



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**BRADFIELD COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Bradfield College

Full Name of School	<b>Bradfield College</b>
DfE Number	<b>869/6000</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309089</b>
Address	<b>Bradfield College Bradfield College Bradfield Reading Berkshire RG7 6AU</b>
Telephone Number	<b>0118 9644500</b>
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Email Address	<b>headmaster@bradfieldcollege.org.uk</b>
Head	<b>Mr Simon C Henderson</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Martin H Young</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>759</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (474 boys; 285 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	13-18: <b>759</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>86</b>
Number of Boarders	Full: <b>673</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>28 April 2015 to 01 May 2015</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in April 2009.

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. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

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 judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and a second governor, observed a sample of the co-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. 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 Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Fiona Hallworth	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Jefferson	Team Inspector (Former Director of ICT, HMC school)
Mr Jason Slack	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr James Priory	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Elizabeth Thomas	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Mark Twells	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr John Parsonage	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mrs Jean Gray	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Carl Bingham	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, SBSA school)
Ms Yvonne Powell	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head, HMC school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bradfield College is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged 13 to 18. Founded in 1850 by the local rector, and occupying 250 acres in the village from which it takes its name, the college is situated in the Berkshire countryside about ten miles from Reading. The college buildings vary in age, and include both Victorian and modern architecture. The college is an educational charity overseen by a board of governors.
- 1.2 The college aims to provide an outstanding education for the young people in its care, equipping them to lead happy and successful adult lives. The college encourages its pupils to enjoy school and aspire to develop intellectual curiosity and ambition in the pursuit of academic excellence, through a breadth and depth of experience both in and outside the curriculum. The college strives to provide outstanding pastoral care and help develop qualities which include integrity, compassion, tolerance, enthusiasm and resilience.
- 1.3 The main entry points for pupils are at Year 9 and Year 12. At the time of the inspection 759 pupils were on roll in the college of whom 474 were boys and 285 were girls. There were 442 pupils in Years 9 to 11 and 317 pupils in the sixth form. The college has eleven boarding houses, whose membership is comprised of boarders and day pupils. Nearly all pupils are full-time boarders; 86 pupils attend daily. The majority of pupils are white British, from the south of England, but others are from overseas including China, France, Germany, Lithuania, Russia and Nigeria. Pupils are from a wide range of family backgrounds, but mainly the professions or business.
- 1.4 The overall ability profile of pupils is above the national average. Of the 84 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), 36 receive additional support to improve their English. At the time of the inspection 125 pupils were identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 74 receive specialist support. No pupil has an education or health care plan.
- 1.5 The headmaster and chairman of governors (the Warden) were appointed in September 2011. Since the previous inspection, changes have also been made to the senior leadership structure; a new science centre, modern languages and history classroom blocks have been opened and the college has re-opened its outdoor Greek Theatre, following restoration. Since September 2013 the college has sponsored a local school following its conversion to academy status.
- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the college. The year group nomenclature used by the college and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

### **School**

College	NC name
Faulkner's	Year 9
Shell	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Bradfield College is very successful in meeting its aim to provide high quality education. The pupils' achievements and learning are excellent by the time they leave the college in Year 13, due to the wide-ranging opportunities provided for them by an excellent curriculum, an extensive programme of activities and good teaching. Pupils are eager to learn and they take full advantage of the educational provision. This results in good levels of progress, and excellent progress in the sixth-form. Progress is slower in teaching where expectations do not fully reflect the ability level of the pupils. The achievement and progress of pupils who are more able and those with SEND and EAL are good, and often excellent, due to the levels of individual support and attention they receive.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent due to the outstanding support and care provided throughout the college community. This is especially marked in the excellent boarding provision and house system; the current position of the medical centre means it is remote from some boarding houses. Those pupils and parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire considered the quality of pastoral care provided throughout the college to be outstanding. Inspectors agree. Excellent attention is given to maintaining high standards of welfare, health and safety. Pupils display excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are mature, compassionate and self-aware young people, willing to give their time to serve the college and the wider community. The college is an inclusive, friendly and welcoming place as a result of the pupils' excellent relationships with each other and with the staff. Their cultural awareness develops through their enjoyment of sharing in the variety of traditions of those from overseas, and from their experience of high quality cultural activities and trips.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are of an excellent quality. The high level of achievement and personal development of the pupils is promoted by an experienced and committed council of governors. They have ensured the college has excellent facilities and resources, good quality staff and an ambitious strategic plan to meet its future needs. Governors retain an active oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities and provide excellent support for the leadership and senior management. The recommendations from the previous inspections have been met. The quality of leadership and management at all levels is excellent. The college has made significant progress in its aim to raise academic standards through more effective teaching and learning, although some initiatives have yet to be fully embedded, including those to raise expectations of the pupils, and to promote the use of assessment data. Development planning is detailed and further informed by thorough self-evaluation. The quality of links with parents and the wider community is excellent.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure all teaching shows high expectations and sufficient challenge to match more closely the ability of the pupils.
  2. Use standardised data more effectively to enable pupils to reach their full potential.
  3. Integrate the medical centre more closely into the heart of the college community.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning attitudes and skills is excellent.
- 3.2 The college is highly successful in developing the all-round ability of the pupils within its care and nurturing their natural talents. By the time pupils leave the college in Year 13, their overall level of achievement is excellent as a result of the quality of education and opportunities that are provided for them. Academic achievement is good in Years 9 to 11 and excellent by the time pupils complete their public examinations in Year 13. Levels of achievement in the co-curricular programme are excellent.
- 3.3 Pupils are articulate and confident in spoken English and demonstrate strong listening skills, as shown in the excellent standard of debate within the college. There is evidence of good knowledge and understanding in their written expression and creative writing. Pupils in the sixth form demonstrate critical thought in their written work and in discussion. Mathematical skills and scientific understanding are strong. Pupils are able to express their knowledge and ideas in mathematical language and show curiosity in science questioning. The information, communication and technology (ICT) skills of pupils at all ages are well developed and they use them appropriately to further their learning and understanding. The pupils' work shows a strong sense of creativity, demonstrated in art, design technology, drama productions, dance and high quality music. The pupils' personal organisation and ability to manage their time effectively is excellent.
- 3.4 Pupils reach excellent levels of achievement in the college's extensive range of co-curricular activities. High levels of success are achieved locally, regionally and nationally in sports, the creative and performing arts and in a range of academic competitions. Awards have been achieved in national media competitions for scriptwriting and film making, and in county young musicians' events. In recent years, sports teams have been regional champions and have competed at national level in sports including football, cricket, tennis, shooting and hockey. Many pupils achieve the highest grades in instrumental music and in drama examinations. Pupils show high levels of initiative and leadership skills in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) scheme, with success to gold and silver level, and in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF). Almost all pupils participate with great success in charitable fundraising each year. The introduction of the Bradfield Diploma, to celebrate personal achievement, has emphasised the college's approach in this area provided a coherent framework by which to measure and celebrate individual pupils' excellent all-round achievement.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE over this period have been above the national average for maintained schools and in 2013 were similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Results in the IGCSE have been above worldwide averages in most subjects. A-level results have been above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2012 they were well above the national average for maintained schools. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) results in 2014 were well above the worldwide average, and above the UK average. Pupils who complete the Extended

Project Qualification (EPQ) produce work of a high standard. Almost all sixth form leavers are successful in gaining places on the courses of their choice in a wide range of universities. Results show that girls outperform boys in both A level and GCSE examinations. Inspection evidence confirms equally good overall attainment both in the classroom and in their work for boys and girls. Attainment by pupils with SEND is good, and some is excellent, and is in line with that of their peers at GCSE and A Level. The attainment of pupils with EAL is good, and sometimes better than that of their peers, with some achieving a higher number of top examination grades. The attainment and progress of the more able students are excellent, reflected in the high number of top examination grades at A level.

- 3.6 The level of attainment at GCSE, and standardised measures of attainment that are available, indicate that pupils make progress that is at least appropriate in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The level of attainment at A level indicates that progress is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Inspection evidence from work scrutiny and lesson observations confirms progress to be excellent in the sixth form but progress in Years 9 to 11 is variable.
- 3.7 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are conscientious, eager to learn and arrive to lessons punctually ready to engage in their learning. They take advantage of the many opportunities available to them and participate with enthusiasm.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and co-curricular provision**

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and co-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The broad and balanced curriculum is highly successful in providing a breadth and depth of experience beyond the classroom that inspires pupils to identify and develop their own interests and talents, in line with the school's aims. Enjoyment and curiosity are fostered through well-chosen individual programmes of study and an extensive co-curricular programme which meet the needs, ages and abilities of all pupils. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, parents and pupils expressed high levels of satisfaction with the range and breadth of subjects and activities.
- 3.10 The 'Divisions' programme in Year 9, promotes independent learning and develops thinking skills and organisation; it is taught through a combination of humanities subjects. Schemes of work show that political and economic awareness and British values are actively promoted, for example, as classes consider the major news stories of the day. Pupils learn about being healthy and the importance of mental health and social issues through the emotional literacy and well-being (ELW) programme. The broad foundation curriculum of Year 9 provides a good balance of academic and creative subjects to prepare for a range of subjects for GCSE and IGCSE study in Years 10 and 11. These provide a wide choice for pupils including several classical and modern languages and both dual and separate sciences. After GCSE, pupils may choose to pursue either A levels or the IBDP, where they are able to choose from an extensive range of subjects and modules in each pathway. Pupils benefit from thoughtful timetabling which allows a flexible choice of subjects at all levels.
- 3.11 In Years 10 and 11 pupils have the opportunity to develop leadership skills through the Bradfield Diploma, which is largely pupil managed and provides excellent opportunities to stretch and challenge pupils. This program is complemented by the IBDP and the EPQ in the sixth form. The CCF and an active DofE award scheme

provide further well-integrated opportunities to lead and be involved in community service. Pupils receive excellent well-structured careers and university advice through the Bradfield Horizons programme which is available to the whole college. This incorporates careful individual advice on choice of university and careers alongside a formal programme of informative careers talks.

- 3.12 The most able pupils are enrolled in a school-wide enrichment programme and are offered additional stretch and challenge, such as through library discussion groups, the diploma research programme and specialist societies, such as the Dissection Society, and the Café Scientifique lecture programme. Pupils with specialist sporting or activity interests benefit from an extensive co-curricular programme and trips, such as the recent World Challenge visit to Mexico, the film studies trip to Los Angeles, a cricket tour to Dubai, and a wide range of creative and non-sporting activities on and off site. Pupils can participate in the Edinburgh Festival and innovations, such as the Bradfield Festival, are planned to engage the whole college in an even wider range of unusual creative activities.
- 3.13 Pupils with SEND and EAL benefit from teaching in small groups and receive excellent support through specialist teaching by staff who know them well. Pupils from these groups are very positive about the quality of the support they receive.
- 3.14 The college is actively involved with the local community and local schools who enjoy the use of the facilities. The many links with the local community including the Bradfield May Fayre and a number of high profile musical events actively involve pupils in learning outside the classroom.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.15 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.16 Teachers demonstrate enthusiasm for their particular disciplines and foster interest and subject understanding. They demonstrate good, and sometimes excellent subject knowledge, enhanced by regular departmental training. Teaching is mostly well planned and deploys a good range of activities. Teaching strategies, which offered limited variety at the time of the previous inspection, have since been considerably extended to afford more imaginative experiences for pupils. Teaching encourages work in pairs and groups, role play, pupil-led exposition and the rotation of activities. Opportunities to analyse and mark individual pupils' performance on a peer review basis enhance further understanding. The impact of these measures has helped create a positive learning environment where pupils take a growing responsibility for their work. In the sixth form, the EPQ enables teaching to promote independent study and in-depth research, as does the learner profile of the IBDP. A strong degree of initiative and independent work is encouraged within the creative subjects, and in physical education, to challenge pupils. This has led to the achieving of high standards.
- 3.17 When teaching provides the opportunity for pupils to take responsibility for their own work, pupils show themselves keen to take an independent line in class debate. They enjoy advancing their own viewpoints while challenging those of others, as seen in an IBDP class introducing the value of art. The strong relations between teachers and pupils engender an atmosphere in the classroom which promotes harmonious learning and develops interest in the topic. However, in some teaching a slow pace restricts the degree of challenge presented to pupils with the result that their eagerness to extend their learning is curtailed. In such teaching, the

expectations of pupils are insufficiently rigorous or demanding, and do not always take account of the different ability levels of pupils. The college has a wealth of available data to assess the ability of the pupils and to plan teaching to ensure they work to the best of their abilities. This happens often, but not in all teaching and the lack of challenge allows pupils to be easily satisfied with results below their expectation or to lose interest in the topic.

- 3.18 The college caters very effectively for those pupils' individual learning needs. The most able pupils are challenged by their participation in a school-wide scheme, and by the Bradfield Diploma, which provide a wide range of enrichment opportunities. Teaching often meets their needs, using extension tasks and target setting. Pupils with EAL and SEND are very effectively supported by dedicated specialist staff who liaise closely with subject departments to provide individually tailored strategies to develop their learning. Teaching is at its most effective in the college when these strategies are used.
- 3.19 Teachers deploy a good variety of resources including a wide range of technology. Teaching areas within the college are well equipped to a high standard to deliver the curriculum. Specialist ICT is available in most teaching areas and in the houses. As recommended in the previous inspection the college has taken comprehensive steps to enhance the provision of ICT and to embed its use in the daily practice of teachers and pupils. Well-equipped ICT suites in both central and outlying locations enable up-to-date software to be deployed in teaching. Effective use is made of the rapidly developing virtual learning environment (VLE) which, when used, streamlines the setting of private study tasks; this enables fast and comprehensive communication between teachers and pupils. Staff and pupils testify to the very significant impact which the VLE has had on the accessibility of resources such as lesson plans, prep assignments and revision materials. The library is an attractive and well-resourced facility for pupils to support their studies. The recently restored Greek theatre provides a classical backdrop for college productions. Sports players benefit from extensive sports facilities and well-maintained playing fields of excellent quality.
- 3.20 The pupils' work is marked regularly. Marking clearly shows where errors have occurred while offering clear analysis of the merits of answers together with constructive advice for their improvement. Pupils value this feedback.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The college has maintained the excellent standards of personal development of the pupils identified at the previous inspection.
- 4.3 Pupils display excellent spiritual development. The Christian ethos which permeates the college community, combined with its surroundings provide opportunities for pupils to reflect about their own beliefs and spirituality. Pupils embrace the college ethos which provides them with the opportunity to be themselves and to be recognised as individuals. The vast majority of pupils have well-developed, compassionate and mature personalities due to the many activities they undertake, such as their engagement in leading chapel services on a wide range of issues. Parents comment on how pupils' self-esteem grows as they progress through the college and upon the quiet self-confidence they eventually assume. Pupils reflect happily on many of the highlights of school life, such as when the entire college meets together in the Greek theatre, involvement in moving drama performances and listening to the high quality music performed by their talented peers.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent moral awareness. They display excellent standards of behaviour and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils respect and understand the college's rewards and sanctions arrangements, knowing that earning trust is key. Personal integrity and truthfulness are evident and pupils value justice, demonstrated in their debating of issues in the world. They display fairness on the games field. Pupils readily take on positions of responsibility, especially in the sixth form, where they relish the many leadership roles within houses and opportunities to mentor younger pupils. Throughout the inspection pupils displayed excellent levels of respect for each other, the college staff and visitors. Pupils of all ages show understanding of, and were sensitive to, political differences in discussions and debates; they appreciate fundamental British values, the need to abide by the laws of the land and the importance of democracy.
- 4.5 The college is an inclusive and welcoming place which supports the pupils' excellent social development. Overseas pupils are well integrated and pupils of all ages support each other. Pupils speak of the strong sense of college community. Many of the pupils' initiatives are directed at contributing positively to the lives of those living in the locality and further afield. The local village is well integrated into the life of the college and pupils have raised support for the local village hall appeal. They regularly entertain the community with concerts and drama performances and invite the village to their society debates. The college sponsorship of a local academy enables pupils to experience learning within a different environment. Through close integration into the local community, pupils develop a good understanding of how the public services and institutions interact with each other. Their involvement in charity work is extensive, and highly successful in raising funds for international and medical charities, and projects in Rwanda, amongst other initiatives.
- 4.6 Pupils from many ethnic backgrounds settle happily in the college and enjoy each other's traditions, ensuring the cultural development of pupils is excellent. The understanding derived from events such as the Mosaic night, an evening of international entertainment over dinner, is strong. The pupils' knowledge and perceptions of other cultures are widened by an extensive programme of national

and overseas trips for creative, sporting and general academic development. Equality and diversity are emphasised in the ELW programme, in assemblies and in chapel services. Pupils show respect for those of different faith, race and culture and those with different lifestyles or needs and understand the need to resist discrimination.

- 4.7 By the time pupils leave the college in Year 13 they are open-minded and outward-looking young people, eager to embrace responsibility and play a positive role in serving the wider community.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The pastoral structure is strong and underpins the college's aim to offer outstanding care for each individual. The house system makes a distinctive contribution. Housemasters and housemistresses effectively manage pastoral staff teams and liaise weekly with the members of the senior management team (SMT). These arrangements enable effective monitoring of procedures and the sharing of good practice. Records show that any concerns about individual pupils are promptly and effectively dealt with. Medical staff, counsellors and the chaplaincy also provide excellent individual care. Pupils value the time given to understanding the importance of healthy relationships within the ELW programme. The college community is characterised by a strong family ethos.
- 4.10 Relationships between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils themselves, are excellent. Pupils report that they feel well looked after. The college has well-established policies for promoting good behaviour, and an effective system of sanctions and rewards. Serious sanctions are used appropriately when required and are suitably recorded, with careful consideration given to any related difficulty or disability. Anti-bullying measures are excellent. Pupils confirm that they feel able to talk to staff if they have any concerns, and that rare incidents of bullying or harassment are tackled swiftly and appropriately. All incidents of poor behaviour are fully documented and monitored, and separate bullying records are equally thorough.
- 4.11 The college consults pupils on a regular basis and values their views. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils stated that the college does not seek or respond to their suggestions. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns. Pupils play an active role alongside staff on committees for e-safety, catering and the co-curriculum, as well as in-house forums. During interviews pupils commented that they receive frequent feedback from the many forums to which they contribute.
- 4.12 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and to participate in regular exercise. There are extensive opportunities for sport and other physical activities. The ELW curriculum raises awareness amongst pupils and staff of the importance of pupil well-being, their mental health and the development of a positive character. The college ensures that staff are trained in mental health issues affecting young people. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils expressed concern about the quality and quantity of food. Inspection evidence shows that considerable effort has been made to respond to concerns previously expressed by pupils, and that the meals are now nutritious and cater to different needs.

- 4.13 The college has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND, which is reviewed annually and implemented effectively.

#### **4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.14 The quality of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 The leadership, senior management and the governors take very active steps to ensure in the welfare, health and safety of those in the college. Excellent senior appointments to manage health and safety and safeguarding have been made which ensure that all procedures are rigorous, efficient and regularly monitored. The health and safety committees of the college have been re-structured and an executive committee now meets monthly. Extensive revision of health and safety documents and procedures has taken place. The college uses independent consultants who help in the annual audits and risk assessments. The governors demonstrate a clear commitment by having a specific governor responsible for monitoring procedures and reporting on them each term.
- 4.16 There are robust systems in place to manage risks from fire, including fire risk assessments and regular checks on equipment. Fire drills are logged and evaluated to reduce risk and drills take place each term. Risk assessments for all areas of the college and for trips outside the college are thorough and suitable and the college has a policy for risk assessment. The buildings and grounds are maintained to a high standard to provide a safe and attractive working environment. In response to the recommendations of the previous boarding inspection, enhanced street lighting and traffic calming measures have been installed on roads across the campus. Road safety training is given to all pupils each term.
- 4.17 The appointment of senior staff with specific responsibility for child protection and safeguarding, and the creation of a pastoral committee, gives staff and pupils a range of appropriate figures they can approach for support and advice. The safeguarding arrangements have been fully revised and updated to meet recent changes in statutory guidance. Annual safeguarding training, as part of the staff professional development programme, maintains high levels of awareness of the need for all members of the college to be vigilant in child protection matters. Safe recruitment procedures ensure that high standards are maintained regarding checks on all staff, governors and volunteers who work in the college. Appropriate procedures are implemented for handling allegations against staff. The governors and senior management maintain close scrutiny of the central register.
- 4.18 The college maintains an appropriate electronic admission register which is backed up daily. Electronic registration of pupils is completed a minimum of twice a day and any absence is quickly followed up. The college knows what to do if a child were to go missing.
- 4.19 A suitable medical centre, overseen by qualified nurses, ensures efficient handling of accidents and illness. There is a comprehensive first aid policy which outlines clear procedures for staff, many of whom have first aid training. First aid is administered promptly and efficiently. The college ensures that excellent care is given for the welfare of those with special physical or learning needs.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders clearly enjoy their experience; they develop very positive and constructive relationships with staff. They relate to each other and to adults with easy confidence and politeness, and comment that they value the social integration and interaction with each other. Traditions, such as the biannual ceremony whereby each boarder shakes hands with each member of the teaching staff, enhance college life. Boarders have high standards of behaviour, born out of mutual respect and tolerance. Common rooms and social areas promote positive relationships across all age groups. Younger boarders appreciate the help given by older who act as mentors. International and new boarders are welcomed and quickly integrated.
- 4.22 Boarders appreciate the large number of staff members they can turn to for help; the support and care they receive help them to achieve an excellent level of independence and personal development. Helpline numbers are clearly displayed in houses, including those of the independent listener and the Children's Commissioner. Boarders take responsibility, serving on college and house forums and they contribute regularly and willingly to the smooth running of their houses. Boarders have opportunities to become independent and develop leadership skills; some Year 12 and 13 boarders become house prefects and help to organise events. Boarders consider that their views and suggestions are listened to and acted upon, where possible, as for example when requests were made to change the dining hall menus.
- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders enjoy living together in a cheerful and homely environment which is very well maintained, warm and comfortable; they have appropriate privacy. All boarders have access to suitable washrooms with a number of rooms having en-suite facilities. Common areas are spacious, with facilities for relaxation and recreation. The boarders personalise their rooms and common rooms. All Year 9 boarders are accommodated in Faulkner's House. The dedicated care of the house staff, and the opportunities this arrangement provides for younger boarders to mix enables boarders to be integrated into the life of the college and helps them to make lasting friendships.
- 4.24 The medical centre is of a high quality, well equipped and comfortable. It is staffed by appropriately qualified personnel and provides twenty-four hour cover. Its location makes it remote from some houses. Boarders report that the distance they need to walk to receive care increases the workload of matrons because boarders ask them for medical care first. Doctors from a local practice hold surgeries in the college every day, and counselling and physiotherapy is also available. Counselling is also available in the houses in the evening. Robust procedures are in place for house matrons to safely administer and store medicines in the houses. Records are meticulously kept; the boarders' competency to self-medicate is assessed the process is monitored. Effective risk assessments are conducted for the boarding houses, and fire drills are carried out regularly, including during boarding time.
- 4.25 The catering staff provide healthy meals that meet the boarders' individual needs. Boarders enjoy meals for special events such as within a menu to celebrate the world cup. In responses to the pupil questionnaires, a minority of boarders were



dissatisfied about the availability of snacks in houses. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Boarders have access to the kitchens in their houses, where they can prepare their own snacks at certain points in the day. Boarders always have access to labelled drinking water.

- 4.26 There is a speedy and efficient laundry service about which boarders commented positively. Some senior boarders also have access to laundry facilities in their houses. The college shop allows boarders to obtain personal items and they can visit the local shops at the weekends. In response to pupil questionnaires, a small minority of boarders were concerned that their belongings are not safe. Inspectors found that all pupils have a lockable space if they choose to use it. Boarders take part in a wide range of supervised activities during their free time, including at weekends, and also have time to relax on their own or with friends. Boarders have easy access to news of the outside world via television, newspapers and appropriate internet facilities. The boarders have the opportunity to contact their families with ease through the use of mobile phones and the internet.
- 4.27 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. In response to questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of boarders answered that they feel safe in their boarding houses. Staff recruitment measures are secure and safeguarding training is in place for all staff. Boarders state, without hesitation, that they are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and fairly by staff. Staff understand the procedures for searching pupils and the use of reasonable force, but say they have never had to use them. Boarders regard sanctions to be fairly and consistently administered and recognise the need for rules. Rewards for academic progress and positive contributions to house and college life are recognised and noted on the boarders' files. The access of visitors to the houses is highly regulated and monitored. Boarders are supervised appropriately; there is generous provision of in the boarding houses, and boarders are easily able to contact a member of staff on duty, including at night. Staff accommodation is appropriately separate from that of the boarders.
- 4.28 The effectiveness of leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. The leadership given by housemasters and mistresses, together with the senior leadership, and effective monitoring by governors ensure that the college achieves its ambitious aims for boarding. The college is highly successful in developing the personal and social skills necessary for boarders to live harmoniously within a community whatever their individual strengths and weaknesses. There is good communication between pastoral and academic staff. Tutors are assigned to houses to give additional support and house staff monitor the boarders' academic progress. Governors demonstrate a positive interest in and knowledge of boarding; for example, one governor joins each house for Commemoration Day to share the experience with pupils, staff and parents.
- 4.29 The SMT effectively fulfil their leadership and monitoring responsibilities by frequent visits to the houses, talking to staff and pupils, monitoring records, and giving significant amounts of time and resources to the professional development of staff. Housemasters and mistresses lead their teams with commitment and undertake valuable self-evaluation of house procedures which informs their planning for future improvements. They ensure a robust induction procedure is provided for new members of staff. A new system of appraisal for staff is in place, but is yet to be fully embedded. In responses to questionnaires, an overwhelming majority of parents considered boarding to be well organised and managed, and that boarding helps their child's progress and development.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governors are highly successful in upholding and promoting the distinctive boarding ethos of the college. They successfully guide the college in its aim to develop academic success whilst maintaining the excellent standards of pastoral care for and personal development of the pupils. The governing council is very experienced and committed to the college and have a clear and ambitious vision for its future. Its members offer a wide range of expertise from the world of finance, education, business, property and law and use their knowledge to provide excellent guidance, support and challenge to senior staff.
- 5.3 There is a keen focus on strategic development. The council shares a common vision with the senior management in the formulation of the three-year rolling development plan, successfully designed to improve the quality of the educational provision. An annual evaluation of key performance targets ensures that progress is maintained. Governors effectively monitor and evaluate the work of the college through a range of sub-committees which meet frequently. This structure provides effective oversight of academic standards and pastoral matters, including welfare, health and safety. Strong financial planning has allowed for the continuous development of excellent new buildings, accommodation and resources, and the recruitment of good quality staff.
- 5.4 The governors have a good knowledge of the college through frequent visits, informal discussions with staff at all levels and presentations to them from heads of department. They provide outstanding support, guidance and challenge for the head, whom they appraise. New governors are given a personal induction by the head on educational, pastoral and co-curricular activities, and by the bursar on estates and finance matters. All governors are aware of their safeguarding responsibility and receive annual training; one governor has specific responsibility for monitoring the efficiency of child protection procedures. Minutes of meetings show that governors fully understand their role and maintain strong oversight of those areas where they have legal responsibilities including the suitability and implementation of college policies. The child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are reviewed annually by the full governing body.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, is excellent.
- 5.6 The leadership and senior management are highly successful in enabling an outstanding level of personal development for pupils whilst also striving to promote a strong academic ethos. They maintain a clear focus on their intention to ensure that all their decisions are made by asking themselves what is in the best interest of the pupils.
- 5.7 The clear vision developed and provided by the SMT, supported by an effective extended leadership group, ensures that staff and pupils understand the college's values, aims and objectives. Carefully constructed committees take responsibility

for the monitoring and evaluation of key areas of college life, including academic development, pastoral care and the co-curriculum. This structure ensures that staff have many opportunities to be involved in decision making and contribute to college development planning. Extremely thorough strategic planning is informed by self-evaluation at all levels. The college conducts surveys of pupil and parental views and incorporates these into their planning. Annual objectives with clearly defined success criteria are evaluated as part of the rolling three-year strategic plan.

- 5.8 Generous provision for the professional development of staff has focused, since the previous inspection, on improving teaching and learning, with the aim of encouraging pupils to demonstrate greater intellectual curiosity and ambition and raise academic standards. Developments in teaching have concentrated on recognising the value of developing the tracking of pupil attainment, stressing the requirement to provide increasing challenge and facilitating the employment of a wide range of teaching approaches. A faculty structure is being developed to provide rigorous monitoring of academic performance in order to lead to further improvements in teaching and learning. A number of related initiatives have been introduced which have resulted in some excellent practice but they are not yet fully and consistently embedded across departments. Ongoing curriculum review has led to an increased range of options for pupils at the college such as the extended academic opportunities provided by the introduction of the IBDP and increased participation in the EPQ. The recommendation in the previous report to improve technology in the classroom and improve the variety of teaching methods has been met.
- 5.9 The senior leadership team, which includes representatives from the housemasters and mistresses, is outstanding in promoting and supporting excellent standards of personal development for pupils. The quality of care and welfare is regularly and thoroughly evaluated through senior managers' visits to houses, questionnaires and the work of the pupil welfare committee. Excellent management by support staff ensures that welfare, health and safety procedures are very efficiently managed. There is rigorous oversight of maintenance standards for the grounds and buildings to provide a high quality educational environment. New plans have been established to further the refurbishment programme for boarding accommodation, to improve communal spaces and further enhance road safety arrangements.
- 5.10 The college is successful in recruiting suitably trained teaching and non-teaching staff. A rigorous recruitment process ensures that all staff employed by the school have undergone statutory checks of their suitability to work with children before taking up employment; appropriate records are kept. Once appointed, academic staff undertake a thorough induction process. Policies are monitored closely and applied appropriately. The procedures for child protection are well managed and thoroughly monitored. Staff are fully up-to-date with training for their roles in safeguarding and child protection, welfare, health and safety. Almost all parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed.
- 5.11 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. The college is very successful in engaging parents and friends. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the educational provision, especially for the range of subjects and co-curricular activities, the information provided by the school, and the safe, caring and supportive atmosphere provided for their children. Inspection evidence supports this.

- 5.12 The college provides a useful website which contains a wealth of information, including that required for parents and prospective parents. In addition there is an excellent range of good quality publications available. Both pupils and staff are involved in writing weekly house newsletters, the sports news and academic society magazines, such as those produced by the philosophy, history and science societies. The complaints policy and its procedures are clear and comprehensive. Scrutiny of documentation indicated that parental concerns are taken seriously and appropriate efforts are made to handle them quickly and resolve them satisfactorily.
- 5.13 Full reports to parents are provided twice a year; these are informative and helpful and allow pupils to self-evaluate their performance. Interim grades are provided every three or four weeks to motivate pupils and recognise both their application and attitudes to learning. In the examination year groups, likely outcome grades are included but target grades linked to ability are not. This system does not always accurately identify whether pupils are working to their full potential. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of parents and pupils commented that they find the information provided confusing for this reason. Inspectors agree. Parents have excellent opportunities to be involved with the work and progress of their children. Meetings with parents are regular; parents are encouraged to attend sports fixtures, musical performances, drama productions and the many information evenings.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**