



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

DULWICH COLLEGE

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Dulwich College

The Junior School and the Kindergarten and Infants' School were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	Dulwich College		
DfE Number	210/6000		
Registered Charity Number	1150064		
Address	Dulwich College Dulwich Common London London SE21 7LD		
Telephone Number	020 8299 9252		
Fax Number	020 8693 6319		
Email Address	woodm@dulwich.org.uk		
Head	Dr Joseph Spence		
Chair of Governors	Lord Turnbull KCB CVO		
Age Range	11 to 19		
Total Number of Pupils	1325		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	11-18:	1325	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	1196	
Number of Boarders	Total:	129	
	Full:	111	Weekly: 18
Inspection Dates	25 Nov 2014 to 28 Nov 2014		

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 November 2008.

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) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website 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.

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. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

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 other governors, observed a sample of the extra-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
Mr John Aguilar	Team Inspector (Principal, Society of Heads school)
Mrs Fiona Boulton	Team Inspector (Headmistress, HMC school)
Mrs Zelma Braganza	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mr James Burns	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, HMC school)
Mr David Dawswell	Team Inspector (Second Master, HMC school)
Mr Martin Kettlewell	Team Inspector (Director of Music, HMC school)
Mr Anton Kok	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mrs Rosemary Martin	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mr Mark Turner	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Pugh	Team Inspector (Senior Deputy Headmaster, HMC school)
Dr Ernst Zillekens	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Robert Decamp	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dulwich College is an academically selective day and boarding school for boys in Dulwich, South London which offers boarding for pupils from the age of 11. Founded in 1619 by Edward Alleyn in Dulwich Village it moved to its present site on Dulwich Common in 1870. There are five schools in the College, in three groupings, each led by its own head. They are: the kindergarten and infants' school which is co-educational from the age of 6 months to 7 years; the junior school, for pupils in Years 3 to 6; and the lower school, for pupils in Years 7 to 8, the middle school for those in Years 9–11 and the upper school, consisting of Years 12 and 13, which are known collectively as the College. The Master, supported by the College leadership team, has overall executive responsibility for the whole College and reports to the College board of governors who oversee all the schools.
- 1.2 The College, founded to educate 12 poor scholars amongst its fee-paying pupils, continues to maintain its founding principles. It welcomes pupils who pass its entrance examinations from all ethnic and social-economic backgrounds. The College reflects the diversity of the area; many pupils come from professional, business and academic backgrounds. Many pupils travel considerable distances to the College from a wide area of Greater London. The majority of boarders come from Hong Kong and mainland China, with substantial proportions from the UK, Poland, Brunei, South Korea and Malaysia. The College is committed to providing a holistic education with the aim to develop the natural talents and abilities of each pupil, giving each the opportunity to excel in every aspect of life. It seeks to create a safe and supportive community, where pupils can develop an independent work ethic. This is intended to encourage a love of learning alongside a sense of social responsibility, and spiritual and personal development.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 1325 pupils in the lower, middle and upper schools, including 441 in Years 12 and 13. There were 129 boarders of whom 111 were full boarders and 18 pupils who board on a weekly basis. The school has identified 337 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 130 receive learning support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are 69 pupils identified as having English as an additional language (EAL) of whom 54 receive support. The ability of all pupils is above the national average with more than half of pupils in the lower school having ability that is well above average. In the middle and upper schools at least a quarter of all pupils have ability that is well above average.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection in 2008 a new chair of governors and a new College Master have been appointed and changes have been made to the senior leadership structure. A new sixth-form centre and economics department has been opened; music and games facilities have been substantially enhanced and refurbishment of existing buildings has been carried out.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the College.

2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Dulwich College provides a high quality of education which, in accordance with its aim, successfully develops the natural talents and abilities of each pupil. The pupils' achievements in their academic studies and extra-curricular pursuits are exceptional due to an excellent curriculum that has no boundaries for learning and excellent, dynamic teaching that inspires pupils to acquire a love of learning. The highest levels of achievement have been reached in public examinations and in the many individual and team activities that are fully integrated into the College day. Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make high levels of progress due to the excellent relationships they share with their teachers and their enthusiasm to engage fully with all aspects of their work.
- 2.2 The personal development of pupils is excellent due to the outstanding support and care provided throughout the College community. Pupils benefit from the multicultural environment in which those from all backgrounds feel equally valued. Pupils show respect for each other and display high standards of behaviour. They grow into considerate and responsible young men who contribute to their local community and the wider world through charitable work and service to others. They are well supported by the excellent provision of pastoral care. Although the College has systems in place to listen to pupils' views the inspection found that these are not consistently implemented. Inspectors agree with the small minority of pupils who reported dissatisfaction with systems to listen to and respond to pupils' views, to enable them to contribute further to the development of the College. The College has successfully met the recommendations of the intermediate boarding report of 2012 to improve traffic flow systems, supervision in the sports centre and achieve greater consistency in recording complaints and boarding house fire drills. The school has ensured that all regulatory requirements regarding safe recruitment procedures have been met.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are of an excellent quality. The exceptional achievement and excellent personal development of the pupils is a result of dynamic leadership, outstanding management at all levels, and a supportive and highly skilled and experienced governing body. The governors and the leadership team maintain strong oversight of the College and careful strategic planning ensures its future development and success. The quality of links between the College and parents is of a very high standard. Since the previous inspection the College has made considerable progress in meeting the recommendations to raise the effectiveness of teaching and of staff appraisal. The College has improved lesson planning to increase the time in lessons for reflection of the work and it continues to review ways to restructure the school day to facilitate more learning time. Governors and the leadership team fully understand their responsibilities especially those regarding welfare, health and safety, safe recruitment and child protection, for which excellent provision is made.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Provide opportunities for pupils to identify and resolve issues that relate to College development.
 2. Improve the structure of the school day to allow for even more reflection time in lessons.

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 is exceptional.
- 3.2 The College is highly successful in its aim to develop the natural talents and abilities of each pupil giving them the opportunity to excel in every aspect of life. Pupils are extremely confident in oral and literacy work across all subjects. They express their knowledge and understanding with ease and enjoy scholarly discussion. They are excellent listeners, enjoy both independent and co-operative learning and display the ability to think originally and logically for themselves. This is evident in the high quality of debate in which they engage. Pupils apply excellent scientific knowledge and numeracy skills across subjects and show an intuitive ability to solve problems, clearly enjoying the challenge. Their excellent knowledge and strong skills in information, communication and technology (ICT) is evident in the high quality independent work they produce. Their work shows a strong sense of creativity, demonstrated in art exhibitions, drama productions and high quality music.
- 3.3 Exceptional levels of achievement are reached in many individual and team interests including British mathematics challenges, science and languages Olympiads and debating, where pupils enjoy participating in the numerous union societies and go on to gain national recognition. Strong representation in national youth ensembles is indicative of the outstanding quality of music making in the school. This is matched by the pupils' level of success in the combined cadet force (CCF), the scout group and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE). Consistent and considerable achievement can be seen in many sports at national level such as rugby, where the College has been national school champion for three consecutive years. Success is achieved at regional and county level in rowing, cricket and cycling amongst other sports.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been exceptional in relation to the national average for pupils in maintained schools, and above the national average for pupils in maintained selective schools. Over 85% of results were achieved at A* or A grades and in 2014 this proportion was even higher. The GCSE results taken early by pupils in Year 10 are consistently strong each year. Results in IGCSE have been higher than worldwide and UK norms.
- 3.5 A-level results, where around nine-tenths of results are achieved at grades A* to B, have been well above the national average for maintained schools and above the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2011, results were exceptional. Results in 2014 maintain previous levels and 75% of those taking the Pre-U examination achieved distinction level. Pupils with SEND and EAL achieve similar levels of success as their peers. Almost all sixth form leavers are successful in gaining places on highly competitive courses, including some winning scholarships to American universities.
- 3.6 The levels of attainment at GCSE and A level, supported by inspection evidence and nationally standardised measures of progress, indicates that pupils make progress that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Those with SEND and EAL and the more able similarly make excellent progress. A particular feature contributing to the pupils' rapid progress is their engagement in a wide variety of

interests beyond their academic subjects. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses almost all pupils and parents expressed satisfaction with the progress they make.

- 3.7 Pupils show an infectious enthusiasm for all aspects of their work, both inside and outside the classroom. They demonstrate an extremely positive attitude and are committed, highly motivated and fully engage in all the College has to offer. Pupils are willing to take risks and are not inhibited in their expression or imagination. In the upper school, the pupils' attitude to work is particularly characterised by arrival at lessons fully prepared and eager to engage without delay.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum effectively supports the College's aims and provides an education that is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. Parents and pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about what the College offers.
- 3.10 The College's distinctive, strong commitment to 'free learning' provides a coherent philosophical underpinning to the educational provision. This ambitious approach successfully breaks down the traditional subject divides and encourages intellectual curiosity. This is realised by releasing pupils of all ages from the normal timetable to follow a range of exciting and stimulating cross-curricular activities, for example, a Year 10 learning day on World War One and the annual sixth-form symposium on themes such as power. Creative events give excellent opportunities which enable pupils to be further engaged with the arts. The pupils' learning is further enriched by an extensive range of well-supported departmental societies, competitions, trips and outings. The College's diploma extends this approach further in Years 12 and 13.
- 3.11 The teaching in mixed ability groups in Years 7 and 8 creates a secure environment for younger pupils. In Year 9 the curriculum expands and more groups are set by aptitude which aids individual progress. In Years 10 and 11 a wide range of options is provided for GCSE and IGCSE studies. Able pupils take public examinations in Year 10, which provides suitable challenge and allows them to follow more demanding courses in Year 11. In Years 12 and 13 pupils study to A level in an extensive range of subjects. An additional liberal studies course provides an eclectic range of options from French literature to cookery.
- 3.12 The College offers an extensive range of co-curricular opportunities that extend the pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to initiate and run new societies such as the Jewish and beekeeping societies. Leadership opportunities are highly developed through the well-supported DofE, scouts and CCF. The provision for music, drama and sport is outstanding with extensive opportunities provided for all ages and abilities. Pupils sing regularly and many drama productions are staged each year. An extensive programme of games and sporting fixtures provides exercise, competitive challenge and success at local regional and national levels. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved with the local community. A strong community service programme encourages pupils to help in local schools, assist with food banks and help in care homes.
- 3.13 The curriculum is kept under continuous and careful review. There is strong provision for pupils with SEND and EAL. A formal scholarship programme across all year groups provides suitable additional support and challenge to the most able. A

wide-ranging and thoughtfully planned well-being programme enables pupils to stay healthy and safe. The provision for careers and higher education is excellent. An imaginative programme equips pupils with research and self-assessment skills so that they are well prepared for life beyond school. Year 12 and 13 pupils are very well supported with their university applications.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 The high quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the pupils' educational experience and exceptional achievement. Inspirational and dynamic teaching provides the academic challenge to enable every pupil to realise their potential and acquire a love of learning.
- 3.16 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. Good planning and the use of a wide variety of methods and stimulating material ensures highly effective teaching is delivered with pace and academic rigour. This allows pupils to make rapid progress in their learning. A key feature of teaching is the mutual warmth of relationships between staff and pupils. In the most successful teaching, time is provided to allow pupils to reflect and contemplate the subject matter being taught. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and are given the freedom to challenge and question. In a small amount of less successful teaching, opportunities to reflect are lost due to over-direction by the teacher and a consequent lack of engagement by the pupils.
- 3.17 In Years 12 and 13 highly knowledgeable teaching demonstrates passion about the subject and uses a variety of strategies to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning and engage in scholarly debate. A particular feature of teaching in Years 12 and 13 is the excellent use of open ended questioning which fosters highly intellectual academic discussions and encourages the pupils to become co-operative learners.
- 3.18 Much teaching uses innovative techniques to illustrate and reinforce key learning points. Some teaching makes good use of technology and exciting resources such as the College archives and library provided an excellent range of teaching aids. Combined with excellent College facilities and the College philosophy of extending learning outside the classroom whenever possible, pupils receive a rich and exciting learning experience which promotes their interests and intellectual curiosity. Although ICT is used effectively in teaching, limited use was seen to be made by pupils themselves in the classroom, which sometimes reduced opportunities for them to extend their independent learning skills.
- 3.19 A small minority of pupils indicated in questionnaire responses that they do not feel that homework enables them to learn effectively. In discussions, pupils thought the homework is appropriate, and the inspection team investigating the homework given to pupils across the school found it to be appropriate. Marking of homework frequently contains helpful comments and detailed suggestions for further development. The marking of work is seen as an important opportunity for dialogue between teachers and pupils to assist further progress in the pupils' learning. Use of assessment data enables staff to track closely the progress of pupils to ensure that each individual pupil reaches his full potential. Teaching uses effective strategies identified in individual pupil learning profiles to meet the needs of SEND and EAL pupils.

- 3.20 Since the previous inspection the College has made considerable progress in addressing the recommendation concerning teaching. More creative and collaborative planning in departmental teams has resulted in more varied, engaging and effective teaching. This has led to an increase in the pace within lessons allowing pupils to make rapid progress in their learning. Improved self-evaluation of teaching and learning has enabled more effective engagement of pupils and encouraged active learning.

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 strong personal development of the pupils is a significant strength of the College. Pupils thrive in the nurturing and supportive community. By the time they leave the school the pupils develop into confident, well-grounded and considerate young men.
- 4.3 The pupils' excellent spiritual development is reflected in their strong sense of personal identity and their respect for themselves and others. The pupils appreciate the opportunities to reflect on their own spirituality whether through opportunities provided in their learning or their engagement in chapel services and assemblies. An awareness of religious faith and the need for tolerance is fostered successfully throughout all aspects of school life and encompasses the many faiths present in the vibrant multicultural community. The school's highly creative environment enables pupils to enjoy rich spiritual moments; members of the madrigal choir created a sense of devotion in their singing of a complex anthem. Sixth-form pupils speak about the impact inspirational art has upon them.
- 4.4 Pupils have a strong moral sense and a clear understanding of appropriate behaviour; they understand that bullying in all its forms is unacceptable. They freely discuss moral problems in tutorials where they feel confident to debate issues of importance to them. Where issues of morality affect their lives directly, such as social networking or homophobia, the pupils show a mature and responsible attitude. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils and amongst pupils promote open discussion; opposing views are given full consideration. Pupils exhibit excellent standards of behaviour because they fully understand the College code of conduct. This is promoted by their involvement in revisions to the code.
- 4.5 Pupils have a well-developed social awareness, developed through their discussions with teachers and each other. Excellent social relationships exist within the school. Through the curriculum and societies pupils develop a strong awareness of public institutions across the world. They demonstrate strong political understanding and are critically aware of their role in British society and the College's past, be it through the College's excellent archive and historical exhibitions or through the wider curriculum. Pupils develop a clear sense of their social responsibility. They engage willingly in charity initiatives which are numerous and enthusiastically supported. They make good use of the opportunities given by the CCF and DofE to learn how to lead and how to follow, and express how much they benefit from taking part in community service activities.
- 4.6 Pupils display tolerance and respect for their own and other cultures and accept cultural diversity as the norm. Pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds are made welcome in the school, and their cultures are respected and celebrated. The annual 'Hand of Friendship' football match brings together pupils from differing religious backgrounds. Pupils become familiar with a wide variety of cultural traditions, especially in the creative subjects, and this is supplemented by visits to local galleries and places of worship. Many pupils benefit from the range of opportunities to travel abroad on school visits and to visit the Dulwich family of schools in Asia, developing further their cultural understanding.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 The staff provide effective support and guidance to ensure that pupils from a variety of backgrounds feel secure and happy. Excellent relationships exist between the staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves, based on mutual trust and respect. Through a well-defined system of form tutors, monitored and supported by heads of year, pupils grow in confidence and understand who to go to with a concern. The parents confirmed unanimously in their questionnaire that the staff treat their children as individuals.
- 4.9 The College has excellent provision to promote good behaviour, which was evident throughout the inspection. The code of conduct published in the homework diary is fully understood by all, as seen in a Year 7 well-being lesson. All incidents of poor behaviour are thoroughly documented and monitored. Although a small minority of pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that sanctions are not given fairly, inspectors found that a clear and consistently applied system operates. Commendations and colours for outstanding performance are awarded and although pupils appreciate the system of rewards, it was found by inspectors to sometimes lack consistency.
- 4.10 The College has very effective procedures for guarding against bullying. When rare cases occur, they are dealt with comprehensively by the College. Pupils know where to go for support and appreciate how quickly incidents are resolved. Almost all parents reported in the questionnaire that their children feel safe and happy at the College. Facilities for disabled pupils are good and an appropriate, detailed accessibility plan includes effective review.
- 4.11 The College has recently undertaken several surveys to seek the pupils' views. There are school councils and minutes show that their voice is heard. A small minority of pupils stated in the questionnaire that the College does not seek their views or respond to them effectively. In interviews, the pupils expressed a wish to contribute further to the development of the College and receive a clearer response when their views are offered. The inspection found that the infrequent meetings of the school council do not always provide this opportunity.
- 4.12 The College promotes a healthy lifestyle. The excellent catering provides a wide choice and suitable portions. Special diets are catered for. The well-being programme is valued and enjoyed by pupils and it covers themes such as healthy eating, exercise, relationships, citizenship, study skills and money management.

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

- 4.13 The quality of the arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Clear lines of responsibility exist within the College leadership team and a dedicated team maintain strong oversight including the completion of an extensive audit of maintenance and health and safety. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and a termly report to the full governing body enables procedures to be monitored and reviewed. Risk is further reduced through suitable risk assessments and a centralised reporting system recording incidents and accidents to identify trends. Due care is taken to ensure the welfare, health and safety of those on school trips and those with special physical or learning needs. Fire arrangements are thorough

and regular fire drills are suitably evaluated. The equipment is regularly tested and efficiently maintained

- 4.15 Particular attention is paid to safeguarding and child protection. Policies and procedures are detailed and monitored by a designated governor, and by the full governing body in an annual review, to ensure that any deficiencies are identified and quickly remedied. All senior managers are trained in safe recruitment and child protection training for staff is updated at the required times. Close links are maintained between the College and local welfare agencies.
- 4.16 Admission and attendance registers are well maintained and stored and staff know what to do if a pupil were to go missing. The medical centre is an excellent facility which provides 24-hour care by qualified nurses. The management of all medical matters is highly efficient. Many staff are trained in first aid and in the treatment of sports injuries.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.17 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.18 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are self-assured and articulate, whether English is their first or and additional language. They relish the multi-ethnic nature of the boarding community. The highly positive relationships between boarders from different backgrounds lead to the development of an appreciation and tolerance of different cultures. Boarders are invariably courteous, defer to each other in conversation, and relate to adults with easy confidence. They develop high levels of self-reliance and maturity, which are fostered by the trust afforded to them.
- 4.19 The boarders are enthusiastic about their boarding houses and contribute to the smooth running of them by their excellent behaviour. Loyalty in each sixth form house is displayed through light-hearted rivalry for the 'Gordon Bowl', an inter-house competition covering a range of sporting and other activities. Younger boarders benefit from the opportunities available to take on roles of responsibility within the house. For sixth formers, such opportunities are available both in the houses and the College, developing their social skills. Boarders feel confident to take suggestions to house staff at any time or to the more formal forums. They particularly appreciate that the opinions they voice in the boarders' catering forum can enable change.
- 4.20 Boarders value enormously the friendships they make, both within boarding and equally with day pupils, with whom they feel fully integrated. If they have a concern or worry the boarders interviewed said that they have supportive friends, but that housemasters are easily approachable and understanding.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The very high level of professional and caring support offered by housemasters is further enhanced by an excellent and natural rapport with those in their care. They know individual boarders extremely well, and the houses have an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- 4.22 Boarders benefit from excellent medical care both in the houses and in the extremely well-appointed medical centre. Staff are well-trained in first aid, the administration and recording of medicines, and the treatment of chronic conditions. The well-qualified medical staff offer 24-hour care and a doctor visits the College daily. Specialist medical services are provided locally if required. Liaison between the medical centre and all house staff is extremely effective. All written policies and

procedures regarding confidentiality, self-medication and the use of household remedies are appropriate and carefully observed, and personal files are methodically recorded and secure.

- 4.23 The induction of new boarders is very effective in helping them to settle in quickly. A challenge issued to sixth-form boarders suggests places they should explore in their time at the College. Boarding houses are secure and no evidence was found to confirm the concern some boarders voiced in the questionnaire that their possessions are not safe. All rooms have lockable facilities. The boarding accommodation is of a very high standard and is clean, bright and well maintained with appropriate heating and ventilation. The boarders are encouraged to personalise their rooms and each room has suitable furnishings with appropriate bedding. Toilets, showers and bathrooms are appropriate for the number of boarders and includes en-suite facilities in the sixth form. Social areas provide excellent facilities including games, computer facilities and TV and there is enough space to allow boarders personal privacy. Boarders enjoy good kitchen facilities where they can make snacks and cook. They make use of the good network facilities for work and recreation, but also to keep in contact with their families.
- 4.24 Boarders have the opportunities to engage regularly in physical exercise and value the College's range of sports facilities. The weekend activities programme is comprehensive and most boarders take advantage of it. Boarders feel privileged to have the advantage of attending clubs and accessing the College's excellent facilities every evening and at weekends. The boarders' awareness of events in the wider world is encouraged through the provision of newspapers, internet connection and the rich extra-curricular programme. Housemasters ensure links with parents are excellent, contacting them regularly by email to update them on their son's progress and by sending a regular newsletter to parents. A detailed 'homestay policy' is applied to any lodgings that are occasionally provided for a few overseas pupils in the half term holidays to ensure the health and safety of the boarders.
- 4.25 The concern voiced in questionnaires that the standard of food is unsatisfactory is not supported by inspection evidence. A wide range of choice of good quality food is provided, in ample portions, and special dietary needs are met.
- 4.26 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding of boarders is excellent. The College implements high quality policies effectively including those for safeguarding and the prevention of bullying. A clear code of conduct in boarding ensures behaviour in the boarding environment is respectful and few sanctions are needed. In interviews, the boarders considered that sanctions are fair when they are applied. Regular fire drills are held, including during the evening or at night. Detailed records are maintained in a common format across the boarding houses. Thorough risk assessments are in place and supervision procedures are followed meticulously, ensuring the whereabouts of boys is known by the house staff. The recommendations in the previous intermediate boarding report regarding the supervision of boarders using the physical education centre in the evenings and the logging of fire drills have been fully met.
- 4.27 The boarding houses benefit from having many resident and visiting house tutors. All duty staff are aware of relevant policies and procedures, and records are kept appropriately, ensuring the well-being and welfare of boarders is of high quality. All house staff, including domestic staff, understand and take pride in their role in supporting the development of the boarders. They demonstrate a clear awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and all have been well trained in safeguarding.

- 4.28 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. The highly dedicated staff manage houses smoothly and sensitively in line with the statement of boarding principles and practice. Staff teams are managed with enthusiasm and humour, and leadership is by example. Regular formal and informal meetings ensure that all staff are kept up-to-date with matters concerning individual boarders as well as wider boarding issues. They ensure that each house has its own identity within a common ethos, and each has a clear vision for future development. Formal meetings twice a term between housemasters and senior leaders enable ongoing discussion of any concerns. Boarding staff follow an excellent induction programme and attend both in-house and external training courses to further improve their boarding expertise. Sharing of good practice is a natural conversation between staff at mealtimes. Staff were highly praised in the pre-inspection questionnaires by both parents and boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance promotes the aim of the founder that the College should be a place of 'good learning'. Through excellent governance and a strong shared vision the College is highly successful in providing a place of exceptional learning. Governors uphold and promote the distinctive socially inclusive ethos shared by the whole College community. Since the previous inspection governance has successfully guided the College in its aim to improve the academic standards so that they have reached an exceptional level, whilst maintaining the excellent standards of pastoral care and personal development of the pupils.
- 5.3 Governors have a very broad range of relevant expertise and skills especially in financial, legal, property, business and educational matters and these are used to excellent effect to provide a thorough oversight of their responsibilities. Working closely together through a committee structure the governors are a strong source of support for senior leaders but are also rigorous in their demands and the challenges they present to them. Governors monitor and evaluate a broad range of school performance indicators including academic results, level of participation and success in co-curricular activities, welfare, health and safety and budgetary control. Governors are well informed about boarding through visits by the nominated governor for safeguarding.
- 5.4 Strategic development planning is strong with clear long term aims. Governance provides successfully for the development and maintenance of the College's accommodation, facilities and resources and ensures that the College recruits high quality staff.
- 5.5 Governors fully understand their legal responsibilities and maintain strong oversight of policies and procedures. A safeguarding committee monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguarding matters including procedures for child protection and safe recruitment and all governors undertake an annual review of safeguarding. Governors undergo suitable training for their roles including a comprehensive induction programme for new governors and all have received child protection training.
- 5.6 The governors devote a considerable amount of time to the College. They frequently invite staff to make presentations at meetings and they have an established programme of visits to share their expertise with the pupils in such areas as law, finance, the media and medicine. They attend many College events and have recently evaluated methods of improving parental awareness of governors. Almost all parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire reported very high levels of satisfaction in all aspects of the education provided for their children and would recommend the College to another parent.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.8 Dynamic leadership and strong management are highly successful in achieving the aims of the College. The exceptional pupil achievement and excellent personal development of both day pupils and boarders reflect the excellent quality of leadership and management at all levels.
- 5.9 The College's clearly articulated strategic development plan is regularly reviewed in order to remain both relevant and ambitious. The plan is promoted by senior leaders and managers at all levels and implemented by high quality academic and support staff. Within agreed aims, initiative by staff is encouraged. This is appreciated by pupils who, following the strong role models provided by staff, also contribute to the ethos of strong leadership within the College.
- 5.10 Since the previous inspection the structure of leadership and management at the College has developed to include the addition of a leadership team for teaching and learning across all sections of the greater College. This promotes an increased focus on the quality of teaching and learning, including initiatives to encourage learning beyond the curriculum. A well-structured biennial departmental review programme encourages discussion about teaching and learning. There are clear guidelines for middle managers to facilitate departmental improvement. In most subject areas good progress has been made, meeting the recommendation of the previous inspection to improve monitoring of departments. Heads of year, introduced since the previous inspection, work closely with their teams of pastoral staff, and with housemasters and academic middle managers, to promote the best outcomes, both academic and pastoral, for the pupils in their care.
- 5.11 The roles of the College leadership team are clearly delineated and work well. Communication is efficient and thoroughly minuted leadership and management committee meetings enable progress to be monitored. Appraisal, on a two-year cycle, is more rigorous than at the time of the previous inspection, which allows effective monitoring of performance and the identification of areas for ongoing improvement. Information about the pupils' performance is presented annually to the governing body which enables strategic planning. A thorough and regular programme of professional development for staff incorporates all aspects of school development, including whole-school issues and individual areas for improvement. There is an ambitious plan for development of buildings. Almost all parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire thought the school is well led and managed.
- 5.12 A rigorous recruitment process ensures that all teaching and support staff undergo appropriate checks of their suitability to work with children. Suitable records are kept. A thorough induction process is followed by suitable further training and review. Procedures to safeguard all pupils are rigorous and all staff, governors and volunteers are trained in safeguarding procedures. Strong support management ensures welfare, health and safety procedures are efficiently managed.
- 5.13 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent and reflects the school's aim to have constructive relationship with parents. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents expressed overwhelming support for the school's provision for the education of their children, and the quality of communication. The complaints

policy and its procedures are clear and comprehensive. Scrutiny of documentation indicates that parental concerns are taken seriously and that the school deals with them promptly and carefully.

- 5.14 The school provides an extensive parents' portal and the accessible website contains a wealth of useful information, including all required documents. Teachers readily make themselves available to parents through email and excellent oversight of all aspects of communication is maintained. The school has begun to make effective use of text messaging and the intranet to communicate regularly with parents.
- 5.15 The provision of a daily report, containing up to the moment information on their child in school, has been well received by parents. Formal feedback is provided to parents each term and these are thorough and helpful. Meetings with parents are regular there are parent forums across all year groups and many parental information evenings, such as for careers, trips and study skills.
- 5.16 Parents have good opportunities to be involved with the work and progress of their children. There is an annual opportunity for parents to meet senior leaders for discussion. A strong and active parents association operates throughout the College and meets regularly. Other societies allow past pupils and parents to remain supportive of the College.

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