



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
LORD WANDSWORTH COLLEGE**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Lord Wandsworth College

Full Name of School	Lord Wandsworth College
DfE Number	850/6064
Registered Charity Number	272050
Address	Lord Wandsworth College Long Sutton Hook Hampshire RG29 1TB
Telephone Number	01256 860348
Fax Number	01256 860363
Email Address	headsec@lordwandsworth.org
Head	Mr Fergus Livingstone
Chair of Governors	Mr Richard Janaway
Age Range	11 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	552
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (364 boys; 188 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 221
Number of Boarders	Total: 331 Full: 91 Weekly/Flexi: 240
Inspection Dates	10 to 13 March 2015

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 March 2012.

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. 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.

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 a governors' representative, 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 Susan Marks	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Zelma Braganza	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Mrs Lynn Clarke	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mrs Susan Gorham	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr Matthew Judd	Team Inspector (Second Master, HMC school)
Mr Nicholas Marchant	Team Inspector (Housemaster, HMC school)
Mrs Isabel Tobias	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr John Vick	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Karen Pickles	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Nigel Willetts	Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Lord Wandsworth College is a co-educational boarding and day school set on a 1200-acre estate with a working farm in Hampshire. It was endowed in 1912 as an agricultural college for pupils who had lost parents through death, divorce or separation. In time, it took pupils funded through fees and in 1957 became a foundation school for pupils between the ages of 11 and 18. It admitted sixth-form girls from 1988 and became fully co-educational in 1997.
- 1.2 The school has a governing body consisting of 11 members, all of whom are also trustees of the foundation as the college and foundation charities were merged in 2012. It currently supports 49 children as 'foundioners'; this is not a fixed number but a budget is set annually and these funds are augmented by a contribution from an endowment fund and from various trusts that support disadvantaged children. Foundioners board, as they have a boarding need, even though some live locally. Boarders are accommodated in a mixed junior house in Years 7 and 8, and in three girls' and four boys' houses from Years 9 to 13. Each day pupil is allocated to one of the boarding houses.
- 1.3 Of the 552 pupils on roll at the time of the inspection, 331 were boarders and 221 were day pupils. About two-thirds of the pupils are boys and one-third girls. Pupils are drawn mainly from local maintained and independent primary and preparatory schools, with 39 from approximately 12 overseas countries. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, and most are of white British ethnicity.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with most pupils demonstrating ability that is at least above average. The ability profile of the sixth form is similar to the national average for pupils in sixth-form education, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. Thirty-six pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom twenty-six receive support, the rest being fluent in English. Ninety-two pupils have been identified as having special educational need and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom twenty-three receive specialist support. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 The school aims to teach pupils that full involvement in a wide range of intellectual, creative, sporting and cultural activity sharpens the mind and deepens one's sense of identity and purpose. Since the previous inspection a development plan has been launched, emphasising pupils' personal development, added academic value and character education. The senior management team has been reconfigured, and the school timetable has been restructured to allow for longer lessons of equal length during the week and an optional enrichment programme on Saturday mornings. Improvements have been made to buildings and infrastructure, including a major new classroom block, with a gallery and dance studio, and the redevelopment of a large indoor sports and events venue in which the whole school can gather together.

- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
First Form	Year 7
Second Form	Year 8
Third Form	Year 9
Fourth Form	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is very successful in meeting its aims; the pupils achieve good results in public examinations whilst developing character and confidence through participation in a wide range of intellectual, creative, sporting and cultural activities. Pupils of all ages attain good standards across all subject areas, and frequently their standard is excellent, especially in the creative subjects and in extra-curricular activities. Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, make strong progress in relation to their abilities. In the sixth form, able, gifted and talented pupils are challenged by an extensive range of activities both in lessons and in the newly introduced, optional Saturday morning enrichment activities, but the progress of some younger able pupils is not always as effective due to lower expectations and less ambitious teaching in some subjects. Pupils benefit from a well-balanced curriculum and an exceptionally rich extra-curricular programme in which they are encouraged from an early stage to try new things as well as develop their own interests. All pupils have a positive and cheerful approach to learning; they want to do well and are willing to try hard.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are extremely articulate and confident, with excellent social skills; they are comfortable conversing with adults and are reflective about the world and their part in it. Pupils show a well-developed sense of right and wrong and are extremely courteous to visitors and to each other. They show tolerance and respect towards those of different cultural and social backgrounds, feel a strong sense of loyalty to each other and to their school, and take pride in one another's achievements. Pupils' exceptional personal development is underpinned by excellent pastoral care. The integration of day pupils into the boarding houses ensures the notable sense of cohesion within the pupil body. Staff are caring and approachable, and the pupils know to whom they can turn if they are in difficulties. Weaknesses in procedures for staff recruitment and in training about safeguarding and fire safety have resulted in failures to meet fully the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety do not meet regulatory requirements.
- 2.3 Governance is sound. The dedicated and well-qualified governing body provides strong support and challenge to senior managers, especially over finances and strategic planning. Governors have endeavoured to address the shortcomings in recruitment practices identified at the previous inspection, but there remain some deficiencies in monitoring safer recruitment and staff training on safeguarding and fire safety. Leadership and management are sound. Staff share senior management's vision for the future of the school and have worked very hard to implement, with notable success, the significant changes recently introduced to the weekly timetable, the length of lessons and the optional Saturday morning enrichment programme. The senior management team has identified the need for, but has not yet implemented, a more effective appraisal scheme for teaching staff which establishes targets in line with the school development plan and which links to staff development and training. Weaknesses in the arrangements for safer recruitment which were identified at the previous inspection have not been dealt with effectively and some key policies have not been fully implemented. The school has excellent links with parents; concerns are well handled and the rare formal

complaints are dealt with in accordance with the school's policy. The policy was amended during the inspection in order to ensure compliance with requirements.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that all new staff receive appropriate induction training in fire safety procedures and that training records are kept [Part 3, paragraph 12, under Welfare, health and safety and, for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 7.1, under Fire precautions and drills];
- ensure that all new staff receive appropriate safeguarding induction training specific to the school and that higher level safeguarding training for designated lead persons is updated at least every two years [Part 3., paragraphs 7.(a) and 7.(b), under Welfare, health and safety and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 8.(a) and 8.(b), under Welfare, health and safety and National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection];
- ensure that references are always received before staff begin work [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and 7.(b), under Welfare, health and safety and National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults];
- ensure the leadership and management of the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent schools standards are met consistently [Part 8, paragraph 34.(1).(a) and (b), under Quality of leadership in and management of schools].

2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, as described above.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Implement an effective appraisal scheme for academic staff in order to ensure consistently high standards of teaching throughout the school.
2. Ensure that the curriculum and all teaching include a level of challenge appropriate for the most able pupils of all ages.
3. Ensure consistency in the quality of marking throughout the school so that all matches the excellent quality of the best.

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 learning is good.
- 3.2 The school is successful in educating its pupils in line with its aim for them to achieve the best of which they are capable. In lessons, in informal conversations and in their enthusiastic participation in the many activities on offer, pupils develop a breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Pupils' skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing are well developed. Pupils are articulate and communicate fluently in class, with their peers, with staff and with visitors. They are able to apply their scientific knowledge to explain their observations of the world and they can define and apply mathematical concepts with accuracy. Pupils are highly creative and are able to pursue logical lines of argument; they enjoy regular success in a wide variety of competitions, such as the school-based art exhibition, public speaking events and contests, national Mathematics Challenges, mathematics Olympiads, national schools' quiz competitions and national singing competitions.
- 3.3 Many pupils achieve success in speech and drama examinations and in instrumental music examinations. A very high proportion achieve notable success in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, from which pupils develop a variety of key life skills. Pupils pursue numerous different physical activities and many participate with great distinction in a wide range of regional and national sporting competitions, reflecting their high level of achievement in physical skills.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the last three years. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and have shown improvement from 2011 to 2013. In 2013, boys' results were similar to the national average for boys in maintained selective schools, and in 2012, girls' results were similar to the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results in 2014 showed an improvement on the previous year. International GCSE results are at least in line with worldwide norms and in some subjects they are above worldwide levels. Attainment at GCSE and standardised measures of progress, combined with inspection evidence, indicate that pupils make progress that is at least appropriate, and in 2013, that is good, in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities.
- 3.5 Results at A level have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2014, there were improvements on the results in 2013. The level of attainment at A level and the nationally standardised progress data available, together with inspection evidence, indicate that sixth-form pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities. A very high proportion of leavers go onto their first choice of university.
- 3.6 Pupils with SEND reach the same levels of achievement in relation to their abilities as those of their peers with the aid of work tailored to their needs in lessons and excellent support outside lessons. Pupils with EAL are helped to gain a good oral and written proficiency in English; they participate in lessons and make similar levels of progress to those of their peers. Highly able pupils make appropriate progress for

their abilities in some subjects, but this is not consistent across all departments or across the whole age range.

- 3.7 Pupils are enthusiastic learners and show strong independent learning skills, frequently going beyond what is asked of them and able to assess their own level of achievement and to set themselves appropriate targets. Pupils understand and value the school's assessment system, which they feel helps them to make progress. They ask pertinent questions in lessons to support their understanding, and they work co-operatively and effectively in groups.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The considerable breadth and high standard of the curriculum allow the school amply to fulfil its aims and meet the needs of all pupils in relation to their age and abilities. Since the previous inspection, the timetable has been restructured and fewer lessons of longer duration have been scheduled in the school day. These changes have been welcomed by both staff and pupils and have removed the need for timetabled curriculum lessons on a Saturday morning. These have been replaced by an optional and very popular series of extra-curricular activities and academic clinics. The Saturday afternoon games programme remains very popular with pupils, offering an outstanding variety of sports.
- 3.10 At GCSE, most pupils study ten subjects; they have the opportunity to take three separate sciences if they wish and the most able mathematicians can also study towards an extended mathematics qualification. All the pupils' learning is enhanced by the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme and by the recent introduction of character education. Careers and citizenship education are both delivered within PSHE lessons and they include teaching about fundamental British values, institutions and services. Political issues are covered in both curricular and extra-curricular activities, and the school takes care to ensure that there is a balanced presentation of opposing views.
- 3.11 In the sixth form the pupils have a very wide choice from 22 A-level subjects, as well as the Extended Project Qualification. The sixth-form programme is enhanced with an excellent enrichment programme of lectures, community action projects, sports, a society to inspire and challenge, and many leadership opportunities.
- 3.12 Since the previous inspection, there has been a major review of the provision for pupils with EAL or SEND and this has had very positive outcomes for the pupils, who feel that they are extremely well supported and valued at the school. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of parents expressed the view that very able pupils do not receive appropriate support from the school. The inspection team found excellent provision for able pupils within the extra-curricular programme, particularly in the sixth form, although that within curricular provision is of an inconsistent standard. The best provision for highly able pupils offers different tasks of varying difficulty within lessons and challenging extension material outside lessons which encourages pupils to think and explore beyond the confines of the examination specifications. This is not a feature of all teaching.
- 3.13 The excellent extra-curricular provision fully meets the ambitious aims of the school. All pupils are expected to be involved in the programme and the school actively encourages and monitors participation. A full range of inter-house competitions is provided, which pupils find exciting and challenging.

- 3.14 Within the outstanding music and drama provision, a large number of events take place in the school's performance spaces. One highlight is a fully inclusive music competition where every pupil is encouraged to perform, irrespective of ability. There are also a number of small ensembles led by pupils, including those in the younger years.
- 3.15 There are many opportunities for the pupils to be involved in community projects. A number help coach sports at a local primary school, a group has worked to improve the appearance of the local churchyard, and some pupils regularly visit a local care home for the elderly whilst others choose to work with children with physical disabilities. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is very popular, with a high proportion of the sixth form achieving the gold award in 2014. The Combined Cadet Force also plays a significant role in school life, including selection in 2014 of a contingent member as the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Hampshire.
- 3.16 An extensive programme of trips is offered, including pre-season training camps for sports such as rugby, hockey and athletics. Closer to home, there are theatre trips to London and all in Year 12 are taken on a university trip as part of their preparation for university applications. Expert guidance is offered by a careers team, and well-directed advice on university admissions results in a very high proportion of pupils gaining entry into their first choice of destination and course.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.18 Strong subject knowledge and effective teaching methods engage and challenge pupils successfully in most lessons. Teachers' consistently high levels of enthusiasm and commitment contribute strongly to pupils' progress. A productive working ethos prevails in almost all lessons, and pupils appreciate the quality of teaching and the commitment and respect shown to them as individuals, and which are promoted amongst them by teachers.
- 3.19 Most lessons are well planned, and are characterised by clear aims, a challenging pace and an awareness of, and provision for, the particular abilities and needs of individual pupils. Features of the very small number of less successful lessons observed included insufficient planning which did not take pupils' abilities into account, had low expectations of pupils' attainment, and lacked a sufficiently varied range of techniques and activities to ensure that every pupil made appropriate progress. Most teaching areas are well equipped with electronic audio-visual resources, but few lessons were seen in which these were used effectively to engage pupils' interest and broaden their understanding.
- 3.20 At the previous inspection in 2010, it was recommended that the best practice in marking should be adopted across all subject areas. Some instances of excellent practice were observed, for example in art, where self-assessment and peer review supplement informative teacher assessment to enable pupils to make excellent progress. However, the application of the school policy on marking and assessment remains inconsistent both within and between departments, and this continues to inhibit the progress of pupils in a number of subjects. The volume of work, including homework, is appropriate at all ages.
- 3.21 The needs of pupils with SEND or EAL are met well across the whole school. Specialist teaching supports the pupils in dedicated lessons as well as in other subjects. All teachers have ready access to valuable guidance on how to support

such pupils and the best teaching observed employed this guidance successfully. For example, a Year 11 lesson with a lower ability English group skilfully enabled the pupils to focus on oral discussion to articulate their ideas before attempting greater challenges in writing. Skilful teaching in Year 11 biology class enabled the lesson plan to be adjusted in response to the needs of the pupils as these emerged during the lesson.

- 3.22 The previous inspection in 2010 recommended improved provision for the more able. Throughout the school, some teaching is successful in meeting the needs of able pupils, but this is not being done consistently across the curriculum. Excellent practice was seen where the lesson included tasks set at three levels, and in another, where opportunities for extension activity for all pupils were provided on the school's virtual learning environment and were widely undertaken. The most able pupils in Years 12 and 13 recognise and enjoy the higher expectations from their teachers, which result in excellent progress and levels of attainment.

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 pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Throughout the school they show high levels of self-confidence without being arrogant, and they are exceptionally mature for their age. Pupils appreciate non-material aspects of life and are able to recognise their own strengths and areas for development. Their confidence, maturity and self-esteem are fostered by the excellent nature of the relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils' well-developed spiritual awareness is enhanced by the study of a range of major world religions. They also gain a strong sense of spirituality through the creative subjects, as seen, for example, in the exhibition by art scholars on the theme of evolution. A number of pupils choose to be prepared for confirmation into the Anglican or Catholic Church each year and they appreciate the way in which the school chapel provides a space for prayer and quiet reflection.
- 4.3 The moral development of pupils is excellent. They treat each other, and their teachers, with respect, and they have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. Pupils recognise that bullying is wrong and their part in stopping it. Their understanding of moral and ethical matters is very effectively developed through assemblies and lessons in subjects such as PSHE, the humanities and the sciences. A knowledge of English public institutions and services is promoted effectively through the curriculum, and pupils learn to understand and respect the over-arching nature of the civil and criminal law of England. Pupils understand the significance of good conduct, and their behaviour around the school is exemplary.
- 4.4 Throughout the school the social development of the pupils is excellent. They are exceptionally well mannered, responsible and considerate. This strong social awareness is evident in the ease with which pupils interact with adults, and with each other. They are co-operative when working in groups during lessons, and they listen respectfully to each other's views. Pupils engage in a wide range of charitable events, displaying social awareness of others and of the significance of helping those less fortunate than themselves. Some pupils regularly visit a local care home, and others take part in an annual sponsored cycle ride in support of a charity raising funds to treat cardiac risk in the young. Pupils have raised money for those affected by the Ebola crisis in West Africa and have sent food parcels to British servicemen and servicewomen overseas.
- 4.5 Pupils have numerous opportunities to take on positions of responsibility. For example, the peer mentoring system is much praised as a way of enabling pupils to share concerns, and the older pupils are excellent role models for those younger than themselves. Through studying subjects such as PSHE and citizenship, pupils develop a good level of economic and political awareness, and from their involvement in various councils and committees they learn about the democratic process.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. They have a firm understanding and sound appreciation of their own traditions and those of other countries, and of major world religions. Through their lessons, assemblies and celebrations of events such as the Chinese New Year, pupils acquire a good appreciation of the Western cultural tradition, as well as of other cultures. A suitable range of visits to galleries, theatres and museums, as well as overseas trips, broadens the pupils' cultural horizons and

experiences. Relationships amongst all pupils, regardless of nationality, culture or faith, are harmonious, supportive and mutually encouraging. Pupils understand the importance of identifying and combatting discrimination of any kind.

- 4.7 By the time they leave school, pupils demonstrate an excellent standard of personal development and are well equipped to play a positive and active part in society.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Harmonious relationships exist between pupils and all staff, and a strong sense of community is based on care for the individual, in accordance with the school's aims. Since the previous inspection, tutoring has been given greater prominence and additional staff have been added to the pastoral team.
- 4.10 Interactions between day pupils and all types of boarders are notably positive. A peer listening service has been developed by training older pupils in listening skills, which all pupils greatly appreciate. Members of the pastoral staff work very closely as a team and meet frequently to ensure effective pastoral oversight of all pupils, for whom they provide very effective support and guidance.
- 4.11 The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Policies are clear and detailed, and incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with fairly. Bullying is quickly identified by staff and pupils acknowledge that, when it occurs, it is dealt with robustly and sensitively. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils expressed concern that staff are not fair in the way they gave rewards and sanctions. Inspectors found rewards and sanctions to be appropriately balanced, well documented and given out with reasoned fairness. Pupils particularly appreciate special awards and handwritten letters of commendation from senior members of staff.
- 4.12 Healthy eating is promoted, with appealing, plentiful food available, although a small minority of pupils find the menus to be repetitive. Inspectors found that the menu cycles are repeated once every two weeks, and that most pupils are content with the variety of meals provided by this arrangement. In questionnaire responses a small minority of pupils expressed concern about the provision for snacks and drinking water outside mealtimes. The inspection team found that a suitable range of snacks, together with drinking water, is available. Opportunities for exercise are legion, with many pupils citing fitness and outdoor activity as a vital part of their school life.
- 4.13 The school makes considerable efforts to cater for pupils with SEND. A suitable access plan includes practical and realistic targets for improvement.
- 4.14 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils stated that the school does not make sufficient efforts to ask for or listen to their views. Through discussions with pupils, inspectors found that the school seeks their views in numerous ways, and pupils were able to point to some changes that had resulted from such consultation.

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

- 4.15 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.16 The welfare and safety of pupils are given a high priority on a day-to-day basis and the majority of staff are trained in child protection. A few staff did not receive this training as part of their induction, although this was remedied by the end of the inspection week. The designated individual to take the lead in child protection has had the appropriate training but that of the deputy designated person was not up to date at the time of the inspection. The school has established close links with local welfare agencies and responds appropriately to any potential child protection concerns. Safer recruitment procedures are more effectively implemented than at the time of the previous inspection. All required checks have been completed on staff currently working in the school and the results recorded but in a number of recent cases, one or more references were received after staff started work. The school records show that it had put in place arrangements for the supervision of the staff concerned until the references were received, usually a matter of days but occasionally longer. The need for greater rigour in obtaining references was a recommendation of the 2012 boarding inspection.
- 4.17 The school's arrangements for fire safety are rigorous in most respects but fire safety training records are not adequately maintained or monitored. Fire drills are practised regularly in both day and boarding time, and appropriate records of these are kept. Necessary repairs or improvements are systematically dealt with and regular maintenance checks are carried out. Risk assessments are carried out for all areas of the school and for activities. Since the previous inspection the school has employed a health and safety adviser with a comprehensive brief to assess and mitigate risk wherever possible. Pupils receive appropriate guidance on e-safety. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that the school keeps their children safe.
- 4.18 Medical provision for pupils with SEND and for any pupils who are ill or injured is excellent. The school has clear procedures for providing first aid and dealing with accidents. Illnesses, accidents and the provision of medications are recorded carefully and first-aid boxes are available at appropriate points on the school site. The nurses are well qualified and many of the staff hold first-aid qualifications; the names of those qualified are displayed in several places around the school.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and correctly stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarders have a very happy and secure relationship with their boarding staff and refer to their houses as “second homes”. They are very courteous, polite and confident in their manner and in their welcoming of others to the school. Their views are heard in several different ways, for example through the house council, boarders’ committees and pastoral questionnaires, and these give the boarders effective opportunities to be heard and ask for changes where they are considered to be necessary. The house prefects, heads of houses and their deputies are strong leaders. Their democratic appointments mean that they are chosen by their houses and this gives strength and respect to their positions. The pastoral care scheme works on a vertical as well as a horizontal level and this ensures that all boarders develop a strong house spirit and a support mechanism for one another. Boarders appreciate the activities, events and opportunities they are given to develop their personal qualities and gain in understanding of the wider world.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for all boarders, who are extremely well supported by the staff in each house. Boarding house staff devote much time to giving individual care and attention in all areas of school life, ensuring that the pupils’ happiness and security are paramount. The pupils feel that they have a large number of individuals to whom they can talk in the houses and they appreciate and value them. Boarders can contact the school counsellor directly if they wish to speak to someone who is not a member of the school staff, and contact details for Childline and the Children’s Commissioner are posted in all house telephone boxes. Boarders are supported spiritually by a chaplain who conducts services in a small chapel within the school. The procedures for unwell boarders are excellent.
- 4.23 The pupils appreciate the trusted, comforting and professional approach from the medical centre staff, who are very well supported by the house staff. Record keeping is excellent in both the medical centre and the houses, and this ensures that the pupils have confidence in, and an appreciation of, both the nursing staff and the house matrons. The medical centre is very organised and welcoming, and each house has a sick bay with en-suite facilities where the pupils are cared for by matrons, with nurses visiting regularly as necessary. Care plans ensure that the staff are made aware of the needs of the relevant pupils. A local doctor visits regularly and appointments may be booked as required; medical support is available 24 hours a day where necessary. All boarding house staff have first-aid qualifications and fire training, and all medicines are secure and checked daily. The confidentiality and rights of boarders are respected appropriately.
- 4.24 In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils stated that they are not happy with the balance of free time and activities in the evenings. The inspection team found there to be an extensive range of activities for boarders which offers an exciting and eclectic mix of sport, cinema, quiz nights, societies, art clubs, dance activities and drama work. On Friday evenings pupils of all ages may choose from a variety of sporting options or a ‘host house’ evening. A variety of trips is offered on Sundays, ranging from London visits to art galleries and science museums to shopping trips locally. This optional programme means that boarders are given stimulating opportunities, but space for time alone when this is preferred.

- 4.25 Boarding accommodation is overall of a good standard, and provides suitable sleeping, study and social space that is well maintained. There has been a focus in recent years on improving the exterior of the buildings as well as some interiors, and this has significantly enhanced the quality of boarding accommodation. Improvements are being made gradually across the site as finances have allowed, so whilst all boarding accommodation is at least acceptable overall, there is considerable inconsistency in quality. Many of the boarders personalise their rooms. Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of designated boarders, and is protected from access by unauthorised persons. Security measures do not intrude unreasonably on boarders' privacy. House matrons are responsible for the boarders' laundry and the pupils appreciate the care they take. Boarders are able to obtain necessary personal and stationery items, and have lockable units in which to keep their belongings safe. Fire drills are carried out regularly at different times of day and night and are recorded appropriately.
- 4.26 The quality of food is excellent and the nutritious range is designed to cater for all those with specific food requirements or allergies, although in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire a minority of pupils expressed the wish for a more varied menu. In questionnaire responses some boarders also expressed the view that insufficient snacks or drinks are made available; in discussions with boarders inspectors found that the vast majority are satisfied with the range and quantity of snacks and drinks. A variety of fruit and squash is available throughout the day in the houses, and pupils in the junior house have squash and biscuits in the dining hall at break time. Pupils can purchase chocolate and sweets from house tuck shops, some houses encourage tuck boxes and many houses provide a large range of snacks in the evenings and weekends.
- 4.27 Contact with parents and guardians is made through tablet computers, mobile telephones, email and landline telephones in boxes in each house, and in the junior house a tablet computer for internet video communication is available for the pupils to use. House staff keep in regular contact with parents to ensure that they are kept updated on pastoral issues and academic progress. Exeat weekends may be arranged, and a robust protocol is in place to ensure the boarders' safety.
- 4.28 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is good. Straightforward and highly effective procedures are in place for signing in and out of the houses, and the security procedures are effective and strongly adhered to. Staff supervision of boarders outside lesson times is appropriate and staff are able to track the whereabouts of boarders in their charge at all times. Staff know and, where necessary, implement the school's policy in relation to pupils going missing, and boarders say that they feel safe. At least one adult member of staff sleeps in each boarding house overnight and boarders have a satisfactory means of contacting the house parent on duty at night if necessary.
- 4.29 The school now has appropriate procedures for safeguarding pupils. Staff and volunteers have suitable job descriptions that reflect their duties, receive induction training in boarding when appointed, are aware of child protection policies and ensure that they are implemented appropriately when needed. The designated person and his deputy have received advanced training although that of the deputy was out of date at the time of the inspection. Staff receive regular training in child protection but some new staff had not received this as part of their induction; this was remedied by the end of the inspection week. The school now has an appropriate safer recruitment policy, though in the past a number of staff started work before their references were obtained. The school performs the required

checks on members of staff households who do not work at the school and the role of house spouses or partners is made clear. A written policy complies with relevant legislation and guidance to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. The policy is understood by staff and pupils and is implemented effectively and consistently. Boarding care is sensitive to pupils' individual needs and boarders have numerous opportunities to raise ideas and express their views; any complaints are handled efficiently and with care.

- 4.30 Boarding leadership and management are highly effective. The boarding principles and ethos centre around the boarders' happiness and development of character, and this is clearly visible in the pupils' confidence and warm approach to visitors. The boarding strategy is closely developed with the house parents by the head of boarding. Whilst the programme of staff induction is in its early stages, developing and expanding as confidence in the ethos grows, the staff clearly are strongly behind the direction the school is taking. Records of staff training in child protection and fire safety are held centrally for the whole school and these have not been adequately maintained or monitored. Some pastoral staff commented on the benefit of focused pastoral courses, which have further developed their understanding of boarding and given them new ideas to bring to their boarding houses.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 Governors make an excellent contribution to the success of the school in numerous areas. They are strongly committed to the ethos of the school and bring a breadth of skills and experience to support senior managers. The main governing body meets four times a year and eight committees meet regularly to focus on specialised areas such as academic and strategy, finance, estate management, marketing and fund raising. Governors offer support and challenge to the school's leadership, monitoring their work and advising on strategy, and in most areas this has been highly effective, notably in discharging governance responsibilities for standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and learning resources.
- 5.3 Governors work hard to ensure that they carry out their responsibilities well, but they have not always been effective in monitoring safeguarding or the welfare, health and safety of pupils throughout the school. They have suitably delegated day-to-day administration of the relevant policies and procedures to senior managers, and have made significant efforts to exercise the required oversight of child protection and safer recruitment, but their effectiveness has been undermined by insufficient familiarity with the regulations and a lack of detailed scrutiny of the implementation of policies.
- 5.4 Governors actively support the school by observing lessons, visiting activities, attending evening events and receiving presentations from staff on a wide range of issues pertinent to the school. Academic departments consider the governors to be knowledgeable and approachable and they value their involvement highly. A governor is nominated to take the lead in matters of safeguarding, and several governors have links to individual boarding houses, although some house staff feel that their links with governors are not closely developed.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is sound.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are effective at all levels in promoting the aims of the school. Their success is reflected in the pupils' achievements, both academic and extra-curricular, in pupils' exceptionally strong personal development and in the very cohesive community that is a striking feature of the school.
- 5.7 Leadership and management give very clear educational direction for the school and this is a key improvement since the previous inspection. A detailed and thorough development plan has been introduced since the previous inspection and sets out strategic aims, one of which is a focus on the development of character, a positive and distinguishing aim of the school. Leadership and management at all levels promote values that encourage tolerance and respect and non-partisan coverage of political issues. The school development plan is supported by very clear and detailed action plans. These set priorities and timescales which are evaluated and reviewed by senior management each year.

- 5.8 Heads of department and pastoral leaders have worked extremely hard to cope with the rapid pace of change since 2014 and are focused on implementing school development priorities, although standards of teaching, marking and assessment are inconsistent. Senior leadership actively supports initiatives from a group of teachers drawn from across the curriculum whose remit is to share best practice and thus ensure that standards of teaching are continually improved. This group is working to reduce inconsistencies in the application of the school's teaching and learning policy. The annual review of individual departments' public examination results and the periodic review of teaching within departments produce valuable information for senior management and teachers to use in their self-evaluation.
- 5.9 The leadership and management discharge their delegated responsibilities for policy implementation and the safeguarding of pupils in almost all areas. Some past weaknesses in the implementation of the safer recruitment policy have been rectified but a number of staff appointed since the previous inspection had started work before references were obtained. Some staff appointed during this period did not receive the required child protection training or fire safety training on induction, and the deputy designated safeguarding lead had not received the higher level update training within the required time period. Some records of fire training received by staff are kept but these are not complete as they do not currently identify those who require the training as part of their induction.
- 5.10 The senior leadership has been highly effective in monitoring the implementation of some new policies and priorities such as the lesson observation system carried out within departments; strong evidence of the value of this initiative was seen in several departments. However, existing quality assurance systems are not always adequate in linking the good work carried out in departments clearly and consistently to the school development priorities.
- 5.11 Excellent staff training opportunities, such as in teaching and learning, are available to underpin staff development and the school development priorities. A group of teaching staff meets regularly to identify and disseminate ideas and best practice. A comprehensive biennial appraisal scheme for support staff was introduced in 2014, incorporating clear targets and timeframes, and identifying training needs. However, there is limited clarity about the teaching staff appraisal system, which is implemented inconsistently across academic departments and which lacks a sufficient level of target setting and accountability to be an effective tool in fully supporting school development priorities.
- 5.12 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. Parents are very happy with the educational experience of their children: high levels of satisfaction were recorded in responses to the parents' pre-inspection questionnaire about the range of subjects available and the very extensive range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities. Most parents are happy with the school's responses to any queries they raise but a few expressed the view that the school has not handled their concerns well. A review of the complaints policy and procedures by inspectors indicated that, in the sample inspected, concerns were consistently handled in a positive, careful and timely fashion, in accordance with the school's policy.
- 5.13 Parents enjoy a great many excellent opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. Pupils' families can be involved in a considerable array of events, activities and social gatherings, such as attending concerts and drama productions, dance shows, sports matches, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and project presentation evenings. The school holds academic evenings, pastoral

evenings on topics such as drugs and higher education, and many house events, for example drinks evenings and house entertainments, where parents are made to feel very welcome. It benefits from a very active group of parents who organise comedy evenings and Bonfire Night functions, and who host campus walks for other parents; they also help the school's canoeing team.

- 5.14 Comprehensive and extremely detailed information about the school and its policies is available on the website, and parents of current pupils have access to further information about their children through the virtual learning environment. Parents receive all the information that is required.
- 5.15 Parents are provided with full and detailed academic and house reports about their children and are kept well informed about their work and progress. The school communicates frequently and very effectively with parents using modern technology including an email system designed for schools' use with parents, a weekly electronic bulletin and social media. The school has social media pages that are updated frequently and through which families are able to keep up to date with its events, and the leaders write blogs and tweets on educational matters.

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