



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**CAMBRIDGE ARTS AND SCIENCES SIXTH FORM AND TUTORIAL  
COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Cambridge Arts and Sciences Sixth Form and Tutorial College

Full Name of School	<b>Cambridge Arts and Sciences Ltd</b> <b>CATS College Cambridge/CSVPA</b>		
DfE Number	<b>873/6022</b>		
Address	<b>Cambridge Arts and Sciences Sixth Form and Tutorial College</b> <b>1 High Street</b> <b>Chesterton</b> <b>Cambridge</b> <b>CB4 1NQ</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01223 314431</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01223 467773</b>		
Email Address	<b>principal@catscambridge.com</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Stuart White</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Fergus Brownlee</b>		
Age Range	<b>15 to 28</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>743</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (319 boys; 424 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	14-18:	<b>335</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>141</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>602</b>	
	Full:	<b>602</b>	Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>06 to 09 Oct 2015</b>		

## PREFACE

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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI standard inspection was in January/February 2010 and the previous intermediate boarding inspection was in January 2013.

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

This inspection 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 evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of their work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with a proprietors' representative, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. 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 Beryl Fawcett	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Flora Bean	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Tom Keenan	Team inspector (Head of Sixth Form, HMC school)
Mrs Linda Macfarlane	Team Inspector (Former deputy head, HMC school)
Dr Millan Sachania	Team inspector (Head, GDST school)
Mr Andrew Selkirk	Team inspector (Deputy head, SOH school)
Mr Stuart Thompson	Team Inspector (Director of Enrichment, GSA school)
Mr Matthew March	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Nicola Botterill	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head, GSA school)

## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
(a)	<b>Main findings</b>	2
(b)	<b>Action points</b>	3
	(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
	(ii) Recommendation(s) for further improvement	3
<b>3</b>	<b>THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a)	The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b)	The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c)	The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4</b>	<b>THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
(a)	The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b)	The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c)	The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d)	The quality of boarding	10
<b>5</b>	<b>THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
(a)	The quality of governance	13
(b)	The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Cambridge Arts and Sciences Sixth Form and Tutorial College is an international college situated in Cambridge and owned by Cambridge Education Group. It is part of a group of schools in London, Canterbury, Cambridge and the US, sharing facilities, operational and management support. The group is operated under the proprietorship of Bridgepoint, a private equity company. There is no governing body. Instead, the chief executive of CEG chairs an executive committee to carry out the function of a governing body, including providing strategic direction for all colleges within the group. The college consists of two sections: CATS Cambridge and Cambridge School of Visual and Performing Arts (CSVPA). Each section has a head of school but the two sections share boarding and welfare staffing, with one head of welfare and boarding, appointed in 2014, who is also the DSL.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, a new principal and new vice principal were appointed to CATS in February 2015 and in August 2015 the CATS arm of the college moved into a new purpose built building. The premises at CSVPA have been modified to support the focus of its courses.
- 1.3 As a pre-university study institution, the college aims to encourage all students to realise their potential by fostering independence and maturity, in order to prepare them for their future as global citizens and for successful study at UK universities. CSVPA provides pre-university study and also degree-level tuition, externally validated by Kingston University.
- 1.4 A total of 743 students are on roll with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. A wide variety of nationalities is represented. Students are admitted from the age of fourteen but some are mature students in their mid- and late twenties. Most students are from overseas, speaking English as an additional language and represent a wide range of ability and language facility. Accommodation for those under the age of eighteen is in two mixed residences, one within the new CATS building and the other is fifteen minutes' walk away. This inspection covers the academic performance and boarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 enrolled at either CATS or CSVPA.

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

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

- 2.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good. Students achieve well and make good progress in their learning, preparing them well for the next stage of their academic career which, for many, is a place at the most competitive universities or art and drama schools. From their various starting points, students achieve good levels of fluency in English and express themselves effectively using a wide vocabulary and with the confidence to express ideas. At CSVPA, students' achievement in the performing arts demonstrates high levels of creative and artistic talent and skill. The curriculum is sufficiently flexible to support individuals' educational backgrounds and prior attainment well. The extra-curricular programme allows students to develop their wider skills. Teaching is good and most is supportive of student learning and progress; teaching of EAL requires attention as it can be too focused on examination requirements. Students make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), for whom provision is good.
- 2.2 Students achieve a good level of personal development and benefit from excellent pastoral care. They are highly appreciative of the care and support given by all teachers, personal tutors and house staff, who are readily available and highly visible. As they are encouraged towards greater independence as learners, students become more self-confident, developing stronger self-esteem and, as they adapt to life away from home, deeper self-knowledge. They understand and respond well to the college ethos and have a caring and respectful attitude towards each other. All staff have respect for students in the classroom and beyond, providing a strong example for students to follow. When students leave the college, they are mature and independent, with an understanding of personal responsibility and a clear idea of what they want to do next. They are well prepared for the challenges of life beyond college. Provision for welfare, health and safety is excellent, as is that for boarding. The diverse character of the boarding community is valued by the students.
- 2.3 The quality of governance and leadership and management is excellent. The executive committee provides the college with strong oversight and strategic direction and fully discharges its responsibilities for safeguarding, standards, financial planning, investment in staff, accommodation and learning resources. Throughout the college, leadership and management carefully ensure a safe and supportive environment that actively promotes student achievement, well-being and personal development. A recent, stringent review has provided a renewed sense of direction and purpose. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, parents thought they could easily contact the staff who care for their child and were pleased with their progress. The required information is provided to parents through the school website, and regular posts are made to an active social media page. Clear and useful reports are sent to parents every half term. Parents' concerns or complaints are dealt with swiftly and efficiently, in line with the college's policy, and satisfactorily resolved.

## **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 that all teaching reflects the most effective practice that exists in the college.
2. Improve the quality of specialist teaching of English as an additional language so that it reflects the wider needs of the students.
3. Respond to students' concerns about the quality and range of food provided.



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

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

- 3.1 The quality of students' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Students achieve well and make good progress in their learning, preparing them well for the next stage of their academic career, thus fulfilling the aims of the college. Students, almost all of whom have EAL, together with those with SEND, demonstrate increasing levels of knowledge and understanding in their lessons, going on to achieve well. They achieve good levels of fluency in English from their various starting points, and can be highly articulate, and express themselves using a wide vocabulary and with confidence in conveying ideas. For example, in an AS English lesson, students understood and discussed well the concepts of parody and melodrama. Students have good levels of numeracy and are capable of applying mathematical concepts to a range of scientific contexts.
- 3.3 The more able students achieve highly through being part of the key professions programme, where they extend their mathematical and scientific knowledge. Students use ICT regularly for their own independent learning, but there are fewer opportunities in lessons. At CSVPA, students' achievement in the performing arts and demonstrates high levels of creative and artistic talent and skill. Students are successful in achieving places at the most competitive universities and art and drama schools.
- 3.4 The extra-curricular programme allows students to develop their wider skills well. Students' notable achievements outside the classroom include: students reaching the semi-finals a university robotics competition; achieving multiple medals in the national mathematics and science Olympiads; individual success at the very highest level (Roentgenium) in the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge; representing Cambridge city individually in national swimming competitions; and reaching the second round of the Cambridge University debating competition, which is highly commendable within the context of their second language.
- 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 national statistics are available. Performance at GCSE has been similar to the national average for maintained schools. In 2013, girls' results were above the national average for girls in maintained schools. The IGCSE results in mathematics have been similar to worldwide norms but EAL results were below worldwide norms overall, although in 2013 results were above both the UK and worldwide averages. The A-level results have been variable from above the national average for maintained schools in 2012 to similar to the national average for maintained schools in 2014. The usual measures of A-level performance are not always a reliable measure of attainment relative to ability for CATS students because many do not have sufficiently proficient English to allow fair or meaningful access to formal baseline testing. Many students, both on the A-level and the CATS university foundation programmes, achieve the highest A-level grades, including some who achieve four passes at grade A\*. Over 46 per cent of A-level grades were A or A\* in 2015. At CSVPA, student achievement and success in Level 3 Diplomas in art and design, and in visual and performing arts, is considerably above the national average.
- 3.6 Inspection evidence, including observation, scrutiny of work and discussions, show that students make good progress. This includes those with SEND who are well

provided for, with in-class and individual support, and those who are seen to be able. Development of English is a prime focus of the college and progress in this area is good, and often more rapid when students are actively engaged in the acquisition of language to develop fluency. Standardised measures of progress in the sixth form for those students that took both the baseline test and A-level exams indicates that they make progress in A level that is appropriate in relation to the average of students with similar abilities.

- 3.7 Students are pleased to be at the college, are eager to learn and focus well in lessons at both CATS and CSVPA. Their folders are well maintained and reflect care and pride in their work. Close monitoring of their work and regular internal exam assessments ensure that a high level of commitment and focus on the standard of their work is maintained. The recommendation in the previous inspection report with regard to punctuality has been met. Students arrive punctually to lessons.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The college provides a distinctive and responsive curriculum that supports its aim to encourage all students to realise their potential. A strength of the curriculum is its flexibility, which enables students to pursue programmes of study that build on their prior experiences and which cater for their present needs and aspirations.
- 3.10 At CATS, students may follow a core GCSE curriculum and choose three additional subjects, which include a number of modern foreign languages. An accelerated programme of study, through which students may complete a selection of GCSE subjects in one year, is also available. For students who are not in a position to access the GCSE courses, the college has developed a one-year Contextual Language in Learning (CLIL) programme. A range of A-level subjects and university foundation programme courses is available for students with an appropriate level of achievement, some of which may be commenced in January. The school encourages students to study Chinese, Russian, German, French or Spanish at A level, if one of these is their native language.
- 3.11 The curriculum at CSVPA offers a broad range of high-quality courses in the graphic, creative and expressive arts, including an extended diploma in art and design and a performing arts pre-foundation course, which have university accreditation. Students undertaking the drama foundation course may participate in masterclasses given by external lecturers. The courses offered provide for much cross-curricular collaboration. The curriculum is supported by excellent facilities. Since the previous inspection, the relocation of CATS has led to the improvement in the space and provision for pupils' personalised learning.
- 3.12 Students with SEND receive highly effective support, tailored to their individual needs, which enables them to make good progress. Those with EAL, the majority of the students, are well provided for, including regular sessions that develop their subject-specific language skills. The needs of both SEND and EAL students are well met by subject teachers. The most able students and those with particular talents and gifts are appropriately extended through the key professions programme, and many participate in challenging activities such as mathematical Olympiads and the Bank of England interest rate challenge.

- 3.13 Students participate in a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), delivered by personal tutors and external speakers. Following the recommendation from the previous inspection, this affords them good opportunities to nurture their personal skills and to engage with issues such as mental health, although the time provided limits the activities that students may undertake with their tutors. The programme actively promotes fundamental values of democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- 3.14 The advice the college provides to pupils making applications to courses in further education or at degree level, including at US institutions, is highly effective. Students appreciate the opportunities they have to discuss their higher-education and career aspirations with staff.
- 3.15 A good programme of extra-curricular activity, which the college has expanded since the previous inspection, is available and continues to be developed. It includes competitive sports such as badminton and basketball, pursuits such as debating, taekwondo and astronomy, and activities enshrined within The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. The cultural life of the college is not yet enriched by sufficient opportunities for student involvement and participation in music. Boarding students have fewer extra-curricular opportunities at the weekend, but the college is in the process of improving its provision in this area.
- 3.16 The college has a number of fruitful community links. Staff at the university, the local hospital and local businesses provide expertise that enriches students' knowledge and broadens their horizons. Students draw inspiration from the collections at the nearby museums and galleries. Equally, they benefit from a busy schedule of trips and visits farther afield.

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

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 Teaching is in line with the school's aim to encourage all students to realise their potential and a significant amount of teaching is excellent. Most teaching fosters real interest amongst the students with questioning that engages and inspires them to think and to take an active part. Clear knowledge of the needs of individual students allows challenge aimed at all ability levels. In psychology, for example, the students enthusiastically explored a study of conformity through pair work, and using their detailed knowledge, actively encouraged their less confident peers. In the small proportion of teaching that was less successful, there were fewer opportunities to engage students actively in the process of learning and to deploy strategies to reinforce their learning, with the result that progress was slower.
- 3.19 Much of the teaching shows great energy, empathy and pace, and employs a variety of methods to inspire students. As a result of this, good progress has been made to address the recommendation from the previous inspection report to improve the quality of teaching by the use of more imaginative teaching styles and resources. Teachers have access to good teaching resources to support their lessons and ICT is often used to present ideas on the whiteboards. Students were also observed using their own mobile technology to support their learning. All teaching is well focused on learning and the students actively take part in the range of tasks that their teachers set.

- 3.20 Many students work well independently and their commitment to overcoming the challenges of study in England was evident throughout the inspection. The ethos promoted across the college and by its entire staff creates an effective working environment in lessons where tolerance and respect for others are natural amongst the diverse cultures of the students. Since the previous inspection, the college has further embedded English across the curriculum to increase the awareness amongst teachers of how to work specifically with EAL students. Evidence of this could be seen by the care teachers placed on making sure that the language was accessible to whole classes, including discussion of the meaning of words before starting on problems, and the valuable use of prompt sheets to help students answer extended writing questions and guide them on sentence structure. The most beneficial teaching encouraged all the students in the class to talk and involve themselves in class discussion, for example in a media lesson where students were actively and enthusiastically discussing and sharing their views on the conventions and codes found in science-fiction movies. In contrast to this, the quality of specialist teaching provided for EAL students is variable, with an over-focus on preparation for IELTS, missing opportunities to develop more general language skills to assist students with their other studies. Co-ordinators of SEND and additional learning support directly guide the identified students and ensure that teaching colleagues are aware of their capabilities so that lesson planning is appropriate.
- 3.21 The inspection took place at an early time in the college year and thus only a limited amount of students' work was available to see, but this showed regular marking and feedback, the most effective of which added helpful comments and target setting, and gave an excellent guide to students on how to improve their work. Students are regularly assessed and summary reports each half term are effective in giving them, and their parents, information about their progress and longer-term targets: this encourages students to take responsibility for their learning.
- 3.22 Teachers are well qualified, have strong subject knowledge, and many are very passionate about their subjects and meeting the needs of their students. For example, teaching in mathematics, exploring coding when calculating summary statistics, had students highly enthused and inspired their confidence. The vast majority of responses to the student pre-inspection questionnaire were of the opinion that teachers help them to learn. In an English for Academic Purposes lesson, for example, the teacher encouraged individuals to carry out online research of different origami models before trying them out and exploring the language used in the instructions provided.

## 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 pupils is good.
- 4.2 Students achieve a good level of personal, spiritual development. This resonates with its aims and is implicit in the ethos of the college, which takes active steps to promote both the students' personal development and their understanding of the character of shared British values. As they are encouraged towards greater independence as learners, students become more self-confident, developing stronger self-esteem and, as they adapt to life away from home, deeper self-knowledge. The faith rooms offer a space for reflection and personal religious observance, and younger GCSE students have begun keeping a weekly '*Reflective Journal*' to record their thoughts and experience of college life.
- 4.3 Students develop a strong moral sense. This was seen in discussions in lessons: in A-level English for example, when studying Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the discussion focussed on the moral issues raised about the nature of the sexual relationship between the main characters. The debating club has discussed issues such as 'Should we abolish marriage?'. Students understand and respond well to the college ethos and have a caring and respectful attitude towards each other. They show considerable mutual respect when working with others, for example in pair and group work. The respect all staff have for students is evident in the classroom and beyond, and permeates college life, providing a strong example for students to follow. Students have a clear sense of right and wrong and, with the minimum amount of intervention, behave well. This is in keeping with the values of the college. Students have a suitable knowledge of the laws of England.
- 4.4 The social development of students is good. They show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves and to this end the cookery club is currently planning a Christmas celebration, with mince pies and carol singing, for the local old people's home, and the College Council has organised successful appeals on behalf of disaster victims. Students learn, through their studies and through the newly developed PSHEE programme, about fundamental values within British society. Through the multi-national, multi-faith and multi-cultural community of the college, which is their home, they also develop a strong mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and they learn to value difference. Respect for democracy and an understanding of the democratic processes, including a respect for the law and individual liberty, is formalised in the PSHEE programme and will be part of the forthcoming experience of electing the college council. Opportunities for learning about government also occur in lessons and were seen, for example, in an A-level history lesson on the political situation in 19<sup>th</sup>- century Italy.
- 4.5 The college's inclusive and diverse community offers opportunities for students to appreciate their own and other cultures, and trips to events at home and abroad, provided by the burgeoning activities programme, offer further opportunities for developing cross cultural understanding. In addition, there are national celebrations such as national food days, International Day and Chinese New Year. The central city location of the college also plays its part in the cultural experience of students.
- 4.6 Students are developing maturity and independence, with an understanding of personal responsibility and a clear idea of what they want to do next. They are well prepared for the challenges of life beyond college.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 Staff provide highly effective support and guidance for students, which contribute well to their personal development and fully meet the aims of the college. Since the previous inspection the new appointment of a head of boarding and welfare has successfully developed the vision of a student-centred welfare provision. This has ensured that students feel safe in a tolerant and welcoming community within a wider international family. The recent implementation of the electronic management information system has facilitated excellent communication of pastoral issues within all areas of the college and enabled more rigorous monitoring of attendance. Since the previous inspection attendance at lessons has significantly improved. Students report that they are highly appreciative of the care and support given by all teachers and personal tutors. This is enhanced further in the boarding houses where house staff are readily available and highly visible.
- 4.9 Relationships between students and staff, and amongst students themselves, are excellent. Students feel that they are well looked after. Teachers know them extremely well and are adept at helping them to take advantage of the opportunities provided. Students are respectful and courteous both within the classroom and beyond. During the inspection examples were observed of students providing eloquent peer feedback in practical tasks, of a mutual respect for each other and of a sense of celebration in each other's successes.
- 4.10 Although a number of students are already participating in a variety of sporting activities, the encouragement of students into healthy eating habits and the benefits of regular exercise is in the early stages of delivery.
- 4.11 The college has effective behaviour and sanctions policies. It has been highly successful in establishing a very positive ethos and clear code of conduct where bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable. All incidents of poor behaviour and more serious sanctions are suitably recorded, with careful consideration given to any related difficulty or disability. Anti-bullying measures are excellent. The college deals effectively with any bullying or cyber-bullying if they occur. A new system of rewards is in its early stages of development.
- 4.12 The college succeeds in securing the views of students through a variety of informal methods. Whilst in the pre-inspection questionnaires a small minority of students did not feel that the college asks for their opinions, the inspectors found no evidence to support this view. For example, student opinion recently resulted in the acquisition of table tennis tables for students' enjoyment. Students also enjoy the many board games available in the student common room, which helps to break down language barriers. The student council elections take place annually after half term when students are established in the college and know each other. Students confirmed that, in the absence of formal structures, they express their views directly to staff and these are noted and acted upon.
- 4.13 The college has an excellent plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 The procedures for safeguarding students are thorough. A detailed and comprehensive safeguarding policy outlines clearly all the required areas of safeguarding and actions to be taken in the event of any safeguarding concern. The college maintains clear links with the appropriate local agencies. The designated staff acting as safeguarding leaders take an appropriately prominent role in ensuring child-protection training so that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff appointments are fully vetted for suitability of applicants and the single central register is maintained accurately.
- 4.16 Highly effective arrangements for the day-to-day running of the college ensure that students remain safe and are well cared for. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Weekly fire alarm testing and fire drills are undertaken, with outcomes accurately recorded and reported. Ongoing training for staff ensures increased awareness and consistently high standards from staff as they carry out their responsibilities for the safety of students.
- 4.17 The premises, which include the new building, boarding accommodation and newly refurbished performing-arts building, provide a comfortable and stimulating environment for staff and students.
- 4.18 The health and safety committee includes a wide range of staff from all departments of the college. They meet regularly to provide highly effective oversight of all school activities and to minimise risk through working closely with all staff. All college activities, including trips and outings, are subject to thorough risk assessments. Appropriately detailed welfare, health and safety policies meet requirements. All college activities including trips and outings are thoroughly risk assessed. Potential risks are dealt with swiftly.
- 4.19 Appropriate arrangements are in place for the care of students who are ill or injured. Suitably trained staff in the new medical centre support the needs of students well. Excellent arrangements are in place to ensure easy access to buildings for any student with a disability.
- 4.20 Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

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

- 4.21 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Students join the college for various periods of time and are seamlessly assimilated into the welcoming boarding environment. Their personal development is clearly promoted by their boarding experience. They are confident and erudite, exhibiting good relationships with one another, on account, to a large degree, of the warm and inclusive atmosphere engendered by the multi-cultural boarding staff. Whilst the system is still evolving, there are growing opportunities for the students to contribute to the life of their house and the developing activities programme offers a range of challenges both on and off campus. Boarders feel safe and confident in the boarding environment and report that there are a number of adults they trust and to whom they can turn in times of need. They are happy and enjoy their time in the college, appreciating its friendly atmosphere.

- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The boarding accommodation, with each student in a single en-suite room, is comfortable, gives a good degree of privacy and is effective in ensuring their personal needs and gives them confidence that their possessions are secure. A faith room is available in Elizabeth House and is valued by the students. The accommodation is modern and clean, noticeboards are appropriately placed and give necessary college and external information to boarders. Houses have limited social areas, although the facilities of the main school building adjacent to Elizabeth House are widely utilised and the large common room is a popular meeting point. Plans to build a common room in the central area of Varsity House in the current academic year have been approved. In both houses, appropriate kitchen areas are available, with appropriate basic food preparation facilities. Bedding is centrally laundered weekly and there are washing machines and dryers for personal clothing. Houses are secure, and access arrangements give entry only to the relevant corridor. Fire practices are regularly carried out and all boarders have a lockable safe within their rooms. The induction of new boarders is comprehensive and the management of boarding houses reflects the multi-racial and multi-cultural nature of the college. Access to Cambridge, with the necessary permission, allows students to purchase necessary toiletries and other items. In their pre-inspection responses, a very small minority of boarders expressed concern over being able to maintain contact with their families. Inspection evidence did not support this view, finding that boarders are able to maintain regular contact with their families through use of mobile phones and other electronic devices.
- 4.24 A range and variety of food is available to students. In the pre-inspection questionnaires and during interviews with students a majority did not agree that the food is good. The inspection evidence supported this view, finding the variety of food on offer to be somewhat limited. A cash coffee bar is open in the dining area throughout the day but a very small minority of students was dissatisfied with the provision of snacks outside meal time. The extra-curricular programme offers a range of challenges both on and off campus. Students report that the weekend programme needs further development and the need for improvement is recognised by the college. A small minority of older students reported in questionnaires and in interview a lack of opportunity to develop leadership skills, take on responsibilities and contribute their opinions; inspectors found these opportunities to be in the early stages of development and therefore limited at present.
- 4.25 Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent. The designated safeguarding lead and two deputies are appropriately trained and boarding staff receive regular safeguarding training; safer-recruitment procedures are followed stringently. Staff induction is comprehensive and effective arrangements are in place for continuing professional development. There is no unauthorised entry to the boarding houses and visitors are accompanied at all times. Staff register boarders' attendance regularly and know the whereabouts of boarders at all times. The college has a clear policy and procedures in the event of a missing boarder. There are currently no adults or children, other than boarders and staff, over the age of 16 living in boarding accommodation. Fire drills in boarding time take place on a termly basis and records are kept. The college has suitable procedures for health and safety matters which are effectively implemented in accordance with its written policy. The medical facilities are suitable and effective new policies and procedures are in place relating to medical recording and monitoring. Medicines are stored appropriately and medical confidentiality is respected. Parental permission for medical treatment, first aid and non-prescription medication is sought. Policies and



procedures to promote good behaviour and counter bullying are clear and effective. They are well understood by boarders who report that they trust staff and that their sanctions are fair and consistent; any bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively by the well-regarded welfare staff. Students say they are kind and helpful.

- 4.26 The leadership and management of the boarding provision are excellent. The head of welfare and boarding chairs regular boarding staff meetings involving the full-time boarding staff. Day-to-day management of the boarding is in the hands of a boarding duty manager in each house, is efficient and provides thorough oversight of students' activities and well-being. Before lessons and after school four house parents operate in each house and daytimes are covered by a house day supervisor. A supervisor is on duty in each house overnight. Students also have a personal tutor from the academic staff who meets them daily. There is regular contact between the personal tutor and the relevant members of the pastoral staff by way of the redeveloped management information system, which also allows pastoral staff to record all matters pertaining to the students in their care. The system also offers filter tabs so that confidential matters are available only to members of the welfare or medical team, as appropriate. All pastoral staff are comprehensively inducted, have clear job descriptions and are encouraged to follow professional development courses. Well-regarded regular professional development opportunities are also arranged within the college for the entire boarding team. The appraisal system has been modified and an annual appraisal is to be the norm for all pastoral staff.

## **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 executive committee carries out the function of a governing body and provides the college with strong oversight and strategic direction. Its members are committed to the progress and realisation of the college's development. Through regular meetings every two months, the committee receives thorough and informative analyses of educational and financial information that enables its members to fully discharge their responsibilities for standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and learning resources. The fine new CATS building demonstrates the way in which an intention for the college's growth and development has reached fruition. A change of structure is underway to make the role of chairman sit more appropriately alongside the principal, as the person responsible for key decisions for this college.
- 5.3 The members of the committee have good insight into the day-to-day activity of the college through very close involvement with college operations and regular contact with the principal and other senior staff, although it is acknowledged that all do not have a sufficiently wide view through planned meetings with students and other members of staff.
- 5.4 The governing body discharges its responsibilities for child protection, welfare, and health and safety efficiently and the detail and recording of this information is immaculate. The annual review of safeguarding and child-protection arrangements is considered by the executive committee as a whole. A programme to improve its detailed understanding of regulations is in place.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management of the college, including links with parents and others, is excellent.
- 5.6 Throughout the college, the safeguarding of students is carefully ensured in a safe and supportive environment that actively promotes student achievement, well-being, personal development and welfare. Staff are suitably trained for their roles in meeting such needs.
- 5.7 In the relatively short time since the appointment of the most senior leaders, all aspects of the college's provision has been stringently reviewed to provide a clear sense of direction and purpose associated with high quality education and support for students' personal development and pastoral care. This is evident across the college and gives college development the highest priority.
- 5.8 Needs have been thoroughly identified and action prioritised, as seen in the significant improvement of boarding provision and the development of the number and range of extra-curricular activities. In several areas of the college, where there is a need for change, leadership has already set plans in place for their improvement. The new management information system enables excellent communication between staff, and in turn staff and parents. The staff of the college

have welcomed the changes. They benefit from a style of leadership that is considerate and, as appropriate, seeks to inform and involve them in developments. As a consequence, students benefit from a consistency of approach and an agreed overarching philosophy.

- 5.9 At all levels of responsibility, the aim of the college associated with creating the conditions for academic success is well understood and provides the focus for management of teaching and learning, although at the level of middle management the monitoring of teaching is not yet fully consistent and the quality of specialist teaching of EAL is variable.
- 5.10 The college has been successful in recruiting suitably qualified staff and supports them through an effective appraisal system and ensuring that they are suitably trained for their roles. Professional development is regularly available, such as an in-house session on interactive whiteboards which ran during the inspection week. Ideas are shared informally and through other activities like the University Foundation Programme collaboration between the different CATS colleges within the company umbrella.
- 5.11 The recommendations for improvement in the previous inspection have generally been met. The college has accepted the need to improve the teaching of PSHEE and provision is currently being developed and implemented. Punctuality to lessons has been greatly improved. Students are actively encouraged to be punctual by teachers and personal tutors and lessons observed during the inspection usually started with all students in place. Improvement of the facilities and space available for personalised learning has been remedied by the opening of the new building. There is good evidence of improvement of the overall quality of teaching, and this continues to be a focus for improvement within the college.
- 5.12 Links between parents and the college are difficult to maintain because the vast majority of parents, carers and guardians are based overseas, and many have a limited grasp of English. In their questionnaire responses, parents were largely positive about the college, felt their questions were dealt with in a timely manner, and would recommend the college to others. Student services have a range of language specialists to enable effective communication; parents thought they could easily contact the staff who care for their child and were pleased with their progress. Appointments are made for those parents who visit the college to discuss their child's progress with appropriate staff. The required information is provided to parents through the school website, and regular posts are made to an active social media page. Clear and useful reports are written for the students every half term, containing comments, grades and helpful targets, and these are also sent to parents. Where parents' concerns or complaints are raised, they are dealt with swiftly and efficiently, in line with the college's policy, and satisfactorily resolved.

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