



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

SEAFORD COLLEGE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Seaford College

Full Name of School	Seaford College		
DfE Number	938/6023		
Registered Charity Number	277439		
Address	Seaford College Lavington Park Petworth West Sussex GU28 0NB		
Telephone Number	01798 867392		
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Email Address	jgreen@seaford.org		
Head	Mr John Green		
Chair of Governors	Mr Richard Venables Kyrke		
Age Range	7 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	677		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (498 boys; 179 girls;)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 81
	3-5 (EYFS):	0	11-18: 596
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	508	
Number of Boarders	Total:	169	
	Full:	48	Weekly: 112
Inspection Dates	25 Nov 2014 to 28 Nov 2014		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI standard inspection was in November 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors/a governors' representative/governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspector

Mr John Dunston	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Judith Gregory	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, IAPS school)
Mrs Diane Durrant	Team Inspector (Head, independent school)
Mr Colin Haddon	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, ISA school)
Mrs Mary Ireland	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
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Mrs Linda Trevethick	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Andrew Lee	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Senior Master, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Seaford College is a day and boarding school for pupils aged 7 to 18. The school aims to provide a distinctive and inclusive education and high expectations, valuing pupils for their particular contribution and preparing them for life. The school seeks to prepare pupils to become confident, articulate and well-rounded, to discover their strengths, to develop resourcefulness, a love of learning and leadership skills, and to respect other cultures. The school is owned by a charity known as the Johnson Trust which is also a company limited by guarantee. The governors are legally responsible for the overall management of the school. Their work is supported by the principal committees dealing with finance and estates, the bursary, and education.
- 1.2 The school was established in 1884 by Colonel Savage as a school for boys in Seaford, a small coastal town. In 1941, it was evacuated to Worthing and in 1946, the Johnson family bought the current estate near Petworth, developing a boarding school for boys that became a charitable trust in 1990. Shortly after that, day pupils were admitted, the school becoming fully co-educational in 1996. Since the previous inspection, the age range of the prep school has been extended to incorporate pupils ages 7 to 13. The current headmaster, the chairman and the vice chair of governors took up their posts in 2013. The new senior management structure includes two deputy heads with responsibility for middle school and sixth form and head of academic scholars. The facilities have been improved with two new boys' boarding houses; new common rooms for Years 9 to 11 have been opened; several buildings have been refurbished; wireless internet has been established across the campus and two new classrooms have been built. A housing development of 18 private homes has been established within the grounds of the school.
- 1.3 The school has 677 pupils, including 182 aged 7 to 13 in the prep school. Approximately one quarter of the pupils are girls. There are 169 boarders and 508 day pupils. Pupils come from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds within the local area and from further afield in the UK and abroad. The ability profile of the senior school is slightly above the national average. Most pupils have ability that is above or in line with the national average. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly below the national average because of the introduction of BTec courses to meet the needs of the school's non-selective intake, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Three hundred and fifty pupils have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive additional support and four of whom have a statement of special educational needs. Thirty-two pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and almost all receive support for their English.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is successful in fulfilling its aim to provide a learning environment where expectations are high, pupils can achieve their best inside and outside the classroom and opportunities are given to pupils to discover their strengths, and to develop resourcefulness and leadership skills. Pupils benefit from a wide-ranging curriculum and a creative extra-curricular programme which also includes activities related to the curriculum. Examination results over time and evidence gathered during the inspection show that pupils attain at a good level and make good progress including in the prep school and the sixth form. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements in the creative and performing arts and in sport are of a high standard. Pupils' attitudes are generally excellent. They are able to work both with others and independently although occasionally concentration lapses in class. The quality of teaching is good, meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, though occasionally insufficient challenge is offered to the most able, which the school has recognised and is addressing. Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and friendly. This is supported by good governance, leadership and management which reflects a commitment to strategic development and ensures that appropriate policies are in place and effectively implemented.
- 2.2 The pupils show a good standard of personal development, reflecting the aim of the school that by the time they leave, all pupils will be confident, well-rounded young people. They show an awareness of the non-material aspects of life, are socially responsible and exhibit courteous behaviour and an awareness of the needs of the wider community as well as a readiness to contribute widely to their own. Pupils benefit from excellent pastoral care which offers effective and caring support across all ages, and pupils always know whom they contact if they have a problem. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They have many opportunities to express their views and feel that they are listened to. The quality of boarding is excellent in terms of both accommodation in the houses and the provision of care including welfare, health and safety. Boarding is effectively led and well organised. Parents and pupils expressed great satisfaction with the boarding element of life at the school.
- 2.3 The school meets all regulatory requirements and standards. As a result of good leadership and management and in response to recommendations from the previous inspection, the school has introduced an appraisal scheme for staff involving direct line managers; integrated provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within departmental schemes of work; and strengthened identity of the middle years by creating a new leadership post with responsibility for years 9 to 11. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and all it provides for their children, as well as of the quality of pastoral care and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities offered. Concerns expressed by pupils in a pre-inspection questionnaire about the quality of food, the balance of free time at weekends, and a perceived lack of opportunity to make their views heard were not borne out during the inspection. Pupils enjoy being at the school. They feel that they make good progress in their work and are well supported by their teachers.

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. Expand measures already introduced to support the learning and achievement of the most able pupils.
2. Improve the safety of some outdoor paths and walkways and ensure adequate lighting around the site.
3. Ensure consistency in the implementation of procedures for behaviour management where necessary.
4. Review the effectiveness with which the newly formed senior management responsibilities are carried out in order to ensure that the sharing of the most effective practice in administration, monitoring and planning is consistent.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of academic and other achievements is good.
- 3.2 The school meets its aim of providing a learning environment where expectations are high, pupils are supported in using a variety of learning styles and their performance is monitored and enhanced.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and skills. Across the school as a whole, written work is fluent, showing particular imagination and creativity in English. Pupils become increasingly articulate and confident in the sixth form, where they show effective organisational ability. Well-developed mathematical skills were seen in a human biology class where pupils were able to calculate chi squared. Pupils compete successfully in the UK Maths Challenge. Pupils demonstrate wide-ranging information and communications technology (ICT) skills and are encouraged to use their own devices to help with their learning: Year 10 pupils, for example, photographed mitotic cells, sending the results electronically for display. Work of outstanding creative quality in art and design technology (DT) is on display and pupils achieve at a high level in music and drama, including a demanding production of 'Doctor Faustus' during the inspection. The prep school produces an annual play and its choir has competed successfully at the Chichester Music Festival. Pupils in the prep school have won regional gymnastics competitions and sing with the National Children's Choir of Great Britain.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve success in sport, including county representation. School teams have been county champions in rugby, hockey, athletics, cross-country and football, while in other sports pupils compete at international level. The school has competed successfully in the Young Enterprise programme, and pupils have achieved considerable success over many years in Greenpower for its racing cars.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been slightly above the national average for maintained schools and in 2013 similar to the national average, with IGCSE results in English Language being above worldwide norms. During this period, around one-third of grades were at A* and A, and approximately four-fifths of grades were at A* to C. A level results have been similar to the national average in maintained schools. In 2012 they were similar to the average for maintained selective schools. In the prep school, pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance against national tests but, on the evidence available it is judged to be good. Mathematics skills are well-developed, and Year 6 pupils also achieve high standards of literacy. About two thirds of pupils proceed to university including selective institutions and some pursue their higher education at specialist music, drama or art colleges.
- 3.6 Pupils in the senior school, including those with SEND, make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The new Seaford Challenge Grades successfully sets pupils achievable but challenging targets. More able pupils occasionally have targets that they achieve easily, but in some subjects, including science, they are provided with more demanding extension work. In the prep school, pupils, including those with SEND, make excellent progress, particularly in art and English.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes are generally excellent and wholly excellent in the prep school. Pupils settle quickly at the start of lessons and work effectively both independently and with others but on occasion a small number of pupils lack concentration, which can adversely affect the learning environment. Pupils' involvement in a wide range of activities helps develop their confidence and skills which in turn has a positive impact on their approach to learning. Pupils enjoy their work and are keen to widen their knowledge and skills.

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 curriculum is highly successful in meeting the school's aim to develop well-rounded pupils who can achieve their best both inside and outside the classroom. It is wide-ranging, covering all required subjects and contributing effectively to pupils' development. In the prep school the curriculum is well supported by cross-curricular days such as a recent Chinese Creative Day. In the sixth form pupils choose from a wide range of AS and A level courses. BTEC courses have recently been successfully introduced in sport, applied science and business studies. The comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme includes visiting speakers. Year 9 pupils experience a carousel of stimulating activities as part of their PSHE programme, ranging from financial awareness to empathy skills. In addition, the weekly vertical tutoring session is effectively used to explore issues such as cyber-bullying. Certain elements of the careers provision are strong, including the Year 11 interviews, a careers fair and the university application advice that sixth form students receive. However, careers provision is not consistent across the school and no formal work experience opportunities are offered.
- 3.10 The curriculum is well suited for pupils of all ages and abilities and actively promotes fundamental British values. Pupils with SEND receive appropriate support within lessons and the curriculum is adapted to take into account the varying abilities of the pupils. The most able students are often given extension tasks in class. Many opportunities exist for more able, gifted and talented students to extend their learning and interests outside the classroom, for example, in history where pupils create their own online revision activities.
- 3.11 The academic curriculum is well supported by the number and range of extracurricular activities which contribute strongly to pupils' personal development. Sport and the creative arts play a central role in the life of the school with high levels of participation. Since the previous inspection sports fixtures have been introduced in the prep school, as well as a junior choir and orchestra. The school regularly puts on drama productions. Weekly lunch-time concerts are intended to build confidence as well as develop musical experience. The Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme provide outdoor education and leadership opportunities, helping to meet the school's aim of developing students' resourcefulness and leadership skills. The varied range of activities includes clay pigeon shooting, fencing, fly-fishing and vehicle re-building. Recent examples of educational visits abroad include a netball tour to Spain, an outward bound and charitable trip to Ecuador and history trips to Berlin and the First World War battlefields, contributing to pupils' appreciation of other cultures and their understanding of the impact of major historical events.
- 3.12 Links with the local community are strong. The school offers facilities for use by local primary schools and runs taster sessions in sport and music for local

schoolchildren. Prep school pupils lead a Christmas lantern procession through the local village. Sixth form pupils undertake activities in the local community such as visiting residents in a local care home. The school has also recently introduced an annual Community Action Day where the whole school goes out into the community and performs tasks for its benefit, such as visiting residential nursing homes and tending to local war memorials.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.14 Teaching reflects the school's aim to provide opportunities in cultural, social, sporting, and co-curricular activities for pupils to discover their strengths, and to develop resourcefulness and leadership skills. Teaching enables all pupils, including those with SEND, to acquire new knowledge, develop collaborative learning skills and make progress according to their abilities.
- 3.15 Throughout the school, teaching encourages pupils to be happy and engaged in ways that develop their self-esteem and give them confidence to tackle new challenges. The most effective teaching encourages infectious enthusiasm, an eagerness to learn and a strong desire to produce work of high quality. Teaching is lively and enthusiastic in many subjects and reflects effective use of time and pace. Learning objectives are clearly communicated, enabling pupils of all abilities to achieve well in tasks set, though occasionally insufficient challenge is offered to the most able.
- 3.16 In the most successful lessons teachers know their pupils extremely well and adapt materials and methods to their different needs and learning styles. In a very few lessons, the teaching limits pupils' ability to develop independent thinking and pupils are not able to develop their own skills to solve problems. High expectations are generally set and relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and friendly. Pupils recognise that this relationship makes most of their lessons interesting and engaging. Occasionally, pupils' unrelated talking is allowed to dominate group work, as a result of which opportunities to support pupils' learning are missed.
- 3.17 A comprehensive system for assessment and tracking of pupils' work has been recently introduced to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Pupils in the senior school talk confidently about their 'Challenge Grades'. They understand the colour-coding system well, and this helps them to know when their work needs to be improved. Good quality marking gives pupils targets and ways to improve, though this is inconsistently applied across the curriculum. Although pupils are often provided with the opportunity to respond to advice and guidance, marking and written comments by teachers are not regularly followed up by pupils. Pupils have opportunities to use peer- and self-assessment to support their understanding. In the prep school an exemplary marking policy has been implemented which provides clear guidance on the use of success criteria and target setting and is used effectively in most subjects.
- 3.18 Pupils are given many opportunities to work collaboratively. In a design and technology lesson the pupils used their knowledge of electronics and kit assembly to make model racing cars, showing excellent problem solving skills and manipulation of materials. In the prep school pupils of all abilities are well supported and demonstrate a pride in their work. They were keen to show off their designs and sock monkeys, while pupils in a sewing group were well supported, the higher ability

pupils being suitably challenged and confidently using success criteria to design their animal finger puppets. Effective and open questioning provides pupils throughout the school with intellectual stimulus. In a senior school art lesson pupils were encouraged to learn as artists on different projects using a range of media, such as clay, textiles and chicken wire. The school provides effective support for pupils with SEND through the use of appropriate strategies to increase their understanding.

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 good.
- 4.2 The school successfully fulfils its aim that on leaving, each pupil will be a confident, articulate, well-rounded young person.
- 4.3 Pupils explore and have an awareness of the non-material aspects of life, for example through participation in chapel services, performing in a choir or creative work in art. In religious studies they learn about the beliefs of people of faiths other than Christianity as well as the core Christian beliefs. In their sporting activities pupils show a strong appreciation of sportsmanship and fair play.
- 4.4 In PHSE lessons and tutor groups pupils discuss and confront moral issues ranging from bullying to healthy eating and the moral implications of debt. Such opportunities were observed in history where consideration of the troubles in Northern Ireland led to pupils linking aspects of that conflict to extremism and terrorism in the world today. Pupils understand democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and show respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. In an English lesson issues of hunting and racism were explored; the ethical treatment of small organisms was discussed in a biology lesson. Pupils display a strong and conscious sense of right and wrong.
- 4.5 Pupils are confident in their social interactions with each other and with adults: they are articulate, mature and self-aware. They reflect seriously on the opportunities and benefits of belonging to the school community, commenting on its friendly, welcoming ethos. Pupils show socially responsible and courteous behaviour, politeness and helpfulness. Excellent behaviour by the majority of pupils throughout the school is a generally notable feature. They show a willingness to lead and act as role models, and to contribute to the life of the community
- 4.6 By taking on leadership roles, senior pupils learn to perform a service to the school, exercising limited authority as well as accepting the responsibility of being role models to other pupils. Sixth formers also act as peer mentors in the prep school, where they receive training, become listeners and run activities. Year 8 pupils can become prep school prefects and begin to take on a range of responsibilities. Further opportunities for older pupils to learn to exercise leadership and responsibility come from serving as guides for visitors, leading sports teams and through the CCF. Pupils of all ages show an awareness of the needs of the wider community by participating in various fundraising events for charity while the school's Community Action Day gives pupils the chance to give their time to the local community through acts of service, for example by assisting in the work of a bird sanctuary.
- 4.7 In the prep school pupils learn to appreciate styles and techniques used in art work of other cultures and produce their own work based on these. A recent Chinese Creative day further increased pupils' understanding of the contribution of one particular culture different from their own. In the senior school, pupils' understanding of another culture was enhanced by their study of India.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

- 4.9 Throughout the school, the pastoral structure is successful in achieving the aim of enabling pupils to develop within a caring, tolerant, supportive community. It provides a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can learn, work and develop. The strong tutorial and house systems have been enhanced by the recent creation of heads of year to co-ordinate both pastoral care and academic monitoring. Since the previous inspection the school has incorporated personal development issues in departmental schemes of work.
- 4.10 Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves are generally excellent. Teachers know their pupils well. Pupils display great trust in the staff caring for them, including spiritual, medical, counselling and academic advisers as well as tutors. This is enhanced by the Pink House which offers a welcoming, supportive place for any pupil to go to when they are in need of support.
- 4.11 The behaviour policy sets out clear procedures for dealing with instances when the high standards are not met, though these are inconsistently implemented. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying that can exist and recognise how actively the school works to deal with it on the rare occasions it occurs. Any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively, as confirmed in pupil and parent responses to pre-inspection questionnaires, although a small number of pupils felt there were inconsistencies in the giving of sanctions and rewards, a view not shared by most pupils in interviews.
- 4.12 The school celebrates a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are encouraged to choose healthy options and learn to make healthy choices. Although a significant number of pupil questionnaires indicated dissatisfaction with the food, the school has already responded swiftly to concerns raised, and plans are in place for an imminent change in catering provision. The quality of meals experienced during the inspection was generally good. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the wide-ranging programme of sports and they understand the importance of physical activity.
- 4.13 A number of pupil questionnaires made reference to the school not seeking pupils' views. During the inspection, almost all pupils interviewed said their opinions were sought regularly, through an active school council, food council and a newly created girls' council. They were pleased that a number of changes have resulted from their deliberations including a planned playground for the prep school and changes to the girls' school uniform. Pupils have felt able to express their disquiet about the compulsory enrolment of Year 9 pupils in the CCF and feel confident that their views have contributed to the thinking of the school leadership.
- 4.14 The school has a suitable accessibility plan in place to improve access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.15 Arrangements to promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.16 Appropriate measures are in place to reduce risk from fire and other hazards and these are reviewed regularly. Equipment is regularly checked, fire drills are held and appropriate training of staff takes place. Clear signs in buildings around the campus indicate emergency exits and the location of safety equipment. Thorough and wide-ranging health and safety procedures are in place around the school, for sports matches and in lessons. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out for all school activities on- and off-site and detailed records kept. However, certain areas

of the school site, especially outdoor paths and walkways, are uneven, in need of repair and inadequately lit.

- 4.17 Appropriate safeguarding measures are in place and effectively implemented. Staff receive regular training and the designated child protection officers ensure that the induction programme for new staff includes a significant input on safeguarding matters. The school has recently carried out extensive improvements to its maintenance of the single central register of appointments to ensure that it better reflects the effectiveness of its recruitment procedures.
- 4.18 Arrangements to ensure the pupils' health and safety have due regard to the nature of the school site. Pupils who are injured or feel unwell during the day are cared for in a well-equipped and conveniently located medical centre. The security of medicines is appropriately managed and meticulous records are kept. Procedures are in place to promote the health and safety of pupils with SEND. The school has, and implements, an effective policy for the provision of first aid.
- 4.19 The admissions and attendance registers are suitably and conscientiously maintained, backed up electronically and correctly stored for the previous three years. Registration of pupils is undertaken electronically in an orderly and efficient manner and any absences are followed up quickly according to clear procedures.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarding houses are warm, friendly, lively and welcoming communities. The family atmosphere fosters excellent relationships among boarders and between boarders and staff. Boarders enjoy and benefit from their boarding experience and regard it as learning for life. They are happy and confident, showing great respect and loyalty towards each other and their houses. This is reflected in their considerate behaviour and the excellent way in which they look after themselves and their accommodation. The two sixth form houses in particular foster personal responsibility and independence in preparation for university. Boarders participate fully in a wide variety of educational, sporting and leisure activities throughout the week, whilst having appropriate times for rest and relaxation. Activities, especially those for full boarders at weekends, encourage a sense of belonging. Full, weekly and flexi-boarders are integrated into house and school life and individual needs are met. Boarders make a full contribution to boarding life, the senior boarders taking on responsibilities to assist in the smooth running of the houses. Some pastoral matters are addressed through peer mentoring. Boarders feel fully able to make suggestions and express their views. They are confident that they will be heard and that they will receive a reasoned response. Boarders have access to the outside world through a variety of media and show appropriate awareness of it. Regular shopping trips, and visits to the cinema, for example, cater for their material needs and reduce the risk of any sense of isolation.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Pastoral care is excellent, comprehensive and integrated, with effective co-operation between house staff, tutors, the pastoral care centre, the medical centre and other sources of support, including properly trained and supervised peer mentors. Boarders are known and cared for expertly as individuals. They readily seek help when necessary, and have full confidence in the adults within the school. An independent listener is available

but boarders have not felt the need to make contact. The induction of new boarders is effective, enabling boarders to feel settled and at home. There is careful identification and management of SEND and EAL needs, with provision individually adapted. Pupils' particular educational, health, dietary or cultural needs are provided for. Diversity is celebrated, for example by ethnic food or social events within houses. Rewards and praise are frequent. Sanctions are appropriate, sparing and seldom necessary. Consequently, boarder behaviour is positive and constructive, encouraged by the warmth, care and friendliness offered by house parents and tutors. All appropriate records are kept and there is excellent communication and co-operation with academic staff. Medical provision is good. Boarders feel that they can approach medical staff confidentially and that they will be well looked after. In the boarding houses there is safe storage of painkillers with effective records kept. Suitable arrangements and risk assessments are in place for boarders to self-medicate where this is appropriate. Boarders have access to local specialist medical services. Although a high proportion of pupils expressed dissatisfaction with the food in the pupil questionnaire, meals sampled at the time of the inspection were generally good. Menus rotate regularly, providing good choice, nutrition and variety. Many boarders thought the food had improved in response to their feedback. Ample supplies of food, snacks and drinks are supplied to the houses. Kitchen areas are well equipped and modern. Boarders appreciate homely touches such as treats served by house staff.

- 4.23 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. Staff are fully committed to keeping children safe and supporting those who need assistance. Appropriate checks and agreements are in place for additional adults living in boarding houses. Boarding staff are accessible during the night. Staff have suitably separate accommodation within the houses, to which groups of boarders may have supervised access for occasional social occasions. There are thorough signing in and out procedures. Procedures in case of a missing pupil are fully understood.
- 4.24 High quality relationships help boarders to feel completely safe. The insistence of experienced boarding staff on excellent behaviour and their high expectations strongly promote an ethos of care and consideration for others in which bullying has no place. The system for older boarders to help in the smooth running of the houses has a positive impact on boarders' experiences. A comprehensive maintenance programme ensures buildings are well maintained. There is an effective common sense approach to ensuring that all electrical equipment in houses is safe. Appropriate fire risk assessments and fire prevention measures are implemented; regular fire drills take place during boarding hours and are appropriately recorded.
- 4.25 Despite some boarders expressing in the questionnaires that the school does not listen to their views, inspectors found significant evidence that boarders' opinions were taken seriously through various council and committee meetings. Boarders feel that they have sufficient free time and are able to spend time alone if they wish. The lounge areas in the houses provide attractive and comfortable spaces for socialising and relaxing. Lockable space is available for boarders in their rooms and valuables and passports are kept securely by house staff. Boarders consider their belongings to be safe. Central laundry arrangements are excellent and boarders in those houses with a domestic washing machine appreciate this provision.
- 4.26 Houses are bright and clean. Boarders are encouraged to look after their belongings and to keep their rooms tidy. Effective measures are in place to secure houses so that there is no unauthorised access. Bedrooms are appropriately furnished, comfortable, and adequately heated. Boarders personalise their own

areas in attractive ways. Toilets, showers and hand basins are plentiful, although in the central girls' house some showers are awaiting planned refurbishment. Boarders can contact parents with ease, using mobile telephones or the internet. They have appropriate levels of privacy. Boarding staff communicate frequently with parents and guardians.

- 4.27 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Boarding handbooks and policies are of high quality, reflecting a strong commitment to providing an excellent boarding experience for all. The boarding team meets regularly and works closely with the pastoral team to monitor the safety and physical and emotional well-being of all boarders. This approach ensures exemplary care of boarders. Information is appropriately shared about boarders' welfare and their academic progress. There are regular reviews of provision and a staff appraisal system is now in place. A development plan indicates priorities for the future of boarding including implementation of recommendations from the previous report. Regular, minuted meetings reflect excellent organisation, efficient information sharing and frequent opportunities for training for boarding staff. In their responses to the questionnaires an overwhelming majority of parents expressed complete satisfaction with the boarding experience.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance strongly supports the aims and vision of the school. The members of the governing body bring a wide range of experience and expertise to their role, and in addition a number of them are current or former parents or former members of staff. Committees take specific responsibility for education, finance and risk, and the extensive estate itself, and a further committee supports the work of the prep school. Apart from the annual cycle of meetings, individual governors regularly visit the school, for example, for musical or dramatic performances, in order to develop further their wide-ranging understanding of the operation of the school, and monitor the implementation of policies. Training of governors, including in safeguarding, takes place regularly.
- 5.3 Board meetings take place termly, and receive reports from the head and other senior staff. Detailed minutes are kept as part of the process of ensuring that the implementation of policies is appropriately monitored. Governors undertake thorough self-review. They maintain effective control of financial matters and contribute in particular through the work of the committees to the school's strategic development. This is particularly evident in the recent construction of high quality additional boarding accommodation, and in the process that is leading to a major change in catering provision. Governors continue to be involved in overseeing the change in school procedures associated with the construction of new private residential housing adjacent to the school drive. Governors are generally effective in discharging their responsibilities for safeguarding the welfare of the pupils, although monitoring of the single central register of appointments has been insufficiently rigorous in the past. Governors carry out an annual review of safeguarding policies and the effectiveness of their implementation.

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

- 5.4 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.5 The leadership has set a clear and ambitious strategy for the school. The educational direction of the school is strongly expressed and successfully promotes the school aims. The senior management team has been thoughtfully restructured to improve performance and implement change across the school. Responsibilities have been more clearly defined, specific new posts have been created, and there is a clear line management, although the quality of administration, monitoring and planning for improvement is not consistent within the senior leadership. The work of the senior team is characterised by a close knowledge of the pupils and a shared belief in the essential ethos of the school to inspire pupils' personal ambition and success.
- 5.6 The strategic plan demonstrates the value placed on the growth of students in all spheres of the school's activities, using terminology such as academic Seaford, sporting Seaford and creative Seaford to reflect academic, extra-curricular and personal development. Prudent financial management in line with the development

plan has allowed for the development of the estate and facilities to enhance educational provision.

- 5.7 The high quality of leadership and management are particularly evident in the senior school and sixth form where newly established roles incorporate both academic and pastoral responsibilities. In these areas, guidance, monitoring and evaluation are particularly effective and performance is appropriately challenged, although the routine administration and analysis of pupils' academic achievements is less consistent. Following the recent expansion of age ranges in the prep school, strategic planning is not equally well developed, although effective monitoring and collaborative planning by the staff clearly enhance classroom practice. The senior management team addresses whole school issues through regular and carefully planned meetings as well as frequent and less formal contact. The direction and leadership given to heads of department and heads of year are helpful and constructive. Department handbooks are comprehensive and incorporate appropriate procedures and guidance for staff. Departmental management is largely seen as supportive by staff although the effectiveness of monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement is inconsistent across the school. A new staff development programme is in place to address this.
- 5.8 Established procedures have secured high quality, appropriately qualified staff. A good range of professional development has been undertaken by all staff. Safeguarding is a priority of leadership and management and has been included both in whole staff training and in the comprehensive induction programme for new staff. Maintenance of the single central register of appointments has, in the past, not been adequately rigorous, although the school took immediate steps to rectify this once it was pointed out and procedures for keeping the register up to date and accurate are now effective and robust.
- 5.9 Progress has been made since the previous inspection in the development of appraisal procedures. A version largely limited to self-assessment has been superseded by a recently implemented performance review system which involves the provision of evidence against teaching standards alongside observations and the setting of clear and manageable objectives. Initial outcomes have been valued by staff and the school plans to evaluate its impact fully once the process has become embedded.
- 5.10 Parents, carers and guardians are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of support and education the school provides, particularly in the area of specific learning support. They appreciate the detailed and helpful information and guidance supplied to them in letters and available online and feel that they have good opportunities to be involved in the work and progress of their children. A Parent Focus Group has been established which meets with senior staff to consider what the school does well and what could be done better as well as reviewing key messages about the school. An appropriate procedure for the consideration of complaints is in place and available to parents.
- 5.11 Reporting to parents, carers and guardians on children's progress is transparent, concise and effective. It has been enhanced by the recent introduction of 'Challenge Grades' whereby clarity in showing the levels of progress achieved by pupils is provided by colour coding. Close academic monitoring is complemented by comments which recognise personal development, and extra-curricular involvement and successes. Regular parents' evenings are supported by further informal opportunities for discussions between parents, subject teachers and house staff.

- 5.12 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire the overwhelming majority of parents taking part agreed or strongly agreed that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. Inspectors found this to be generally true, especially in the prep school. Parents also confirmed emphatically that their children feel happy and safe at school and are well looked after; that they can easily contact the staff who care for their children; and that the school is well led and managed.