



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

REPTON SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Repton School

Full Name of School	Repton School
DfE Number	830/6001
Registered Charity Number	4390219
Address	Repton School The Hall Repton Derbyshire DE65 6FH
Telephone Number	01283 559220
Fax Number	01283 559223
Email Address	headmaster@repton.org.uk
Head	Mr Robert Holroyd
Chair of Governors	Sir Henry Every Bt
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	665
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (364 boys; 301 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 231
Number of Boarders	Total: 434 Full: 434 Weekly: 0
Inspection Dates	18 Mar 2014 to 21 Mar 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 April 2009.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and chapel services. 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

Lady Fiona Mynors	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Diana Bendall	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Andrew Johnson	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mrs Karen MacGregor	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, HMC school)
Miss Francesca May	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Ms Yvonne Lesley Powell	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Dr Millan Sachania	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Dr Ian Selmes	Team Inspector (Teacher, HMC school)
Mrs Linda Trevethick	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Crispin Dawson	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Alexander Tate	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Repton School was founded in 1557 to provide day education for boys. It developed into a boarding school with day pupils in the 19th century and became co-educational in 1979. The school is a charitable company limited by guarantee and a registered charity, overseen by a board of governors who also govern a nearby preparatory school, which is managed separately. It is set in a village location in its own grounds based around Augustinian priory ruins, with modern additions. All pupils, day and boarding, are based in one of the ten houses. Since the previous inspection, a dedicated science block has been built and the theatre has been refurbished. Three partner schools have been developed in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide a well-organised, happy Christian community in which each pupil, with his or her unique potential, has the opportunity to become a fulfilled and responsible citizen. It seeks to place a particular emphasis on academic achievement, supported by the opportunity for pupils to develop their interests outside the classroom, to enable them to have confidence in their own abilities and respect those of others.
- 1.3 The school is academically selective. The ability profile in Years 9 to 11 is above the national average, with more than half the pupils having ability that is at least above average, and a few having ability that is below average. In the sixth form, the ability profile is slightly above the average for pupils of this age, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. The majority of pupils come from professional and business families who live across a wide catchment area. Most pupils are of white British origin. Within the pupil boarding community, 14 nationalities are represented.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 665 pupils on roll, with just under half of the pupil body being girls. All 434 boarders are full-time. The school has identified 145 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 42 receive specialist help with their learning. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Forty-one pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 26 receive support within the timetable and the remainder have access to support outside lessons.
- 1.5 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
B Block	Year 9
A Block	Year 10
O Block	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 exceptionally successful in achieving its aims. The quality of pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve well and make rapid progress as they receive excellent support. The most able pupils and those with particular skills and talents achieve at a high level in a variety of activities and subjects. Pupils display excellent attitudes to study. They co-operate easily with each other and their teachers, and have a purposeful approach to learning. They benefit from the many opportunities afforded by the curriculum and the wide range of activities available. They respond positively to the high quality teaching, which enables them to make excellent progress as they move through the school.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. It reflects the strong caring Christian ethos of the school. Pupils are confident and mature in their approach to all that they undertake. Outstanding relationships amongst pupils and their rapport with staff are strengths of the school. The pupils benefit from the excellent pastoral care they receive, underpinned by the highly effective arrangements in place for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. The quality of boarding is excellent. The vibrant house communities are central to the school's pastoral structure. The majority of pupils in interviews and questionnaire responses expressed their overwhelming support for the school. The most successful management practices in the houses are not yet shared. Development plans are in place for some houses, although these are not incorporated into an overall boarding development plan.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is excellent. The governing body, with strong experienced leadership, has enabled the school to be extremely successful in achieving its aims. Working closely with senior management, governance has ensured that pupils are well educated to a high standard, and develop excellent personal qualities. Leadership and management are excellent. The school has made significant progress since the previous inspection, including notable improvements in academic results, the strengthening of opportunities for able, gifted and talented pupils through academic societies, and the development of efficient electronic recording and tracking of monthly assessments. Middle management has been strengthened. Many heads of academic departments undertake systematic monitoring of teaching and learning, but this is not yet consistent. The current appraisal system, undertaken by senior management, often involves lesson observation, although teachers are not routinely observed teaching as part of the process. The quality of links with parents is excellent. They are extremely satisfied with the education and care that their children receive.

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. Strengthen further the quality of academic monitoring, building upon the examples of excellent practice, and including lesson observation and work scrutiny as part of a consistent scheme of staff appraisal.
 2. Enhance pupils' boarding experience, share the best practice in house management and introduce development planning of boarding to ensure consistency of provision in all houses.

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 excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are very well educated in accordance with the school's aim to promote academic rigour and to cultivate each pupil's unique potential for achievement. Standards have risen consistently since the previous inspection. Pupils, including the most able and those with SEND or EAL, are confident learners, able to apply their very good knowledge and understanding to a range of tasks. Their writing indicates a high level of literacy, and they are cogent in articulating their opinions orally and developing their train of thought. Pupils use technical terminology with precision, and have an excellent command of vocabulary in modern foreign languages. They display good numeracy skills and are proficient in the application of information and communication technology (ICT). Their physical skills are extremely good.
- 3.3 Pupils regularly demonstrate high levels of creativity across a range of subjects, particularly observed in the excellent quality of artwork on display. They have good skills of independent thinking, although some are less confident in taking intellectual initiative. Their work is well ordered and carefully presented. A number of pupils, often those identified as able, gifted or talented, develop their interests in a variety of academic societies, giving papers on topics such as US foreign policy. Others have had their work published in the fields of scientific research, poetry and history of art. Pupils with SEND or EAL achieve well, developing the skills required for accessing the breadth of the curriculum. Virtually all pupils proceed to university, many to highly competitive institutions.
- 3.4 The pupils achieve at a high level in their extra-curricular pursuits. Their attainment in sport and outdoor activities is exceptional, with talented pupils receiving high levels of support. In the last five years, the school has held 16 national titles in hockey, and pupils have a strong record of success in football, netball, cricket, tennis and fencing. A high number attain silver and gold standard in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). Pupils regularly secure merits and distinctions in music examinations, and the school's musical ensembles perform an ambitious repertoire. Pupils also enjoy much success in national mathematics and scientific competitions.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Performance at GCSE is well above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2012, girls' results were above the national average for girls in maintained selective schools, and in 2013 high standards were maintained, with over 65% of results at grades A or A*. At A level, results have been well above the national average for maintained schools, and above the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2011, girls' results were exceptional. In 2013, 80% of passes were awarded grades A* to B. International GCSE (IGCSE) mathematics results have been higher than worldwide norms.
- 3.6 The level of attainment at GCSE, IGCSE and A level, and the nationally standardised progress data available, indicate that pupils make a high rate of progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. This was confirmed by evidence from pupils' responses in interviews and lessons, and their written work.

Pupils with SEND or EAL progress equally as well as their peers because of the excellent quality of the support they receive. Pupils who are able, gifted and talented achieve high standards as they benefit from additional challenges in their work.

- 3.7 Pupils display excellent attitudes to study. They co-operate and have a purposeful approach to learning, readily engaging with their peers and teachers in discussion. They are keen to do well, and their attentiveness in lessons is usually exemplary. In responses to the questionnaire, pupils felt highly positive about the progress they make in their work.

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 extensive curriculum strongly supports the school's emphasis on academic achievement, and it suits the pupils' abilities. Parents and pupils are extremely pleased with the range of subjects and activities available. Since the previous inspection, opportunities for Year 9 pupils to study design and technology and ICT have been increased. In Years 9 to 11 pupils have access to a suitable breadth of subjects, with appropriate choices that include at least one modern foreign language, usually two, and separate sciences. Pupils are generally set by ability to suit different needs. Years 12 and 13 benefit from an excellent choice of 25 subjects for A level.
- 3.10 The creative arts curriculum is greatly enriched through access to working professionals who include an artist in residence, a professional pattern cutter and musicians who take master classes. Pupils who are talented at sports benefit from an elite sports programme. The strengthening of diverse academic societies since the previous inspection successfully assists the most able pupils to explore beyond the basic curriculum in imaginative and active ways. In the Hampshire Society, pupils reflect on philosophical issues. Excellent use is made of the extended day to offer flexible teaching time to enhance individuals' subject choices, and the curriculum is adapted as necessary to support pupils with specialist skills or talents.
- 3.11 Pupils are extremely well supported in their career choices. They benefit from a thorough higher education programme which includes careful preparation for university, matching their choices to A-level predictions. Pupils are encouraged to undertake work experience, and the school helps them to link with former pupils who can provide suitable opportunities to learn about the world of work.
- 3.12 The provision for pupils with SEND or EAL is excellent. Careful screening takes place to identify any needs, and individual support is provided by extremely knowledgeable specialists. A 'Summary of Needs' is easily accessible to all staff. Specific and practical guidance on how to facilitate the pupils' learning and ensure progress is provided through this documentation and appropriate training is given to support subject specialist teachers. In interviews, pupils spoke very positively about the help they receive.
- 3.13 To enhance the pupils' personal development, the school offers an excellent range of academic and non-academic activities. All pupils are expected to participate in physical activity and have the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of options to suit all tastes. Pupils are highly enthusiastic about their sport, particularly the outstanding quality of facilities and coaching. Opportunities in performing arts are highly effective in enabling pupils to develop and showcase their talents and

interests. Pupils gain significant leadership and mentoring experience through their participation in the Combined Cadet Force in Year 10. This is developed further as they continue with this, or with the DofE or community service as they progress up the school.

- 3.14 To promote pupils' experience of working with people of many backgrounds or in different circumstances from their own, the school has forged strong links with the local community. Pupils volunteer for community recycling and art projects, and undertake inter-generational visits at care homes and in a Derby hospital. They also benefit from strong links and regular visits to Repton's schools in the United Arab Emirates, and to a school in Ghana. These extend their awareness of the world and of their role as global citizens.
- 3.15 A wide variety of high quality national and international trips takes place, deepening pupils' educational experience. Pupils visit local theatres, while Geography field trips have included visits to the Peak District and the USA, and a trip to Iceland is planned. European language trips take place in Years 12 and 13.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Almost all teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' progress and their interest in learning, strongly fulfilling the school's aims. Since the previous inspection, the school has made excellent progress in ensuring that teachers have a clear understanding of the pupils' needs. They tailor the teaching to enable pupils to achieve well and make excellent progress. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to apply themselves with purpose to their studies, as well as with a sense of enjoyment.
- 3.18 The subject knowledge of well-qualified staff is excellent, and they successfully employ a variety of teaching methods that promote pupils' rapid progress. Their enthusiasm and high expectations create a learning environment conducive to high achievement. The teachers know their pupils extremely well, and relationships in the classroom are extremely positive. This underpins the shared drive for academic excellence and fulfilment of each pupil's potential. Very good use is made of questioning to challenge pupils at the appropriate level to match their abilities, which enables them to gain a clear understanding of a topic. A strong emphasis is placed on careful preparation for public examinations. Teachers almost always maintain a good pace in lessons, and time is well managed. Resources are used efficiently. Information and communication technology is used well as a teaching tool to stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment, and to assist their learning. Good opportunities for pupils to engage in independent learning were observed, such as in a biology lesson where clips and teacher presentations were available online so that pupils could consolidate and extend their learning away from the classroom. The use of a specialist internet area for sharing learning enables pupils to post articles and comments useful for their coursework, and encourages excellent peer collaboration.
- 3.19 Almost all lessons are very well planned and structured. In the very few less successful lessons, an over reliance on teacher-directed activity and a narrow range of questioning slowed the pace of pupils' learning and limited their contribution. This resulted in pupils of all abilities being less engaged with their work, and consequently making limited progress.

- 3.20 The best marking and assessment are of a high standard. Teachers generally provide constructive, informative comments that enable pupils to improve their work, make good progress and prepare efficiently for examinations. There is inconsistency within departments in the quality and quantity of effective marking, and less effective marking does not clarify how pupils can improve. Pupils appreciate the helpful oral feedback they receive. They understand the mark schemes and grade boundaries, and the significance of sound examination technique. Pupils speak positively of the extra support given willingly by their teachers outside lessons, if requested.
- 3.21 Pupils with SEND or EAL are well supported by teachers and where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, all requirements are met and the school makes excellent provision. Individual needs are well understood, and pupils' work is carefully marked with diagnostic, constructive comments, explanations about key vocabulary and a clear focus on examination requirements. The most able pupils are usually appropriately challenged in lessons and given additional tasks to ensure that they can achieve at the highest level. Since the previous inspection, a more rigorous assessment system has been developed and is being implemented. Where it is used effectively, the tracking of pupils' performance aids teaching in the planning of lessons. It also provides pupils and parents with regular feedback on academic progress.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent, strongly fulfilling the school's aims. The pupils are well prepared for life beyond school and to play a valuable part in society. Pupils are courteous, considerate and articulate. Their spiritual development is excellent, reflecting the strong Christian ethos of the school. They are confident and mature in their approach to school life. Many pupils are involved in chapel services, through music, readings and prayers or participating in the homily. Pupils develop their own values and beliefs through discussion in lessons and tutor time, respecting and appreciating the views of others. They value the beauty and history of their surroundings and they move purposefully but quietly about the campus. Their mature spiritual awareness is also expressed in art, music and drama.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, as demonstrated in discussions on topics such as drug addiction and slavery. They are able to express and understand different sides of an argument. Pupils have a strong commitment to helping others less fortunate than themselves, and are regularly involved in a large number of charity events and local community service. In the term before the inspection, pupils were involved in organising and running the annual 'Sale of Work', which raised £28,000 for a wide range of charities. In association with former pupils, the pupils also help to support a food bank in an urban area of deprivation.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate excellent social skills when talking to visitors and showing them with pride around the school. They also use these skills highly effectively through the house system, where groups of pupils across the age range share key moments of their day together. Pupils greatly enjoy the opportunities for interaction with the house staff and other adult members of the community who join them for meals. They value the strong sense of community, but also enjoy the friendly rivalry between houses. A strength of the community is the way in which pupils of both sexes happily co-exist and co-operate together at all ages. In their responses to the pupil questionnaire, a significant minority felt that they do not have sufficient opportunities to take on responsibilities. Inspectors found no evidence to support this view. Such opportunities include serving meals in houses, taking on roles as prefects with a great deal of responsibility for younger pupils and organising fund-raising events.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is excellent. Pupils from many different countries make up the harmonious school community. This enables pupils to develop a respect for and understanding of different cultures. Those with EAL report that they are helped to settle in very well. Pupils consider other faiths in religious studies, and visit a mosque and a synagogue. They demonstrate an awareness of their own cultures in discussions on current events, and strengthen their understanding of national institutions, taking part in a mock parliament and visiting the Houses of Parliament and the Royal Courts of Justice.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 The pastoral support and guidance for pupils underpin the school's aims to nurture them within a caring community. Parents are appreciative of the care their children receive. The vibrant house communities, into which day pupils are fully integrated, are central to the school's pastoral structure. Tutors play a pivotal role in the consistent monthly monitoring of pupils' academic progress. A network of five tutors per house, medical staff, counsellors and the chaplaincy provides outstanding pastoral support. Weekly meeting records reveal that any concerns about pupils' personal or health issues are dealt with efficiently and swiftly.
- 4.8 Outstanding relationships amongst pupils, and their rapport with staff, are strengths of the school. The vertical structure within houses is significant as senior pupils provide a listening ear for younger ones. Prefects receive intensive and relevant pastoral care training.
- 4.9 As part of the comprehensive and relevant personal, social, health and citizenship education programme, pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. They take regular exercise through the varied opportunities available. Concerns were expressed in pupils' questionnaire responses about unevenness of the quality and quantity of food across houses. Inspectors judged that much effort has been made to improve provision since the previous inspection. Overall, it is of good quality.
- 4.10 Exemplary standards of behaviour are expected and achieved. In responses to the questionnaire, some pupils indicated that sanctions are unfair. Interviews with pupils revealed that the clearly defined, graduated sanctions are fair and generally justly applied. The school has a comprehensive policy to safeguard against all forms of bullying and harassment. A small minority of parents felt that the school had not always dealt well with bullying. Inspectors closely scrutinised the meticulous records of the rare incidents of bullying, which include details of the measures taken. These indicate that bullying is not tolerated, and that appropriate action is taken immediately. This view was endorsed in pupil interviews.
- 4.11 A suitable range of good opportunities is available for pupils to express their views. These include informal discussions in houses, prefects' weekly meetings with senior management and end-of-term reviews. Pupils' suggestions have led to the provision of specific items for houses and ICT developments.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 Extremely efficient arrangements for the whole school ensure that pupils are well looked after in a safe and exceptionally well-maintained environment. Parents recognise the quality of care that their children receive, and pupils feel safe at school. Policies for welfare, health and safety, and the efficiency of the procedures are reviewed regularly and rigorously by senior management and governance.
- 4.15 Great care is given to safeguarding pupils. The policy and procedures are implemented with efficiency across the school. Record keeping is excellent.

Designated staff, who have received regular specialist training, are knowledgeable, and they have developed strong links with local agencies. All staff receive appropriate, regular training and are clear about procedures if they should have any concerns about the safeguarding of pupils. Prefects receive training in child protection in support of their welfare role. A designated safeguarding governor provides support for the school.

- 4.16 All necessary measures to reduce the risk from fire and other hazards are taken, and a systematic programme of checking equipment is in place. Across the school fire drills take place regularly, and risk assessments for activities, trips and facilities are efficiently prepared.
- 4.17 The first-aid policy is appropriate, and many staff have first-aid qualifications. The facilities and support provided for sick or injured pupils are excellent, with specialist medical care on site and strong links with a local surgery. Detailed records of any accidents are maintained. These are carefully monitored to enable the school to improve its procedures swiftly if necessary.
- 4.18 The attendance and admission registers are correctly maintained and stored appropriately for the previous three years, and any pupil absences are followed up carefully.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The school's aim to develop capable and well-rounded young adults is achieved. Boarders are polite, sociable, confident and articulate, and they speak very enthusiastically about their boarding experience. They particularly enjoy the in-house dining arrangements. Boarding houses have a family feel and relationships across the community are excellent. Well-trained prefects enjoy their various responsibilities, supporting the staff and taking on numerous supervisory duties. Younger boarders have allocated tasks and enjoy making a contribution to the community. Behaviour in the boarding areas is exemplary. Within the culturally diverse boarding community boarders integrate exceptionally well, including across the year groups. They also ensure that day pupils who are a part of the house community feel fully integrated. Boarders have appropriate access to information about the world through access to television and newspapers.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are well cared for as individuals and their safety is promoted. A rolling programme of refurbishment of boarding houses has ensured that the accommodation is well maintained. Most bedrooms are attractive and all are appropriately furnished. They are adequately heated and provide a clean and comfortable space for boarders. Responses to the pupils' questionnaire suggested that boarders could not lock valuables away. Inspectors found that boarders have a lockable space in which to keep any valuables but do not always choose to use this facility. Rooms and corridors are frequently personalised by boarders, and in several houses their artwork is displayed. Showers and toilets are plentiful and well maintained, and all of the houses have baths. In responses to the questionnaire, boarders expressed that facilities for them to make hot drinks and snacks are not available in all houses. Inspectors found that they are provided. Each house has several spacious and comfortable common room areas with suitable furnishings, which are available for

use by mixed or designated year groups. The excellent laundry facilities provide a quick and efficient service. The dining halls are very pleasant venues and the boarders greatly enjoy the social aspect of meals. Food is prepared from locally sourced ingredients; it is nutritious, plentiful and well cooked. Pupils with special dietary requirements are well catered for, and menus are rotated regularly. Plentiful fresh fruit and water are available at all meals.

- 4.22 Boarders' medical needs are extremely well met. The well-equipped medical centre has qualified staff, and with the school's strong links to a local surgery boarders receive excellent care when necessary. Medical staff work closely with house matrons so that all medical interventions are quickly reported, and medication is appropriately stored and dispensed. The arrangements for self-medication are effective, and the confidentiality and rights of boarders are respected. All necessary consents from parents are in place. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available to boarders and the spacious school site provides space for walking and running. This enables boarders to keep fit and healthy. House excursions are organised to local towns, the cinema and the theatre. The facilities available for sport and recreation are exceptional, and boarders have opportunities to take part in voluntary work, sport, music, charity or drama events. Boarding staff are easily accessible. For new boarders, various house-based induction programmes help them to settle well. Excellent guide books for parents, boarders and day pupils are distributed centrally, and some houses also produce their own induction booklet. All boarders have a range of adults to whom they can turn for help and guidance. Access is available to several secure quiet spaces if they want to be on their own. House notice boards provide comprehensive information and contact details for the school counsellor and independent listener, as well as for outside agencies. A member of staff is easily contactable overnight, and mobile telephone numbers are exchanged so that staff and boarders can make contact when boarders are off site. Appropriate risk assessments are in place. Contact between boarders and their parents is easily made by email and mobile telephone. Video contact can be set up for those who request it. Contact between parents or guardians and house staff is equally straightforward.
- 4.23 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare, health and safety and for safeguarding are excellent. These are a priority for the school, strongly supported by effective systems and good communication amongst all staff. Prompt two-way communication with parents or guardians on all matters of concern is part of the very effective procedure for keeping boarders safe. Safeguarding policies and procedures are secure, and care is taken in the recruitment and checking of suitable staff. The school has developed strong links with the local safeguarding children's board. Staff training is up to date. The excellent anti-bullying policy promotes an open and trusting atmosphere throughout the school, and pupils feel safe and well cared for in their houses. The clear system of rewards and sanctions within boarding underpins the aim for boarders to live in harmony and take responsibility for their own actions. Efficient systems are in place for signing in and out, and house staff are aware of boarders' whereabouts. The missing child policy is clear and well understood. Appropriate risk assessments exist, and arrangements to prevent fire are suitable. Regular fire drills take place during boarding time. Fire drill logs are up to date and correctly stored.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Boarding is managed extremely efficiently by strong leadership, supported by experienced teams who take their duties and responsibilities conscientiously, for the benefit of boarders. Systems and policies ensure that the

clearly expressed boarding aims are achieved. The boarding team meets frequently to review and discuss issues and implement changes and developments as appropriate. As several academic staff are linked to houses, and electronic records are kept, information can be shared easily regarding boarders' welfare and academic progress. The best practice in the management of the houses is not yet shared across the school. Some houses have produced their own development plan, but this is not consistent throughout. Currently, there is no overall boarding development plan to identify common areas for improvement, which can lead to duplication of effort. In responses to the questionnaire, boarders indicated that their views are not sought or responded to. Inspection evidence did not support this view. Inspectors found that boarders' views are continually sought in various ways, both formal and informal, and that these are seriously considered and action taken when possible. Regular meetings with the house prefects and heads of houses influence practice, and additional resources are made available. In their responses to the questionnaires, pupils and parents expressed an overwhelming degree of satisfaction with boarding life.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body, with strong, experienced leadership, has enabled the school to be extremely successful in achieving its aims. A large board of highly committed governors brings a wide range of appropriate skills and expertise to support the school's management. Governors receive appropriate training and induction. Working closely with senior management, they have ensured that pupils are well educated to a high standard. A particular strength of the board is its strategic planning. This has enabled the school to strengthen its brand, and to develop this abroad. With prudent financial management, governors have invested in high quality staff, plentiful resources, and the carefully developed accommodation and grounds. The imaginatively refurbished theatre and excellent science building demonstrate the success of the governors' commitment to the school.
- 5.3 An efficient committee structure, with regular meetings and detailed reports from senior leadership, enables governors to maintain highly effective oversight of the workings of the school. The minutes of committee meetings show that governors provide appropriate challenge, within a supportive environment, to senior management, which is a stimulus to school improvement. To ensure that governors have an understanding of the day-to-day work of the school they attend many formal and informal events. Academic governors observe lessons.
- 5.4 The governors are highly effective in discharging their legal responsibilities in relation to statutory requirements. Whole-school policies are reviewed regularly, and the policy and procedures for safeguarding are reviewed carefully each year by the full governing body.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.6 The school is highly successful in achieving its stated aims to enable pupils to become fulfilled individuals and responsible citizens. At all levels, leadership and management discharge their responsibilities assiduously. School policies reflect the school's ethos and are implemented efficiently. There is an exceptional sense of community and common purpose, and arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are exemplary. All staff are appropriately trained for their roles in safeguarding pupils and in ensuring their welfare, health and safety. All necessary checks on the suitability of staff and governors are carried out, and the single central register is meticulously maintained.
- 5.7 The highly effective, approachable leadership is strongly supported by the complementary skills of the dynamic senior leadership team. They provide a clear vision for the school and its future development. They work extremely well together to ensure that pupils achieve high academic results for their ability, participate fully in a very wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities, and are confident, well-

balanced and engaging individuals. The excellent rapport between teachers and their pupils is a particular strength.

- 5.8 Senior leadership reflects carefully upon priorities for the school, and consults other staff widely, particularly through working groups, over future direction and planning. Whole-school development planning is thorough and ambitious. The rolling academic development plan is extensive, although some of the work envisaged for the proposed academic forums has yet to take place.
- 5.9 The school is most successful in recruiting suitably well-qualified staff, and excellent support is given to newly appointed teachers, including weekly meetings, regular lesson observations and the opportunity to observe others. All staff have wide-ranging opportunities for professional development. An appraisal scheme which operates on a two- to three-year cycle is conducted by members of the senior leadership team. A previous version of appraisal had a strong academic focus. While lesson observation often forms part of the current appraisal system, teachers are not consistently observed teaching as part of the process.
- 5.10 Middle management is successful in motivating staff and enabling pupils to achieve excellent outcomes. Boarding houses are extremely well managed, and academic departments are effectively led. Following the recommendation of the previous inspection to strengthen middle management, monitoring of teachers' performance by their head of department takes place. This focuses particularly upon a review of examination results. A comprehensive system of pupil tracking is also in the early stages of implementation. However, while in many departments formal observation of teaching is regularly carried out by the head of department, and some systematic scrutiny of pupils' work takes place, this is not yet consistent practice across all academic departments. An excellent scheme for peer-to-peer lesson observation is also in the early stages of implementation, but is yet to become a consistent feature of departments.
- 5.11 The school has made significant progress since the previous inspection. This includes notable improvements in academic results, the strengthening of opportunities for able, gifted and talented pupils through academic societies, and efficient electronic recording and tracking of monthly assessments.
- 5.12 The school's links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents expressed overwhelming support for all aspects of the school. The school maintains a highly constructive and mutually supportive relationship with parents. Documents seen show that the school handles parents' concerns sensitively, swiftly and personally, in line with published policies and procedures. Parents have easy access to staff or senior management if they require additional information. The family feel of the school is enhanced by the warm welcome given by the support and administrative teams to any parents or visitors to the school.
- 5.13 Parents have many opportunities to become involved in the life of the school community. They are keen supporters of sports matches, and drama and music performances. They help to organise charity activities and social events, and make suggestions for community service. Parents and former pupils offer advice in a careers fair for pupils, as well as work experience placements. Some parents perform in school musical ensembles.
- 5.14 The parents of current and prospective pupils have access to plentiful relevant information about the school, its policies, events and successes. This is accessed

through an easily navigated website, and is supported by some use of social media. Further information on developments and achievements is published in printed form, such as the bi-annual *Archive* newsletter and the annual *Reptonian* magazine.

- 5.15 Parents are very well informed about their children's progress, both formally and informally. The content of reports has improved since the previous inspection, including consistency in writing style, the provision of useful guidance on achievement and the inclusion of advice for further progress. Formal reports, sent home electronically seven times a year, provide helpful diagnostic comments from teachers and tutors on a pupil's academic progress. The quality of reports is carefully monitored. Parents' meetings are held annually for each age group and twice a year for Year 9. Informally, parents are encouraged to contact the school and its teaching staff whenever they have enquiries. Tutors are also proactive in contacting parents about positive aspects and any concerns regarding pupils' school life.

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