                                                                                                            |
| Ownership and Governance | The school is owned by Rochester International College , a limited company. The company's three directors act as the school's board of governors and principals. |
| School Structure         | The school is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged from 11 to 19. Pupils can board from the age of 16.                                       |
| Inspection Dates         | <b>17 Nov 2015 to 18 Nov 2015</b>                                                                                                                                |

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

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. Accordingly, this inspection records whether the school complies with each of these Regulations, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. Compliance is judged both by written formulation and by implementation. The Regulations represent minimum requirements and are given as either 'met' or not 'met'.

Additionally, inspections consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the Education (Abolition of Corporal Punishment) (Independent Schools) Regulations 1989.

This inspection also 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 it judges the extent to which the school currently meets the boarding Standards. 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 Regulations.

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) the school's aims, detailed coverage of the quality of educational provision or pupils' achievement;
- (ii) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (iii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features;
- (iv) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures;
- (v) an 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 mentioned specifically in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

The report reflects the evidence used in deciding whether the school's provision meets or does not meet the various requirements. Grades are not provided for the quality of the school as a whole or for each aspect inspected.

If the school has EYFS registered provision (for children under the age of two), reports use the same evaluative terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.

National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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 with the principals. They attended registration sessions. 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 Deborah Forbes    | Reporting Inspector                                        |
| Mr Edward Tolcher     | Compliance Team Inspector (Bursar, HMC school)             |
| Miss Margaret Connell | Team Inspector for Boarding (Former principal, GSA school) |

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Rochester Independent College is a boarding and day school for pupils aged from eleven to nineteen. It was founded in 1984 as a sixth-form tutorial college but has expanded since then, acquiring further properties which now form part of a two-acre site. Boarders, all of whom are aged sixteen or over, are accommodated in six boarding houses on the campus. The school is situated in the centre of Rochester.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has acquired three properties and has built an underground hall with theatre facilities. Also, two new information and communication technology (ICT) suites have been added.
- 1.3 The school currently has 291 pupils on roll; 168 boys and 123 girls. Of these, 57 are boarders. The ethnicity of the day pupils reflects that of the catchment area, which covers most of Kent. Pupils come from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of boarders are of white British ethnicity with a minority from overseas, mainly from Thailand, but others are drawn from Europe.

## 2. COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATORY STANDARDS

### Part 1 Quality of education provided

#### Curriculum

- 2.1 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.2 The school has a written policy for the curriculum, supported by schemes of work which do not undermine British values. The curriculum for Years 7 to 10 is clearly set out in a booklet which shows the subjects studied in each year and the topics covered. In Year 11 some pupils are continuing the two-year GCSE course, while others attend the school to sit International GCSE (IGCSE) examinations in one year. The school has schemes of work but these are not extensive, and some are commercially produced. The policy and schemes of work take account of the ages, aptitudes, needs and interests of the pupils, including those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, and demonstrates how their personal development is supported. [Paragraph 2(1)]
- 2.3 The school offers a broad curriculum which provides the pupils with experience in all the requisite areas of learning. Due to the limited nature of on-site physical education resources, pupils are instead taken each week to local sports centres. Pupils may enter the school at any stage and small classes enable them to participate fully in the curriculum. Much emphasis is placed on their acquisition of numeracy and literacy skills, and they have many opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening through drama and oral work. The artwork displayed round the school attests to their creative skills and they use ICT appropriately. All pupils study one modern foreign language and have the opportunity to add a second one in classes held outside the normal school timetable. Those in Year 11 study English, mathematics, science and physical education and may choose from a wide range of options in addition. [Paragraph 2(2)(a) and (b)]
- 2.4 In Years 7 to 10 a programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) enables pupils to engage with fundamental British values, to live responsibly and think positively about their futures. It is taught in weekly sessions which encourage discussion and debate. The school is non-denominational and holds no assemblies or acts of worship, but pupils learn respect for different cultures and faiths through their PSHEE lessons and through the atmosphere of respect and tolerance which is central to the school's ethos. From Year 11 on, PSHEE is no longer a timetabled lesson, but the policy sets out how topics are addressed through different subjects. Pupils and their parents receive information about options at appropriate times and many pupils carry out work experience in Year 10. Those in the sixth form have a personal tutor who guides them impartially in their career choices. The school holds an annual preparation day where representatives from universities come in to talk and provide advice. [Paragraph 2(2)(d) and (e)]
- 2.5 The sixth-form curriculum offers pupils a suitable range of subjects and is flexible in meeting their needs and requirements. In addition to those who are studying for a two-year A-level course, some individuals come to the school to attend one-year A-level resit courses. These individuals may already have taken A-level examinations and come to re-sit them to improve their grades. A number of overseas pupils come to the school in order to qualify for entrance to British universities. Each pupil's programme is individually structured according to what is required. The school has

no programme of additional general studies but pupils receive time and attention from their personal tutors. [Paragraph 2(2)(g)]

- 2.6 The small classes and close focus on academic work ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified at an early stage through information received from previous schools, the screening test which all new pupils at the school receive, or by staff referral. Suitable strategies are outlined for teachers to help these pupils in class. In a small number of cases they may receive one-to-one assistance. Those who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are almost exclusively in the sixth form and they are provided intensive teaching in English, where necessary, to enable them to gain sufficiently high grades in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examinations to qualify for university entry. In Years 7 to 10 a small but well-attended range of extra-curricular clubs and educational trips and visits helps the pupils to develop personal characteristics which lead to success. Older pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and are encouraged to suggest activities that they would like to undertake to widen their experience. All are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. [Paragraph 2(2)(h) and (i)]

## Teaching

- 2.7 The school meets the Regulations.
- 2.8 Small classes enable pupils to acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills and make good progress. Teaching fosters their self-motivation so that they are keen to apply themselves and work hard. They take responsibility for their learning and think for themselves in an environment where they cannot escape notice. Lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's analysis of achievement and progress demonstrate pupils' developing skills. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they can get help with their work if they require it and that the school gives them the support they need to learn. [Paragraph 3(a) and (b)]
- 2.9 Lessons are well planned in order to meet the frequently wide spread of ability within a small class, and activities are organised so that all can participate and make appropriate progress. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' aptitudes and abilities, using targeted questioning to encourage development. Pupils with SEND, EAL and the most able receive appropriate tasks and experiences. Teachers also have good subject knowledge and use varied strategies to engage their pupils' interest, like deciphering a code at the start of a Year 9 geography lesson. Those in the sixth form gain confidence in their own application of skills, such as in literary analysis or working out how to translate design into an object in textiles. Resources for teaching are of a good quality and used appropriately. [Paragraph 3(c), (d), (e) and (f)]
- 2.10 The school has its own framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. Data is collected on all pupils, with each department devising its own tests and monitoring the pupils' progress throughout the year at specific points. Lessons are planned using this information so that all pupils can make good progress. Their work is marked appropriately with guidelines for improvement provided. The size of classes and the attitudes of the pupils mean that strategies for managing behaviour are relatively simple, but teaching engages their interest to keep them focused. [Paragraphs 3(g) and (h), and 4]



- 2.11 Teaching does not undermine fundamental British values or discriminate inappropriately against pupils. [Paragraph 3(i) and (j)]

### How well do pupils achieve?

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pupils' Ability</b>      | Pupils' ability is measured using commercial standardised tests which, with the school's own data and inspection evidence, indicate that ability is in line with the national average.                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Pupils' Needs</b>        | The school has identified seventy-six pupils with SEND; their range of needs include mild dyslexia and processing skills. Two pupils have an EHC plan. Twenty-one pupils have EAL, the school has identified thirteen of these pupils to have high academic ability and a small number to be gifted or talented in other areas.                 |
| <b>Pupils' Achievements</b> | In the years 2012 to 2014, GCSE results have been similar to the national average for maintained schools overall. Results at IGCSE have been lower than worldwide norms overall. The school's A-level results have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. |

## Part 2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.12 The school meets the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.13 The ethos of the school demonstrates the active promotion of fundamental British values. In the student council, pupils learn that change can be brought about by the workings of democracy. They are however aware that the democratic process is not demonstrated through the choosing of representatives on the school council, as this is done by the staff rather than through election. The boarding council, whose representatives are also chosen by staff, raises and solves pupils' concerns. In interview, boarders said that they can make their views known and are not penalised for raising a concern in good faith. As well as learning about the rule of law and individual liberty in PSHEE, the pupils demonstrate in their behaviour that they have a suitable understanding of these topics. They value the liberty which they experience in not wearing school uniform and in being able to call their teachers by their first names. Regardless of these liberties, pupils are still conscious that they must act within the framework of school rules and show respect towards others. Pupils value the multi-cultural society of the school and say that respect for other cultures and beliefs is part of their everyday experience. [Paragraph 5(a), (b)(ii) and (vii), and NMS 17]
- 2.14 The pupils speak enthusiastically about their school and affirm how their confidence has increased since joining. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses the vast majority of pupils said that their views and ideas are listened to, and all parents who responded expressed that their children are happy. Pupils relate readily to adults and converse freely, greeting visitors in a courteous and friendly way. They are aware of the needs of others and participate in a number of local initiatives such as displaying their art work in a local café, inviting local people into the school to see drama productions, organising an arts festival and belonging to sports clubs. Pupils raise funds for charities, for example Children in Need, and are aware of global

issues such as climate change and care of the environment. [Paragraph 5(b)(i) and (iii)]

- 2.15 The school has no prefects or positions of responsibility other than student council representatives. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and for others. The boarders are accommodated in six houses, but these houses are physical buildings rather than separate houses with their own ethos. They feel that they belong to one community. As the largest section of the school and the oldest pupils, they enjoy considerable independence and freedom but behave responsibly and considerately. All pupils acquire a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England through their experience of English life and the guidance of their tutors and boarding staff. [Paragraph 5(b)(iv) and NMS 19]
- 2.16 Tolerance and harmony are evident between all members of the school community. They learn about one another's cultures and traditions. Respect for everyone is highly valued. The directors preclude the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject. Pupils are always offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. [Paragraph 5(b)(v) and (vi), (c) and (d)]

## What are pupils' views of the school?

Pupils are asked to respond as 'agree' or 'disagree' with the option to specify 'no view' or not to answer individual questions. A total of 135 pupils responded to part or all of the questionnaire. The table below shows the proportions of pupils who responded 'agree' or 'disagree' in relation to each question, and the number who didn't offer a view.

|                                                                                             | %<br>Agree | %<br>Disagree | Number<br>offering<br>no view |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>School questions</b>                                                                     |            |               |                               |
| 1. I enjoy school                                                                           | 95         | 5             | 10                            |
| 2. I find my lessons interesting and engaging                                               | 95         | 5             | 5                             |
| 3. The school gives me the support I need to learn                                          | 96         | 4             | 10                            |
| 4. I can get help if I need it                                                              | 97         | 3             | 7                             |
| 5. The school encourages me to do my best                                                   | 94         | 6             | 8                             |
| 6. I feel safe and happy at school                                                          | 94         | 6             | 10                            |
| 7. My views and ideas are listened to in class and in school                                | 93         | 7             | 12                            |
| 8. Behaviour is good in the school                                                          | 86         | 14            | 11                            |
| 9. Teachers are fair in the way they give rewards                                           | 84         | 16            | 27                            |
| 10. Teachers are fair in the way they give sanctions                                        | 83         | 17            | 32                            |
| 11. The school deals with bullying                                                          | 88         | 12            | 37                            |
| 12. There is a member of staff or senior pupil I can turn to if I have a problem            | 92         | 8             | 12                            |
| <b>Boarding questions</b>                                                                   |            |               |                               |
| 1. I enjoy boarding                                                                         | 91         | 9             | 101                           |
| 2. Boarders get on well together in the house                                               | 97         | 3             | 99                            |
| 3. I am well looked after if I fall ill or am injured                                       | 96         | 4             | 108                           |
| 4. I am able to contact my family and friends if I need to                                  | 86         | 14            | 98                            |
| 5. I like the food in boarding                                                              | 55         | 45            | 104                           |
| 6. I feel safe in my boarding house                                                         | 95         | 5             | 98                            |
| 7. I am able to have snacks and drinking water outside main mealtimes                       | 80         | 20            | 100                           |
| 8. I am able to keep my belongings safe                                                     | 94         | 6             | 99                            |
| 9. Boarding staff treat me fairly                                                           | 89         | 11            | 99                            |
| 10. I am happy with the balance of free time and activities in the evenings and at weekends | 94         | 6             | 102                           |

### **Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 2.17 The school does not meet all of the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.18 The safeguarding policy is up to date and includes all contents required by official guidance. It is available on the school's website. Staff have received suitable safeguarding training on induction and all know how to report on any allegations or disclosures. Records are suitably kept and the school has helpful, supportive relationships with local agencies. The school follows all requirements with regard to the recruitment policy and obtaining vetting checks on staff. It is mindful of its duty with regard to preventing pupils from being drawn into terrorism. Staff have received regular training in their safeguarding duties including recognising the dangers of extremism and other needs of vulnerable pupils. The directors conduct a formal annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures. Pupils receive advice about e-safety. [Paragraphs 7(a) and (b), 8(a) and (b), and NMS 11]
- 2.19 The school has an appropriate policy to promote good behaviour. The vast majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school actively promotes good behaviour. A small minority of pupils indicated in their questionnaire responses that behaviour is not good in the school. However, in interview they expressed the opposite view. During the inspection, behaviour was exemplary. A small minority of pupils also expressed the view that sanctions are not fairly awarded. The record of sanctions shows that few are issued and they are for misdemeanours which are listed in the school rules. The school's record of serious sanctions is properly maintained and appropriately cross-referenced with pupils' files. The school follows its own published policies, issuing written warnings to parents on the rare occasions when a pupil is deemed to have committed a serious misdemeanour. Both boarding and day pupils are encouraged to behave responsibly. In their questionnaire responses, almost all boarders reported that they get on well together in their houses. [Paragraph 9 and NMS 12]
- 2.20 During the inspection, the school was holding an anti-bullying week. Pupils were discussing the issues with their tutors in form time; for example a form in Year 7 considered issues described in a prominent sports athlete's autobiography. Some lessons were also based on this theme. The school has an anti-bullying policy which is well understood by the pupils. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that the school deals well with bullying, but a small minority of pupils in their responses expressed the opposite. In interview, older pupils said that they had not encountered bullying and, if they did, they would know what to do. Younger pupils were less certain but affirmed that the school had dealt effectively with incidents which had occurred. The school keeps a log of any incidents involving bullying which showed that they had been appropriately dealt with and that sanctions were issued when warranted. [Paragraph 10 and NMS 12]
- 2.21 The school has a suitable health and safety policy. Premises are maintained with due regard to the safety of the pupils, and are also of an appropriate standard to ensure boarders' health, safety and welfare. The risk assessment policy is contained within the health and safety policy. Risk assessments are carried out for the buildings and for activities, and the school was able to provide evidence of how it had responded to identified risks; however the quality of the risk assessments is uneven. All parents, including those of boarders, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that their children feel safe at school. The school has not carried out legionella testing on the water to comply with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. [Paragraphs 11 and 16, and NMS 6]

- 2.22 Procedures to reduce risk from fire are not adequate. The school has undertaken fire risk assessments but they are not carried out by a competent person and consequently not all necessary procedures and actions are identified. The school has not appointed an individual with relevant training, experience and knowledge to assist in fire prevention. Recording of fire drills was found to be inconsistent and the school therefore had no evidence that they had taken place at the required intervals. Equipment is appropriately maintained and signage is suitably placed. [Paragraph 12 and NMS 7]
- 2.23 The school's policy for first aid is detailed and clear. Some staff have undertaken first-aid training and a qualified nurse is present at the school on a part-time basis, available to be consulted when necessary. First-aid kits are kept in appropriate locations. When boarders first arrive, they declare what regular medication they are taking so that the nurse is aware of their needs. Boarders who are unwell are generally cared for in their houses, where they prefer to be, since most of them are accommodated in single rooms. In the previous inspection it was noted that the school did not provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, but that situation has been resolved. Pupils who are assessed as competent may self-medicate and have lockable boxes in which medication must be stored. Suitable records are kept confidentially in the medical centre. Boarders have access to local healthcare services and are registered with the local general practitioner, their rights as patients are fully respected. All parents of boarders, and the large majority of boarders themselves, who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that boarders are well looked after if ill or injured. [Paragraph 13 and NMS 3]
- 2.24 Supervision during the school day is organised through staff rotas. The staff handbook sets out clearly what duties are expected. In the evenings and at night time the boarding staff take over supervision. Pupils may sign out of the house in the evenings but this procedure, along with curfews, are strictly enforced. Staff know how to contact pupils if necessary and what to do should a pupil be missing. Pupils can contact staff during the night should the need arise by mobile telephone. [Paragraph 14 and NMS 15]
- 2.25 Admission and attendance registers are properly maintained and stored. Shortcomings in the admission register noted at the time of the previous inspection have been rectified. [Paragraph 15]
- 2.26 Boarders are helped to settle in to the school by the boarding staff and by other pupils. External helplines are displayed in every boarder's room and the independent listener is well known to them. A very small minority of boarders in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses said that they are not able to contact their friends or family if they need to. Inspection evidence did not support this view; most boarders have landlines in their rooms and can contact their parents by phone or through the internet. The school employs suitable filtering systems to monitor the safe use of the internet. [NMS 2 and 4]
- 2.27 Arrangements for the preparation and serving of food are hygienic and suitable. Boarders' meals include provision for particular dietary needs. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a minority of boarders said that they do not like the food in boarding, and a small minority indicated that they are not able to have snacks and drinking water outside main mealtimes. Inspection evidence from a scrutiny of menus and sampling of meals judged that the meals are healthy and nutritious. Drinks and snacks are provided for boarders. [NMS 8]

- 2.28 Boarders' laundry is handled efficiently in the school's laundry facility. Local shops are within easy reach of the school, and boarders can sign out when outside of their lesson time to buy anything they need. All boarders' bedrooms are locked and, in addition, have lockable boxes to keep possessions safe. [NMS 9]
- 2.29 Boarders have well-lit desks and study facilities in their rooms. They also have access to other areas where they can study, as well as to indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Some outings and activities are organised at weekends and boarders are able to suggest their preferences. Since all boarders are over 16, they generally prefer to organise their own time and many wish to use their evenings and weekends for study. They also enjoy socialising in their common rooms. Boarders are kept aware of current events through newspapers, the internet and television. [NMS 10]
- 2.30 The boarding houses are secure and unauthorised people cannot gain access to them. Visitors receive guidelines as to where they may go and at what times. No family members of boarding staff live in the boarding houses and the school does not arrange guardians or lodgings for boarders. [NMS14 and 20]

### **Other legislation**

- 2.31 The school has an accessibility plan to improve the information, curriculum and physical access for pupils with SEND. Boarders said, in interview and discussion, that they did not experience any discrimination and are helped to integrate into the community. [Equality Act 2010 and NMS 16]
- 2.32 Corporal punishment is not used. [The Education (Abolition of Corporal Punishment) (Independent Schools) Regulations 1989]

### **Part 4 Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

- 2.33 The school meets the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.34 At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not carry out all required vetting checks or ensure that the single central register of appointments was complete. These shortcomings have now been fully rectified and the school has a clear procedure when appointing new members of staff which is followed appropriately. [Paragraph 18 and NMS 14.1]
- 2.35 Supply staff are not used by the school. Appropriate checks have been completed to ensure the suitability of the school's directors and the single central register of appointments is accurately maintained. [Paragraphs 19, 20 and 21]

### **Part 5 Premises and accommodation**

- 2.36 The school does not meet all of the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.37 Suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils, as well as appropriate changing accommodation. The accommodation for the care of sick and injured pupils is suitable. [Paragraphs 23 and 24]
- 2.38 The premises are appropriately maintained with a system for reporting faults and carrying out minor repairs. Internal acoustic conditions and lighting are suitable for the activities that occur, but external lighting is not adequate for people to enter and leave school premises safely. [Paragraphs 25, 26 and 27]

- 2.39 Drinking water is supplied at several locations around the school and is appropriately labelled. The temperature of the hot water is suitable. [Paragraph 28]
- 2.40 Pupils have access to outdoor areas for recreation at break and lunchtime, and for boarding activities. They are taken to local sports facilities for physical education. [Paragraph 29]
- 2.41 Boarding accommodation has been recently refurbished and is suitably maintained. It is comfortably furnished and spacious, with effective lighting, heating and ventilation. At the time of the previous inspection some boarding accommodation did not provide appropriate separation for genders, but this has now been rectified. Boarders have individual rooms; some have en-suite facilities while others share such facilities between two. All washing and toilet facilities are ample and newly refurbished. Boarders may personalise their rooms and have access to common rooms and areas for private study. The accommodation is protected from unauthorized access. No surveillance equipment intrudes on pupils' privacy. [Paragraph 30 and NMS 5]

## **Part 6 Provision of information**

- 2.42 The school meets the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.43 Parents are provided detailed and informative reports on their children's progress, indicating levels of achievement and effort and offering suggestions as to how to improve. Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school on its website and in information booklets provided to them and their children. The principles and practice of boarding are included in the boarding handbook and are available on the school website. They are understood by the boarders. [Paragraph 32 and NMS 1]

## **Part 7 Manner in which complaints are handled**

- 2.44 The school meets the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.45 A suitable policy for handling complaints and concerns is currently displayed on the school's website. In practice the school aims to respond to concerns and complaints swiftly as reported by the large majority of parents their questionnaire responses. All formal complaints, including those relating to boarders, are properly recorded. Parents are appropriately informed of their right to a panel hearing if they are not satisfied with the response to a formal written complaint. One formal complaint has been received, but none has gone to a panel hearing in the last year. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive about all aspect of boarding life. [Paragraph 33 and NMS 18]

## **Part 8 Quality of leadership and management**

- 2.46 The school does not meet all of the Regulations and Standards.
- 2.47 The directors have not discharged their responsibilities for ensuring that all the regulatory standards are consistently met. They have rectified the regulatory failures identified at the previous inspection. As the directors are also the principals of the school they have developed their own systems of monitoring standards, calling on external expertise when they consider it necessary. The well-being of pupils is not consistently actively promoted in the areas of health and safety, and fire safety. [Paragraph 34]

- 2.48 Senior boarding staff are suitably trained and receive suitable induction. Links between the boarding and academic staff are appropriate, enhanced by the resident house tutors. Almost all the required records specified in the NMS are suitably maintained and monitored, except for those concerning fire drills. Boarding staff have developed an appropriate system of self-evaluation against the standards. [NMS 13]

### What are parents' views of the school?

Parents are asked to respond as 'agree' or 'disagree' with the option to specify 'no view' or not to answer individual questions. A total of 81 parents responded to part or all of the questionnaire. The table below shows the proportions of parents who responded 'agree' or 'disagree' in relation to each question, and the number who didn't offer a view.

|                                                                                                          | % Agree | % Disagree | Number offering no view |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|------------|-------------------------|
| <b>School questions</b>                                                                                  |         |            |                         |
| 1. My child is happy at the school.                                                                      | 100     |            | 1                       |
| 2. My child is making good progress at the school.                                                       | 98      | 2          | 6                       |
| 3. My child feels safe at the school.                                                                    | 100     |            | 3                       |
| 4. My child is well looked after at the school.                                                          | 100     |            | 8                       |
| 5. The school actively promotes good behaviour.                                                          | 98      | 2          | 12                      |
| 6. There is someone for my child to go to if problems arise in the school.                               | 99      | 1          | 4                       |
| 7. The school welcomes my views.                                                                         | 97      | 3          | 19                      |
| 8. The school deals well with bullying.                                                                  | 98      | 2          | 46                      |
| 9. Behaviour is well managed.                                                                            | 97      | 3          | 15                      |
| 10. I receive good information about my child's progress, the school's policies and activities/events.   | 95      | 5          | 9                       |
| 11. I receive timely responses to my questions, concerns and complaints.                                 | 97      | 3          | 3                       |
| 12. My child has access to a broad curriculum.                                                           | 99      | 1          | 9                       |
| 13. My child's individual educational needs are being met at school.                                     | 98      | 2          | 4                       |
| 14. I would recommend the school to another parent.                                                      | 98      | 2          | 8                       |
| <b>Boarding questions</b>                                                                                |         |            |                         |
| 1. My child enjoys boarding.                                                                             | 100     |            | 71                      |
| 2. The boarding accommodation is well maintained.                                                        | 100     |            | 72                      |
| 3. My child is well looked after if he/she is ill or injured.                                            | 100     |            | 74                      |
| 4. I am able to contact my child easily.                                                                 | 100     |            | 71                      |
| 5. I am able to contact boarding staff easily.                                                           | 100     |            | 73                      |
| 6. My child feels safe in the boarding house.                                                            | 100     |            | 72                      |
| 7. My child's belongings are kept safe.                                                                  | 100     |            | 72                      |
| 8. Boarding staff treat my child fairly.                                                                 | 100     |            | 72                      |
| 9. I am happy with the balance of free time and activities my child has in the evenings and at weekends. | 100     |            | 74                      |



### 3. SUMMARY OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

|                                                                          | All requirements met? |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Part 1 Quality of education provided (curriculum)                        | Yes                   |
| Part 1 Quality of education provided (teaching)                          | Yes                   |
| Part 2 Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils       | Yes                   |
| Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils, including Other legislation | No                    |
| Part 4 Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors                | Yes                   |
| Part 5 Premises and accommodation                                        | No                    |
| Part 6 Provision of information                                          | Yes                   |
| Part 7 Manner in which complaints are handled                            | Yes                   |
| Part 8 Quality of leadership and management                              | No                    |
| National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools                          | No                    |

#### Action points

3.1 The school does not meet all the regulatory requirements, and therefore it must take the following action.

- Ensure that legionella controls are appropriately carried out to comply with HSE guidance. [Part 3, paragraph 11, under Welfare, health and safety, and, for the same reason, NMS 6, under Safety of boarders]
- Ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out by a competent person; that a competent person (with sufficient training, experience and knowledge) is appointed to assist in taking preventive and protective measures (including fire-fighting and evacuation); and that fire drills are appropriately carried out and recorded. [Part 3, paragraph 12, under Welfare, health and safety, and, for the same reason, NMS 7, under Fire precautions and drills]
- Improve the external lighting so that people can enter and leave the school safely. [Part 5, paragraph 27(b), under Premises and accommodation]
- Ensure that the principals/directors fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the regulations and standards are met consistently and pupils' well-being is always actively promoted. [Part 8, paragraph 34(1)(b) and (c), under Quality of leadership and management, and, for the same reason, NMS 13.4 and 13.5, under Management and development of boarding]

The school will be required to produce an Action Plan for the Department for Education to set out how it intends to resolve the issues listed above.

### **Progress since the previous inspection**

- 3.2 The required actions from the previous inspection were (i) to ensure that safe recruitment procedures are followed; (ii) to ensure that the admission register is maintained in accordance with requirements; (iii) to ensure that appropriate checks are made against the barred list and that DBS checks are made as required; (iv) to ensure that the single central register of appointments is complete; (v) to provide appropriate facilities for students who are ill; (vi) to ensure that accommodation for boarders has appropriate separation for genders. These regulations and standards have all now been successfully met.