



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
ST EDMUND'S SCHOOL CANTERBURY**

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St Edmund's School Canterbury

The Junior School and Pre-Prep were inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	St Edmund's School Canterbury
DfE Number	886/6050
Registered Charity Number	1056382
Address	St Edmund's School Canterbury St Thomas Hill Canterbury Kent CT2 8HU
Telephone Number	01227 475600
Fax Number	01227 471083
Email Address	head@stedmunds.org.uk
Head	Mrs Louise Moelwyn-Hughes
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Terry
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	327
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (178 boys; 149 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 200
Number of Boarders	Total: 127 Full: 107 Weekly: 20
Inspection Dates	22 Sep 2015 to 25 Sep 2015

PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in October 2013 and the previous ISI integrated inspection was in November 2009.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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

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

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

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), 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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

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Mrs Sarah Dawson	Team Inspector (Deputy Head Academic, HMC school)
Mr David Dawswell	Team Inspector (Second Master, HMC school)
Mr Toby Seth	Team Inspector (Deputy Head Development, HMC school)
Dr John Wharam	Team Inspector (Director of Teaching and Learning, HMC school)
Mr John White	Team Inspector (Director of Sixth Form, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Bailey	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Edmund's School Canterbury is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 13 to 18. The school aims to encourage pupils to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. It seeks to emphasise the importance of developing compassionate and decent human relationships, alongside the nurturing of individual interests and talents. The school is owned by St Edmund's School Canterbury, a charitable company, and shares a governing body with the Junior School and Pre-Prep, which occupy the same site. The head of the school has taken up post since the previous inspection and has oversight of the three schools, delegating responsibility for the Junior School and Pre-Prep to two other respective heads.
- 1.2 Founded by the Clergy Orphan Society, the school moved to its present site in 1855, changing its name in 1897 to St Edmund's School Canterbury and maintaining its Christian ethos. The Christian tradition continues today although the school welcomes pupils of other beliefs. The Junior School opened the following year and girls were admitted in 1982. Occupying a 25-hectare site at the top of St Thomas Hill in Canterbury, the school overlooks the city. The boarders are accommodated in the main school building, and in the adjacent Gorsefield House, in Sunfield House and in Clare House, situated close to the school's boundary. Boys and girls live in separate areas of the main building and in separate buildings within Gorsefield, Sunfield and Clare houses.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has installed an artificial grass pitch, and created a sixth-form information and communication technology (ICT) suite, as well as a new sixth-form common room. It has also created a photography studio and a sixth-form dining area. A number of areas of the school and boarding houses have been refurbished.
- 1.4 There are currently 327 pupils in the senior school, 178 boys and 149 girls, and 127 of the pupils are boarders. The school offers full, weekly and flexible boarding. The day pupils are mainly from business and professional backgrounds, of white British ethnicity, reflecting the local area. The boarders come from a wide spread of countries, with those from the United Kingdom forming the largest group in each year. The ability of the pupils is above the national average. The school has identified 28 pupils as having a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but provides learning support to 33 pupils as it offers short-term interventions for any pupil who needs help with a particular difficulty. One pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and is funded by the local authority. Of the 77 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), 57 receive support for their English from the school.

- 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 NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Lower 5	Year 9
Middle 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower 6	Year 12
Upper 6	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The success of the school lies in the wholehearted way in which it fulfils its aims of helping pupils to understand the importance of developing compassionate and decent human relationships, as well as nurturing their individual interests and talents. Academic achievement is good, with all pupils preparing for GCSE and A-level examinations in the expectation of securing suitable university places. A broad curriculum enables pupils to make individual choices, in addition to the core subjects, enabling them to pursue their own particular interests. This curriculum is much enhanced by the wide range of extra-curricular activities available and the readiness of the school to respond to pupils' particular enthusiasms. Teaching is committed to helping pupils, who appreciate the individual assistance which they receive when necessary. Those with SEND, including any with an EHC plan, or with EAL are especially well catered for, as their needs are understood and met, but the more able pupils are not always given sufficient challenge within the classroom. Teaching does not as yet make full use of the available data to plan lessons and track pupils' progress. Both pupils and parents affirmed their satisfaction in responses to pre-inspection questionnaires with the progress made by pupils.
- 2.2 The personal development of the pupils is an unequivocal strength of the school, which has been very successful in integrating boarders and day pupils within four school houses so that all feel they belong to the same community. Day pupils frequently participate in weekend activities for boarders and all are proud of the fact that boarders from a number of different countries extend everyone's knowledge and understanding of different ways of life. Pupils are self-confident, unaffected and friendly. They enjoy excellent relationships with the adults who care for them and with each other. A small minority of those pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school does not listen to their views, that homework does not help them to learn and that teachers are unfair in the way they award rewards and sanctions. There was no inspection evidence to support these views and in discussions during the inspection the pupils asserted their satisfaction with school life. The school has made safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of the pupils a priority and has excellent systems in place to do so. The high standards of pastoral care are valued by the pupils.
- 2.3 Governance has a clear vision of development for the school and is meticulous in its monitoring of standards. It is well aware of its legal responsibilities and thorough in meeting them. The energetic senior leadership of the school has taken a number of effective initiatives in improving what the school has to offer. Discriminating self-evaluation informs its evident enthusiasm for the well-being of all pupils. It has been diligent in addressing the recommendations of previous inspections and are currently addressing the improvement of teaching, particularly of the more able pupils.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Make fuller use of the available data to inform the planning of teaching and the tracking of pupils' progress.
 2. Provide a consistently high quality classroom experience for all pupils, including the most able.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims. They demonstrate good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in all of their subjects. They enjoy learning and are very attentive listeners who can clearly articulate their own ideas. Written skills are well developed: pupils write accurately and persuasively across a wide range of contexts. They apply mathematical skills appropriately, including within the sciences and geography. They are logical thinkers and are taught to analyse and develop arguments with increasing sophistication. Some pupils' reasoning skills are less developed, causing them to lack confidence in tackling harder questions for themselves. Pupils are proficient users of ICT and employ it readily in a variety of contexts. Their creative skills are encouraged, with excellent outcomes evident in a number of subjects. Pupils' physical skills are well developed and they show good levels of enjoyment and commitment to physical activity and healthy living.
- 3.3 Pupils with SEND or EAL attain at a good level, commensurate with their peers, and become confident learners across the curriculum. The more able pupils develop their work through further enrichment activities but they do not always receive an appropriate level of support and challenge within the classroom to help them to achieve their full potential. Most pupils go on to higher education, a significant number to highly competitive courses, and the majority to their first choice of university or college.
- 3.4 High levels of success across a rich variety of extra-curricular activities increase pupils' confidence and help to develop their initiative and independence. Some pupils, particularly the more able, achieve at high levels in essay competitions organised by universities. There are excellent levels of achievement in music and speaking examinations, and individual pupils achieve regional or national sporting selection. Achievement in art and drama is strong, whilst pupil initiative and stamina are in evidence in their participation in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE).
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for 2012 to 2014, the most recent three-year period for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and International GCSE results in EAL for 2014 were higher than worldwide and UK averages. A-level results have been above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Results have declined from 2012, where girls' results were well above the national average for girls in maintained schools. In 2014, results were similar to the average for maintained schools. Results attained in 2015 were broadly similar and these levels of attainment, and the standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Those with SEND or EAL respond well to the specialist support they receive and make equally good progress, which is demonstrated by their performance in lessons and public examinations, and in the improvement of their written work and communication skills over time. The vast majority of pupils and parents who responded to questionnaires felt that pupils are making good academic progress.

- 3.6 Pupils of all ages enjoy learning and relish the challenges set by their teachers, particularly when given the opportunity to work collaboratively. They are well motivated, have a disciplined and organised approach to their work, and are quick to seek guidance and to ask further questions.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 Curricular provision is well matched to pupils of all ages, abilities and needs, and fully supports the aims of the school. It is highly effective in its coverage of different areas of study: scientific, linguistic, mathematical, practical, cultural and physical. The broad, balanced curriculum exceeds the subjects of the National Curriculum. In Year 9 the core curriculum includes art and design, French or EAL, personal, social and health education (PSHE), religious studies and two optional subjects chosen from drama, Spanish, design technology and Latin. In Years 10 and 11 pupils are able to choose from a wide variety of courses, in addition to the core subjects of English literature and language, mathematics, French or EAL and science. The most able scientists can study three separate sciences. Pupils have the opportunity to follow the English Baccalaureate and to prepare a suitable foundation for A-level studies.
- 3.9 Since the previous inspection, the range of A-level subjects has been broadened to include politics, classical civilisation, economics, computer science, Greek and Arabic. The opportunity for pupils to pursue their own academic endeavour has been enhanced by the Extended Project Qualification. Sixth-form pupils with EAL prepare for an English examination required for entrance to a British university.
- 3.10 Additional help in academic subjects is freely offered, and encourages pupils to assess and then enhance their own understanding of topics they find difficult. Support is extensive for those with SEND, including any with an EHC plan, or with EAL. Pupils are tested on arrival and subject teachers are provided with detailed guidance on how best to assist them.
- 3.11 Pupils are intellectually enriched by a talks programme known as The Curiosity Shop, by visits to lectures at local universities and by a Saturday morning programme that is accessed by boarders and day pupils alike. All benefit from the compulsory skills and service programme, offering them the opportunity to develop different skills, such as debating and cookery, and pursue other interests serving both themselves and the community. Pupils gain experience of leadership through running an entertainment committee, a house singing competition, charity fund raising, the Christian pupil-led discussion group, the Literary Society, the school magazine and service in the library.
- 3.12 The PSHE programme for Years 9 to 11 is comprehensive in its coverage of issues that promote pupils' well-being and safe living. It successfully promotes their social and cultural awareness, self-esteem and confidence. Provision includes economic education. The school actively and effectively promotes fundamental British values in both implicit and explicit ways, such as through the Canterbury Youth Parliament. Political issues are covered in a balanced way, with opportunities for discussion.
- 3.13 Pupils develop their talents in a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities in drama, music and sport. Almost all pupils develop through their involvement in the DofE at bronze, silver and gold levels, and in the CCF. Their experiences are further enriched by activities outside the school, such as language exchanges and trips to

the theatre, galleries, concerts, and historic and cultural sites both in the UK and overseas.

- 3.14 Effective careers guidance assists pupils in making choices for the next stage of their education. Pupils report that they find Year 10 work experience helpful in making choices and informing them about possible careers for the future.
- 3.15 A recommendation of the previous inspection was to encourage greater use of the library and ICT as a means of helping pupils to develop the skills of research, interpretation and analysis. This recommendation has been fully addressed.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.17 Teaching makes a strong contribution to the pupils' progress and achievement. It supports well the school's aim to help pupils reach their full potential. Teaching demonstrates thorough subject knowledge alongside a secure understanding of examination demands, and almost without exception is well planned, with learning objectives clearly identified. Work in class in the majority of lessons is suitably varied to match the range of pupils' ability, for example in the setting of independent learning tasks in religious studies and in tasks allocated in geography. In the sixth form, teaching encourages pupils to become increasingly independent in their learning. Those studying art set their own weekly targets and film studies teaching prepares the pupils to become effective self- and peer assessors, whilst at GCSE, teaching in the music department includes pupil-led activities. The use of role play in design technology is innovative and highly effective. In the small minority of lessons observed that were less than good, pupils' progress was hindered by poor planning or insufficient subject knowledge. Responses to questionnaires indicated that a small minority of pupils feel that homework set by teachers does not help them to learn. All pupils interviewed saw the value of tasks set and appreciated the opportunities given to reinforce their learning. The inspection team judged that the setting of work for pupils' independent learning in their own time has improved over the past year since the leadership team has made this a focus of in-service training (INSET).
- 3.18 Teaching encourages the library to be well used; it has been newly adapted to allow space for academic and cultural talks. Pupils are also encouraged to carry out research and to read for pleasure by their teachers. A recent 'Stop Everything and Read' day reinforced the ongoing whole-school initiative to improve literacy, whilst a helpful 'literacy ladder' is displayed in the geography department and key words lists are available in many classrooms. Teachers have welcomed this initiative but, as yet, teaching departments have not all incorporated fully the helpful guidance offered in the programme of continuing professional development (CPD) to provide a consistently high quality classroom experience for pupils in all subjects.
- 3.19 Teaching demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs of individual pupils, taking into account those with SEND, including any with an EHC plan, or with EAL. Able, gifted and talented pupils enjoy a comprehensive extra-curricular programme and the school is beginning to develop activities to provide suitable extension and investigative opportunities in the classroom. Teachers are well informed about pupils' individual needs; for example, effectively pitched vocabulary building for pupils with EAL was evident in English and economics lessons. The needs of pupils with SEND are thoroughly documented and disseminated to all teachers. A recently

introduced system tracks the pupils' progress from nationally standardised tests for all new entrants into the school, and target grades are communicated to teachers and to pupils as they work towards public examinations. It also identifies pupils with SEND or EAL, and most recently, those who are able, gifted and talented. As yet, teaching does not make full use of the data available to plan and assess.

- 3.20 Excellent relationships between pupils and teachers are a key element in supporting the pupils' progress. Teaching promotes tolerance, respect and non-partisan coverage of political issues. In all age groups, pupils speak warmly of their teachers' willingness to provide additional support outside the timetable, including initiatives such as after-school and Saturday morning academic support clinics. Progress is enhanced where pupils who have particular needs are supported by effective liaison between teaching and pastoral staff and regular mentoring sessions provided by the learning support department. In response to their questionnaire, the vast majority of pupils said that their teachers help them to learn.
- 3.21 The best marking is detailed, giving instructive formative feedback that draws upon clearly identifiable criteria, but some work is not marked with sufficient regularity and includes insufficient advice to enable pupils to know how to improve.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' spiritual development is excellent. The school fulfils its aim for pupils to leave with a mature awareness of the spiritual and ethical as well as the material nature of life. By the end of their time at the school, pupils' level of personal development enables them to make discriminating choices and to be resilient in their approach to life. Pupils appreciate the open and inclusive approach of the chaplaincy, which encourages them all to attend and enjoy chapel services together, whatever their faith. Throughout the school, in and out of lessons, pupils are self-confident, courteous and friendly. Their self-esteem is evident and they are comfortable working alongside staff on joint school committees. Pupils approach art, drama and music with maturity and subsequently benefit from rich opportunities for expression, in keeping with the school's aim of understanding the importance of beauty in their lives.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils have well-developed moral sensibilities and an excellent understanding of right and wrong, guided by the example of staff and each other. They accept responsibility for their behaviour and are eager to contribute wholeheartedly to ethical deliberation, as seen in the classroom in PSHE, religious studies, history and politics. Pupils display high standards of behaviour, consideration for others and a pride in themselves and their school. They have respect for the rule of law, whether in the form of school rules or the English system of justice. Their maturity is shown in the way they balance their value of individual liberty with the needs of the community and the constraints of the law.
- 4.4 The social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils readily accept the many opportunities to take responsibility, from acting as boarding prefects to captaining sports teams and being monitors, coveting these roles and considering them valuable. Pupils clearly care for their peers. Their respect for each other is evident during lessons where points of view are debated openly. Pupils with EAL are well integrated and are encouraged by their peers to participate in and outside the classroom. Pupils articulate their understanding of equality, discussing such issues as stereotyping, racism, drugs and smoking. They respond thoughtfully to guest speakers, chapel services and PSHE. Pupils have an understanding of public institutions and services in England. They learn about democracy in the workings of the school council, where actions brought about by their persuasion show them how they can affect outcomes. Through the school charity group pupils learn to be compassionate towards local and international communities. They raise substantial funds for a range of charities each year, and help with local initiatives such as support of the homeless.
- 4.5 The cultural development of pupils is excellent and supported by a diverse programme of extra-curricular activities. Their tolerant interactions reflect the Christian principles of the school, and are coupled with a respectful, active desire to understand the beliefs of others, as well as learn about their cultures. They say that their environment includes numerous talented young people from a variety of different backgrounds that in turn enrich their experience. Awareness of Western culture is part of their experience of school life. They visit the theatre and benefit from the proximity of the cathedral, with its musical and cultural associations.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 Senior leadership oversees a comprehensive structure to support pupils which includes housemasters, form tutors, the chaplaincy, the medical centre and the learning support department. Twice-daily meetings with their housemasters at registration and twice-weekly sessions with their form tutors enable pupils to develop constructive relationships with them. Form tutors are also responsible for delivering PSHE in the lower years. The recent pastoral tracking initiative is a practical measure in keeping staff informed of essential information. Recently appointed leadership of girls' boarding provision adds to the strength of the pastoral team.
- 4.8 Teaching staff know their pupils very well, with relationships between staff and pupils being a strength. Relationships amongst pupils are equally harmonious. A minority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they did not feel teachers are fair in the way they gave sanctions and rewards. However, during interviews pupils asserted that teachers treat them fairly and reward them for good work and effort. Sanctions logs enable fairness and patterns to be monitored. The inspection team judged that this monitoring is effective.
- 4.9 All pupils are encouraged to participate in physical exercise through their games and activity programme. Healthy eating is encouraged and forms part of the tutor programme for Year 9. School meals for day and boarding pupils are nutritious and plentiful. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school and there is a suitable three-year accessibility plan.
- 4.10 The school has developed a positive anti-bullying strategy that identifies bullying and advises pupils how to report and combat it. Pupils report little evidence of it and are appreciative of the speed at which any issues are dealt with. Scrutiny of the school's records supports this view. The school's comprehensive measures to promote e-safety are effective in combating cyber-bullying as well as helping to protect pupils from unsafe internet sites.
- 4.11 In addition to the school council, the school seeks pupils' views through discussion and through surveys. A small minority of those pupils who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they did not feel there are sufficient opportunities to take responsibility and that the school does not listen to their views. However, in interviews they said that as well as raising concerns informally on an individual basis they could represent their views on the school council. Inspectors judged that pupils can express their views freely and that the school gives them suitable opportunities for taking responsibility.

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

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.13 The school has highly effective measures for safeguarding, implementing a robust policy that reflects the most recent guidance and local requirements. Training of all staff is current and at an appropriate level. All staff, including those newly appointed, know what steps to take if they need to raise an issue connected with safeguarding and they know who the designated safeguarding lead is. Staff are also trained in supporting the Prevent strategy, the Government approach to combating extremism. Meetings of the whole safeguarding team, including the designated safeguarding governor, are held twice a term. Weekly pastoral meetings focus on safeguarding. The designated safeguarding governor also attends these meetings on occasion. The school has good relations with local external agencies, and liaises appropriately when required. Appropriate systems are in place to check that staff appointments meet current legislation requirements.
- 4.14 The school operates an effective risk assessment policy, and all risk assessments, including those for fire and off site visits, are rigorously completed and monitored. The school is attentive to the particular layout of the campus, such as the road between the main site and the playing fields. The site and the surroundings are well maintained.
- 4.15 The school is diligent in maintaining fire risk assessments, aided by the local fire and rescue service. Fire drills and logs are appropriately collated and maintained.
- 4.16 A large number of staff are trained in basic first aid, whilst a smaller number are fully trained. Accidents are reported promptly. The pupils benefit from a well-qualified, resident medical team based in a recently refurbished medical centre.
- 4.17 Admission and attendance registers are maintained and stored correctly, as required. The school has employed an attendance officer so that the whereabouts of pupils are carefully monitored and any unexplained absence can be speedily followed up.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.19 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarding experience contributes positively to their personal development. They are polite, engaging, articulate and well informed. They talk with pride and affection of the boarding environment and the school as a whole. House systems, which include house prefects and captains of boarding, allow the pupils to have an active voice. They are keen to be involved in their share of house duties, contributing to the community. They develop key qualities of self-reliance and integrity. An atmosphere of trust, friendship and tolerance pervades all the senior boarding houses.
- 4.20 The international nature of the boarding community fosters the pupils' curiosity about each other's cultures, and they are keen to make one another feel welcome and at home. Boarders who receive learning support find that boarding affords them additional opportunities to contact staff if they need help. All boarders learn to be respectful to each other, and thoroughly enjoy opportunities to mix and share leisure time. In their free time in the evenings, boys and girls can visit each other's common

rooms to socialise. Relationships between staff and boarders, as amongst the boarders themselves, are harmonious and constructive.

- 4.21 The quality of boarding care and provision is excellent. Boarders affirm that they can turn to any member of the boarding staff if they are in need of support or guidance, and, through a highly publicised campaign of posters, talks and presentations, they have a clear understanding of the route to all the external support mechanisms they may need, including a counsellor and independent listener.
- 4.22 Boarders who are unwell are well cared for so that their physical, mental and emotional well-being is promoted. They benefit from a medical centre, staffed by qualified nurses, which is available to them during the day and at night if there is need. Each house registration document contains a pupil flag to alert staff to potentially serious individual medical issues, and the communication between medical and house staff ensures that pupils are all given appropriate care. Specific staff training is instrumental in the care of those who have chronic conditions. Boarders assessed as being sufficiently responsible may self-medicate and house staff are made fully aware of the protocols for their doing so. Meticulous records of all medicines dispensed are kept by the medical centre.
- 4.23 The health and safety of the boarders are promoted through the school's careful attention to legal requirements. Houses are clean and well maintained. The boarding houses, and boarders' activities, are assessed for risk. Necessary measures are taken to reduce risk of fire, and fire drills take place termly in boarding time.
- 4.24 In response to the questionnaires, a minority of pupils expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of food and the provision of additional snacks. Having sampled the meals, scrutinised the menus and interviewed many boarders, the inspection team found that the food is of good quality and plentiful. The catering department provides all boarders with nutritious and well-balanced meals. A selection of hot and cold food and drinks is available at each meal. Considerable care is taken to ensure that all specific dietary requirements are met. The catering team operates a system of ID photographs to assist staff in recognising pupils who need special care with their diet. In addition to main meals, the boarders are given daily supplies in houses so that they can access snacks outside mealtimes. Evening registration for all senior boarding pupils includes the popular provision of milk and biscuits. All senior boarding houses have access to a small kitchen where pupils can prepare basic evening snacks. The pupils also benefit from their involvement in the highly successful dining hall committee, which is effective in promoting the pupils' views about food.
- 4.25 In questionnaire responses, a minority of boarders said that their belongings are not safe in the house. Inspection found that each boarder is provided with a lockable facility. Boarders have ample storage for their clothes and belongings in their rooms. They said that they appreciate the efficiency of the laundry system.
- 4.26 In the evenings, boarders have limited but appropriate access to the school sports fields and indoor sport provision. They enjoy a wide range of weekend activities including squash, basketball and badminton. Weekend excursions are provided on an individual house basis, as well as being open to the entire boarding group.
- 4.27 Boarding houses are comfortable and secure, and boarders have access to suitable bathroom facilities. Many rooms have en-suite facilities. A number of senior

boarding houses have recently undergone room refurbishment and improvements in the recreational common room facilities, which benefit all senior boarders. Boarders are freely allowed to personalise their own areas of their rooms.

- 4.28 Boarders can easily make contact with their family and friends. The school communicates with boarders' parents by email and house staff respond readily to parents' requests and concerns. Very few of those concerns become formal complaints although the school has a suitable policy for parents to follow should they need to.
- 4.29 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding for boarders is excellent. Their welfare is a priority of the staff and of the school leadership, who are diligent in carrying out the most recent statutory requirements. They respond quickly to any identified risk, taking action to reduce it.
- 4.30 Good behaviour is encouraged in the boarding community, and throughout the inspection the boarders displayed courtesy, friendliness and helpfulness. Although there are clear procedures for dealing with bullying, boarders reported that it is extremely rare and quickly dealt with if it occurs. The school's recent initiatives on e-safety are effective in promoting a culture in which cyber-bullying is rare. Boarding sanctions are rarely applied but are suitably recorded and monitored. Policies are in place for physical restraint and for searching pupils and their possessions.
- 4.31 All staff recruitment checks have been completed in line with requirements. Meticulous records with respect to staff training are kept. All staff have been appropriately inducted into boarding routines and have received the necessary training in child protection and safeguarding, including most recent (July 2015) updates to *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
- 4.32 Boarder safety is of paramount importance to the school. The school operates several CCTV cameras for security purposes without compromising the privacy of boarders. Regular post-school registration in the evenings and weekends helps to ensure that staff know the whereabouts of all pupils. Each house has sufficient staff cover in order to ensure the safety of all boarders. The school has a policy in place, well known to staff, for locating any pupil who is missing. Boarders can contact staff at night should they need to do so. Staff accommodation is separated from the pupils and access to it is not permitted.
- 4.33 The effectiveness of leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Recent changes have taken place in the structure and personnel of the boarding team, which continues to offer the pupils a committed and professional body of staff who offer high levels of care and support. The senior boarding staff work well as a team, holding regular formal meetings to discuss key boarding issues. The school's statement of boarding principles and practice is well understood by boarders and staff, who can explain clearly how systems operate and for what purpose. The systems and their effectiveness are monitored by senior staff. Both boarding and pastoral staff in the school are committed to self-evaluation and improvement.
- 4.34 In responses to their questionnaire, a very large majority of parents expressed the belief that their children enjoy boarding, that the boarding experience is beneficial to their children's progress, and that boarding is well organised and managed effectively. All parents felt that the boarding accommodation is comfortable and that the school keeps their children safe.

- 4.35 The school has been very successful in implementing the recommendation from the previous boarding inspection in continuing to promote and implement a culture of awareness of welfare, health and safety in boarding provision.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Members of the governing body bring both expertise and commitment to their roles. They are well known in the school, attend school functions, and are diligent in both understanding and carrying out their legal responsibilities. They plan strategically for the future, annually evaluating their plans and, in conjunction with the school leadership, deciding priorities for the year ahead and the longer-term future of the school. They oversee the school's finances responsibly and show an informed, searching approach to its academic results. They ensure that the school has sufficient resources to support a broad curriculum and is able to offer its pupils the individual care that accords with its aims.
- 5.3 Governors offer challenge to the school's leadership through agreeing demanding targets for the year, and then evaluating and monitoring the success in meeting them. These annual targets are in addition to a detailed appraisal process. Governors are assiduous in carrying out their monitoring roles through the work of committees and through particular responsibilities allocated to individuals within their number. A coherent system of reporting ensures that all governors are kept well informed about the progress of the school. They review school policies annually and, in the case of updates being necessary during the year, they are kept informed through the governor portal and show active engagement with the information. Induction procedures for new governors are substantial, enhanced by a period of mentoring.
- 5.4 Governance meets all statutory requirements and consciousness of its legal responsibilities is strong. The whole governing body participates in the careful annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures, and the efficiency with which they are implemented. They are able to draw on considerable experience and expertise in this area, offering excellent support to the school. They have been actively involved in the past year with school leadership to establish effective measures to promote and finance e-safety for the pupils.

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 good.
- 5.6 The newly constituted dynamic senior leadership has taken a number of successful initiatives to improve both academic and welfare standards in the school. It has sought and responded to the views of both parents and pupils. The very positive responses of parents to the questionnaire indicate that they are pleased with the direction that the school is taking.
- 5.7 A priority for school leadership has been the welfare and well-being of its pupils, with the greatest importance being accorded to safeguarding. Excellent policies and procedures have been established, including the far-reaching and effective e-safety policy, the training of staff in their roles in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety, and the guidance of pupils. Systems of excellent pastoral care ensure that the

pupils are able to develop the compassionate and decent relationships that are central to the school's aims. Clear lines of communication and reporting help to make the systems work to the advantage of the pupils. Their outstanding personal development demonstrates confidence derived from the care they receive. Leadership fosters values that encourage respect for others and democracy.

- 5.8 By determined stages, and with the support of governance, the leadership is bringing about the improvement of the physical environment so that the pupils benefit fully from their surroundings and facilities. Boarding is integral to the pastoral success of the school and the pupils' enthusiasm for it further attests to strong leadership.
- 5.9 The leadership team is highly visible in the school and approachable to pupils, parents and staff, which aids the strong atmosphere of community and fellowship that characterises the school environment. Self-evaluation by the team has been central to its energetic pursuit of high standards and to its clarity of vision for the future of the school. Teaching and non-teaching staff are invigorated by the leadership and are embracing the changes that have been introduced. Management has been successful in appointing and supporting staff who understand the importance of meeting the needs of all pupils. Suitable arrangements are in place for checking the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers. All checks are correctly and centrally recorded.
- 5.10 In addition to the establishment of a secure and nurturing school, the leadership team has identified the improvement of academic standards as a priority. The best possible academic qualifications for each pupil is a stated aim of the school and in order to achieve this aspiration, leadership has introduced an academic tracking system to monitor the progress of the pupils. Teachers have been involved in a programme of CPD as leadership has held sessions on teaching and learning.
- 5.11 The excellence of the leadership team is not yet matched by management at all levels. It does not systematically promote academic success. Middle managers do not all use the available data to inform planning in their departments or develop innovative, imaginative resources for teaching. The appraisal process is not sufficiently linked to professional development. Goodwill and enthusiasm are evident, and the beginnings of a more structured approach to teaching and learning are apparent.
- 5.12 A recommendation of the previous inspection referred to teaching for pupils with varying needs. The school has gone some way to meeting the recommendation, particularly in the way it assists pupils with SEND or EAL, and in the provision of INSET for staff. Recent initiatives are designed to improve standards further.
- 5.13 Links with parents, carers and guardians have been strengthened by the leadership team. Parents are extremely satisfied with the quality of education and support provided. All respondents to the questionnaire feel that the school is well led and managed. Communication has been improved through a new email system, the head's blog and the introduction of *The Week Ahead* newsletters. The parents association affords parents the opportunity to come into school to speak with senior staff, and the school has proactively used these occasions to communicate its vision and aims.
- 5.14 Information is distributed effectively to the parents of all current pupils and to those of prospective pupils. The website makes required and helpful supplementary information available, including a suitable complaints policy. The school aims to

resolve complaints or concerns at an early stage and consequently receives very few formal complaints. Complaints of a serious nature are rare and responses to the parents pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed that difficulties are resolved quickly.

- 5.15 Arrangements for reporting pupils' progress are regular, clear and informative. Pupils receive two written reports each year, as well as five interim grade assessments. These are supplemented by an annual parents' evening for each year group. In addition, parents are encouraged to seek guidance from housemasters about their children's progress. Parents are warmly welcomed at all school events, such as plays, concerts and matches.

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