



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**WARMINSTER SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## Warminster School

The preparatory school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	<b>Warminster School</b>
DfE Number	<b>865/6009</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>1042204</b>
Address	<b>Warminster School Church Street Warminster Wiltshire BA12 8PJ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01985 210100</b>
Fax Number	<b>01985 214129</b>
Email Address	<b>admin@warminsterschool.org.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Martin Priestley</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Dick Payn</b>
Age Range	<b>11 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>396</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (234 boys; 162 girls)</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>214</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>182</b>
	Full: <b>182</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection dates	<b>29 Jan 2013 to 01 Feb 2013</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in February 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. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://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', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

### Inspectors

Mrs Janet Pickering	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Barbara Elliott	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr Christopher Holmes	Team Inspector (Teacher, HMC school)
Miss Helen Johnson	Team Inspector (Director of University Admissions, HMC school)
Mrs Isobel Nixon	Team Inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)
Mr Michael Punt	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Matthew March	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Jan Scarrow	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Head, GSA school)

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Founded in 1707, Warminster School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged 11 to 18, situated on the edge of the ancient market town of Warminster. The preparatory school is on an adjoining site and has the same governing body as the senior school. The school aims to provide an inclusive, high quality, broad and stimulating education within a supportive environment in which each pupil is treated as a valued individual and encouraged to participate within and outside the classroom. The school seeks to provide a culture in which pupils rejoice in their own and others' achievements and develop skills to equip them for life beyond school. It sets out to promote the universal values of creativity, tolerance and service to others. Though it has a Church of England foundation, the school welcomes pupils of other faiths and denominations, and of none.
- 1.2 Of the 396 pupils in the school, 149 boys and 105 girls are in Years 7 to 11, with 57 girls and 85 boys in the sixth form, and 98 boys and 84 girls are boarders, accommodated in 5 gender-specific, age-related houses. The school provides specialist learning support to 41 of the 115 pupils it has identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. There are 109 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), of whom 55 receive support for their English.
- 1.3 The majority of pupils come from professional, commercial, agricultural or armed forces backgrounds. Twenty-two nationalities are represented in total; pupils from overseas come predominantly from Europe, although some are from further afield. The ability profile in Year 7 is above the national average, in Year 10 it is slightly above the national average and in the sixth form it is in line with the national average.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection, the school has developed its annual staff appraisal programme; extended the academic curriculum and its provision for more able pupils; increased the emphasis on personal learning and thinking skills and the range of extra-curricular activities, and provided additional information and communication technology (ICT) resources. Areas of refurbishment include sports facilities, boarding houses and classrooms; a multi-purpose hall is under construction.
- 1.5 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 Warminster School successfully meets its aims of providing an inclusive, holistic education for its pupils, who develop into confident, outward-looking and well-rounded young people. In a positive, friendly, happy and caring environment, pupils benefit from a very broad curriculum and an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. In line with its aims, the school encourages a culture that welcomes and celebrates participation, and in which pupils rejoice in their own and one another's achievements and develop a range of skills to enrich their lives and equip them for life beyond school. Good academic achievement is supported by good teaching, and pupils succeed in areas including sport, music, drama, the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). Throughout the school, pupils are extremely well behaved and show very good attitudes towards their learning. There is excellent support of pupils with SEND or EAL and opportunities are developing for challenging and enthusing the more able pupils. Marking of pupils' work and assessment of their learning are excellent in some areas but inconsistent both within and across departments. The new school management information system is facilitating the use of assessment data and tracking of pupils' progress, and a more rigorous appraisal system is helping to raise the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In line with the school's aims of developing a willingness to serve others, accept social responsibility and engage in charitable support, pupils eagerly contribute to the school and local communities, and seize opportunities for teamwork, leadership and fund raising for worthy causes. They are articulate and mature for their ages and demonstrate self-confidence, social awareness and a sense of perspective. The boarding experience is excellent and makes a key contribution to pupils' personal development. The boarding houses provide a home from home and boarders feel well known and valued. The multi-cultural nature of the school enhances the social and cultural development of all members of its community. The pastoral care of all pupils is excellent and they greatly appreciate the help and support they receive from the highly committed teaching and support staff.
- 2.3 The quality of governance and of leadership and management is excellent. The active, experienced and engaged governing body is fully supportive of the school's aims and ethos and very well informed of all aspects of school life. Strategic planning is comprehensive and detailed, and leadership of the school is highly respected. Throughout all areas of the school, cohesive management teams are very well led and there is highly effective communication between teaching and support staff. Welfare, health and safety, and safeguarding of pupils, are prioritised. The school is fully compliant with the regulatory requirements for independent and boarding schools. Links with parents are excellent. A small minority of parents and pupils expressed dissatisfaction with a few aspects of the school's provision. Inspection evidence did not support these views. The school has met all recommendations of the previous Ofsted inspection, and is making good progress in the use of assessment to assist pupils' progress and in ensuring that teaching meets the needs of all pupils, as recommended at the previous ISI inspection.

**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 2011.

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Further develop additional opportunities, within and outside lessons, to challenge the more able pupils appropriately.
  2. Extend the sharing of best practice in marking and assessment, within and across academic departments.
  3. Ensure that suitable and sufficient isolation facilities are always available for unwell boarders from all boarding houses.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' learning and achievement is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim to encourage each individual to develop and thrive, not just academically but in all areas of sporting and extra-curricular endeavour.
- 3.3 Regardless of ability, pupils display good subject knowledge, skills and understanding, and they are articulate and confident when describing their school work and interests. Their creative skills are evident in excellent artwork and in English. The pupils' ability to make links between subjects and to apply their knowledge and understanding was evident in many lessons observed, including the use of strong mathematical skills in Year 13 physics. In other subjects, pupils of all abilities read aloud well. There was limited evidence of pupils using ICT to assist their learning, however good practical skills, as seen in design technology (DT) and science, enabled them to carry out experiments safely and successfully.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve success in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and the school meets its aims of providing a rounded education and encouraging participation without self-consciousness. Many activities help pupils to develop good physical skills; specialist sports coaching has had a positive impact on skill levels for pupils across the age and ability range, and a significant number of pupils train at regional and county level in a variety of sports. The CCF, DofE, and Ten Tors challenge enjoy high levels of participation and achievement. Personalised programmes are developed for talented musicians; pupils regularly perform in regional orchestras and selective music festivals, and a recent school production of *Phantom of the Opera* received a National Operatic and Dramatic Association award for 2012 best musical theatre production in south west England. Other areas of success include national speaking competitions, mathematical challenges, science CREST awards and F1 in Schools. Almost all Year 13 pupils gain entry to their first choice of university.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and at A level they have been similar to the national average for maintained schools. Results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) have been above the worldwide average and in 2009, results were also similar to the UK average, where the benchmark is higher. Results in International GCSE (IGCSE) English as a second language have been similar to the worldwide average. Pupils' progress relative to ability is good overall to the end of Year 11 and appropriate through the sixth form. The excellent individual support of pupils with SEND or EAL, aided by the effective deployment of learning support assistants, ensures that they make good progress in line with their ability. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is developing through the opportunities provided by the recently established Townroe group.
- 3.6 Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their very good personal conduct in lessons and around the school contribute significantly to their achievements. They are supportive of each other and listen respectfully to teachers and peers, with whom relationships are excellent. Good examples of pupils working collaboratively and discussing their learning were seen in many lessons.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The breadth of the curriculum, especially in the sixth form, and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities provide a broad and stimulating education, in line with the school's aims. The curriculum provides opportunities for linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative development. In Years 7 to 9, pupils study two modern foreign languages, separate sciences, three strands of DT (resistant materials, graphics and electronics), creative arts and ICT in addition to English and mathematics. Since the previous inspection, extended provision for the more able has included the creation of ability sets in a broader range of subjects and the timetabling of critical thinking for pupils in the top set for English. There is a good range of options at GCSE, with flexibility for pupils with SEND or EAL according to their needs. An increasing number of subjects now offer IGCSE as a more challenging option for top sets. Information and communication technology is a core subject; all Year 11 pupils take the European Computer Driving Licence, and ICT and the electronics strand within DT are GCSE options. Year 12 pupils choose between A-level courses and the IB. In line with the school's aim to provide a broad but not exclusively academic education, all Year 12 A-level pupils take AS critical thinking, are offered a 'university cooking skills' course and are encouraged to undertake the Extended Project Qualification. The IB programme offers challenging opportunities for independent learning through the core of: theory of knowledge, the creativity, action, service (CAS) element, and the extended essay. The school makes every effort to accommodate individual needs and offers IB pupils up to 13 self-taught languages by organising relevant external tutors as required.
- 3.9 A well-structured personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, which includes careers advice, is taught by tutors and enhanced by visiting speakers. However, IB pupils do not have access to the related lecture programme attended by A-level pupils. Pupils from Year 9 upwards benefit from careers advice, and assistance with preparation for university entry is shared amongst a number of staff.
- 3.10 The curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, which, in line with the school's aims, enables pupils to develop a range of skills to enrich their lives and equip them for life beyond school. Pupils say that there is always plenty to do, both during the week and at weekends. The Monday afternoon programme is full, varied and greatly appreciated by pupils. The school organises frequent trips to see professional music and drama productions, sport is enjoyed by pupils of all abilities, and the house structure presents further opportunities for involvement in sport, music, drama and creative areas. Leadership and teamwork skills are also developed through activities such as the DofE and CCF.
- 3.11 Links with the local community are strong. Pupils recently took part in a local production of *Les Misérables*. Sixth formers host an activities morning for members of local Mencap branches. Pre-season training sessions are extended to talented young sports players from the community and pupils run a technology club at the local library.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.12 The contribution of teaching is good overall.
- 3.13 Most of the teaching observed was at least good, with several examples of excellence and no lessons less than satisfactory. At all ages, the quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the pupils' level of attainment and progress, and helps the school to fulfill its aim of encouraging each pupil to thrive academically. Target setting on a one-to-one basis with tutors reinforces the development of each pupil as a valued individual, and good use of the new school management information system to track pupils' progress is beginning to have a positive impact on achievement.
- 3.14 Teachers are highly knowledgeable within their subjects and there is a good range of experience and expertise across the teaching staff. Very positive relationships between pupils and staff are evident in all lessons. Teachers know their pupils very well and in the best lessons, thorough planning addresses individual needs by offering a variety of appropriate tasks. Procedures for the identification of individual needs of pupils, along with highly targeted and effective communication between the learning support and EAL departments, have significantly increased and improved the provision of support for pupils with SEND or EAL. A small number of parents, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, did not agree that more able pupils receive appropriate support. Inspectors found that the setting of extension tasks to challenge and enthuse the more able pupils is increasing in frequency, in line with a recommendation from the previous inspection, but remains inconsistent across departments.
- 3.15 Carefully planned lessons take account of pupils' preferred learning styles, emphasise personal learning and thinking skills, and allow pupils to explore areas of interest with enthusiasm and a good degree of independence. Less progress is evident in lessons that are predominantly teacher-centred and dependent on textbooks and handouts. The best lessons are taken at a brisk pace and incorporate a variety of teaching methods and a good range of activities.
- 3.16 There has been significant development of the use of ICT in teaching since the last inspection, with well-resourced classrooms offering excellent opportunities for pupils to take advantage of the latest technologies. Interactive whiteboards are used regularly in some subjects to enhance the pupils' learning experience. The use of digital media across several departments is developing and enhances pupils' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment, but this is not fully embedded across the curriculum. Pupils benefit from the eclectic mix of well-furnished and resourced classrooms, which provide a good and often outstanding environment for effective teaching, in line with the school's aims.
- 3.17 The rapport between teachers and pupils is excellent. Pupils recognise the value of their teachers' generous support in and out of lessons and identify their feedback and guidance as a key to good progress. In some lessons observed, regular feedback and ongoing assessment enabled pupils to set targets and raise attainment levels. The atmosphere in all lessons observed was calm and purposeful.
- 3.18 The overall quality of marking and assessment is good, with some examples of excellent explicit and subject-specific advice to pupils on how to improve their learning and achievement. As recommended at the previous inspection, more

systematic observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and sharing of good practice are helping to raise the quality and consistency of marking and use of assessment data both within and across departments. Since the previous inspection, more rigorous and frequent appraisal of teachers and a supportive professional development programme have ensured greater consistency in the quality of teaching.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The school clearly fulfils its aims to provide pupils with a broad and stimulating education, enabling them to develop into confident, outward-looking and well-rounded young people. The universal values of creativity, tolerance and service to others are promoted through the strong PSHE and rich activities programmes.
- 4.3 The pupils develop an excellent sense of spiritual awareness and a greater understanding of others. They benefit from assemblies and chapel services, which reinforce the Christian tradition of the school; inclusion of other faiths and cultures is covered through, for example, the religious studies (RS) programme. Some pupils gain greater spiritual awareness through attendance at confirmation classes. Pupils successfully explore values and beliefs in subjects including English, history and PSHE. They take part in a wide range of performance activities, including drama and music productions, through which they develop their aesthetic sense.
- 4.4 The pupils have an extremely strong moral sense and appreciate the difference between right and wrong. This is further strengthened by the comprehensive system of rewards and sanctions operated by the school. Pupils address moral and ethical issues through the PSHE programme, and are perceptive in their consideration of lifestyle choices, raised by topics such as e-safety, alcohol, drugs and healthy eating. They explore what can be learned from the past in history lessons and show strong moral awareness in their support of and empathy for their peers.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. The school fosters a deep sense of community, considerably enhanced by the presence of boarding, and pupils are expected to behave responsibly at all times. They are courteous and considerate in lessons and around the school, and develop strong relationships with one another and with their teachers. They are keen to take on responsibility and there is strong competition for the roles of school, house and boarding prefects. Others represent their peers on the school council or belong to the charity committee, and older pupils assist with registration of younger ones in the boarding houses. Pupils contribute to the wider society through their participation in the DofE, the CAS component of the IB, and the organisation of activities such as helping to clear the grounds of a local church on Community Action Day. They consider issues such as the differences in the standard of living between wealthy nations and poor, and their awareness of and concern for those less fortunate than themselves are evident in the time and effort which they willingly give to charity fund raising each year.
- 4.6 The pupils demonstrate excellent cultural awareness, fostered by the multi-cultural pupil body. They learn about other cultures in subjects such as geography, RS and modern foreign languages. Their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of others are greatly enhanced through friendships created within the boarding houses, the opportunity to participate in overseas trips and activities such as the Model United Nations. Pupils celebrate festivals from other cultures, such as Chinese New Year, with enthusiasm, and they volunteer to lead prayers on Remembrance Day in a variety of languages. Pupils learn to appreciate Western culture and traditions through PSHE and the sixth-form lecture programme.

- 4.7 In line with the school's aims, pupils are well prepared for life beyond school and leave with a very good standard of personal development.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The school provides outstanding care for its pupils, in accordance with its aims. Pupils feel safe and well cared for as individuals. Tutors play a key role in pastoral care; they see their groups twice a day and are the first point of contact with parents. Extremely positive relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils, are seen in every area of school life: in the classroom, on the sports fields, in tutor groups and in the boarding houses. Pupils are respectful and courteous, and clearly care for each other; they confirmed that there are numerous people they could talk to if they had a concern. Younger pupils especially appreciate the help and encouragement they receive from older pupils. There is an outstanding induction programme for all pupils new to the school.
- 4.10 An excellent choice of freshly prepared food is available at mealtimes and supports healthy eating. During the inspection, pupils expressed considerable appreciation of the quality of the food available. There was no evidence to support the small number who did not agree that the food is good in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Regular exercise is encouraged through the formal sports programme, in physical education lessons and in optional activities such as a Columbian dance exercise programme.
- 4.11 Pupils are expected to behave well, and their response is overwhelmingly positive. Any cases of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with speedily and effectively, with detailed records kept to detect trends or patterns. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small number of pupils did not feel that teachers are fair in the way they give rewards and sanctions. Inspectors found clear evidence that pupils feel that the process is fair and equitable. Anti-bullying procedures and online safety are reinforced in PSHE lessons.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND who, along with pupils with EAL, are fully included in the life of the school.
- 4.13 In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils disagreed that the school asks for their opinions and responds to them. However, during the inspection pupils spoke positively of the effectiveness of the school council and other pupil committees, and confirmed that their views and opinions are both sought and acted upon.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 All arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent and in line with the school's aims to provide a safe and secure environment for them. The designated child protection officer (CPO) and the deputy CPO have been trained in child protection and inter-agency working, and the governor with designated oversight of child protection has also received appropriate training. The CPO ensures that all staff, teaching and non-teaching, receive regular safeguarding training, and comprehensive understanding and rigorous implementation of policies and procedures are evident across the school community. Good links have been established with the local safeguarding children board. The emphasis on safeguarding encompasses security of the extensive school site, as exemplified by the appointment of security guards, the careful positioning of CCTV cameras, the use of keypads on external doors and the successful training of pupils in road safety.
- 4.16 All necessary measures are in place to minimise the risk from fire and other hazards: regular fire drills are held on the main school site and in boarding houses; staff receive appropriate fire awareness training; equipment is regularly checked; and comprehensive records covering all these areas are carefully maintained. Thorough risk assessments cover all areas of school life, including educational trips and visits. Robust health and safety policies and procedures are also accompanied by full records of relevant maintenance and staff training.
- 4.17 Arrangements to ensure health and safety are very effective. There is generally good provision for pupils who are ill or injured, although suitable isolation facilities have not always been available in all boarding houses. Meticulous records are kept by the nurse and by boarding house matrons, and there is regular first-aid training for staff.
- 4.18 Electronic registration of all pupils occurs twice daily and absences are followed up promptly and efficiently. The admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored, in line with regulatory requirements.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 In line with the school's aims, each boarding house provides a supportive and family atmosphere in which individuality flourishes, participation and achievement are celebrated, and a range of personal skills is developed. The community spirit generates within pupils affection for and loyalty towards their house.
- 4.21 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. In all houses, boarders are open and friendly, and enjoy a genuine rapport with one another and with the adults who care for them and who know them very well. A wide range of cultures is represented in the boarding houses, and the tolerance and understanding exhibited by boarders for one another are a particularly strong feature of the school. Boarders value one another's academic, physical, social and cultural differences and the friendships they make; new pupils are seamlessly assimilated into the house community. The multi-cultural nature of boarding is celebrated in a variety of ways, such as national food themed nights and Chinese New Year festivities. Boarders contribute to the life of their house through house and food committees, and those who are older are keen to take on prefectorial duties and to help with younger boarders. Boarders are

comfortable and feel safe in their houses. They appreciate the consistency in the way they are treated across different houses and feel that rewards, for instance for consistently tidy rooms, and sanctions for misbehaviour are proportionate and fair. A range of extra-curricular activities is offered between the end of lessons and boarders' supper, and the gym is popular after homework (prep). At weekends, a formal programme of visits and expeditions is organised for all boarders, and individual whole-house trips are arranged at least once a year.

- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Boarders are well accommodated in two junior and three senior houses, mainly in twin and single rooms, although some younger boarders share four-bedded rooms. There are well-furnished and bright common room areas in all houses, with modern and comfortable soft furnishings. Boarders can personalise their own living spaces. Bathroom facilities are of a good standard and are clean and well maintained. All houses have large-screen televisions, computer rooms that include a visual internet communication facility and daily newspapers. Boarders can use their mobile telephones to contact home and there is an enclosed call box, complete with details of appropriate helplines, in each house. The boarding staff offer weekend activities ranging from Saint Nicholas's Day celebrations to 'Warminster Has Talent'. The formal programme of visits and expeditions, arranged by the head of boarding and including local walks, paintballing, cinema visits and shopping expeditions, is enjoyed by various age groups. The excellent support network within the houses includes housemasters and housemistresses, tutors and matrons. Matrons are on duty throughout the day. They are responsible for the oversight of boarders' pocket money and, as recommended in the previous inspection report, maintain detailed records of all cash transactions. In addition to an efficient central laundry facility, each house has washing machines and dryers for the laundering of personal possessions. Boarders receive a thorough induction to both house and school upon arrival and those from overseas are particularly well served by the programme. Meticulous records are kept of all significant issues pertaining to boarders and of notable contacts with parents. House kitchens also allow boarders to make snacks outside the school day and at weekends boarders have the opportunity to cook for themselves. Occasions when pupils from overseas cook their national cuisine for friends are much appreciated. A small number of boarders in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed concern about the food provided by the school and insufficient activities in the evening and at weekends. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views.
- 4.23 The boarding arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are excellent. All regulatory requirements are met and the school's safeguarding policy is fully implemented. House staff are appropriately trained in child protection and first aid, and demonstrate an excellent awareness of their responsibilities for the boarders in their care. Policies on bullying and behaviour are made available to parents and are clearly understood by boarders, who reported no known incidents of bullying but were confident that any would be dealt with promptly and effectively. House staff record minor offences and sanctions, whilst more serious matters are referred to the head of pastoral care through the head of boarding.
- 4.24 Boarders who are unwell are cared for by house staff within their own house. Since the previous inspection, each house has identified a dedicated isolation room and bathroom for boarders who are unwell. However, in one house the number of boarders has meant that there is limited space for such provision. The administration of medicines is clearly recorded in houses. Medical documentation and policies are regularly updated by the school medical centre. In line with a



recommendation of the previous Ofsted inspection, all medication, including any controlled medicines, is securely stored within each house. The school nurse staffs the medical centre during the day and is on call at night and at weekends; she has daily contact with each house. The school doctor visits twice each week. Boarders know how to contact house staff in case of emergency and at night, and there are contact buttons placed strategically within each house. There are appropriate risk assessments in place for higher risk activities and parental permission is sought in writing. Fire drills are carried out regularly in boarding time and are recorded. Staffing in all areas meets the needs of boarders and they have a choice of adults with whom they can discuss any personal issues.

- 4.25 The leadership and management of boarding are excellent. Boarding priorities are clear and there is a commitment to self-evaluation and improvement. The head of pastoral care oversees all aspects of the boarding process, produces policy documents in conjunction with house staff and carries out the appraisal of housemasters and housemistresses. Day-to-day management of the boarding houses is devolved to the head of boarding, who is a housemaster. The housemasters and housemistresses operate coherently and collaboratively to ensure that there are common key policies in operation in all houses; they meet monthly to discuss both routine matters and more strategic boarding issues. Matrons also meet monthly and all meetings are formally minuted. House staff are well qualified; assistant staff speak highly of the support they receive and confirm that they feel integral to the house team. Matrons are present in houses throughout the day, deal with all routine house matters and ensure that sick boarders are monitored regularly. Boarders value the care and support they receive from the adults within the house. All policies relevant to boarding are of high quality and are available to boarders through house notice boards, and, in some cases, their school planners. Contact with parents is regular. Records, for instance permissions for medical intervention or for weekend expeditions, are securely stored in boarders' personal files.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The twelve governors are fully supportive of, and highly committed to, the school's aims and ethos, and they share a strong strategic vision for its future. Through their work with the leadership team, a development plan that covers all aspects of the school, and is both proactive and reactive to external factors, has been drawn up. The governing body shares an extremely broad range of relevant expertise including accountancy, law, land management, marketing, corporate business, and primary, secondary and higher education. Governors offer support and challenge to the leadership and senior school management teams and their work is supported by academic and finance committees. Designated areas of oversight include child protection, pastoral care and boarding, finance, education, and health and safety. The governors receive regular high quality reports from the headmaster and other members of the leadership and senior school management teams, together with occasional presentations from heads of academic departments. The chair maintains contact with the headmaster and bursar at least once each week.
- 5.3 Governors visit the school frequently not only to attend events, but also to take lunch with pupils, track pupils during the day and socialise with members of staff. They conduct the annual appraisal of the headmaster and bursar, and their personal interest in and first-hand knowledge of the school are much appreciated across the school community.
- 5.4 The governors enable efficient achievement of good educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff and resources. They are diligent and effective in discharging their responsibilities for boarding, child protection, welfare, and health and safety throughout the school. The governing body conducts an annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is excellent.
- 5.6 The school is well led and managed by highly efficient teams who work collectively in support of its aims. Leadership is strong, strategic, consultative and caring, and is highly respected across the whole school community. Support of and commitment to the school's ethos ensure cohesion across all areas of school life.
- 5.7 The leadership team comprises the headmaster, deputy head, director of studies, head of pastoral care, bursar and the headmaster and deputy head of the preparatory school. It meets regularly to address whole-school strategic matters; the membership of this core team ensures cohesiveness and strong links across both schools. Since the previous inspection, the senior management team has been restructured to excellent effect. Senior school members of the leadership team are joined by heads of sections of the school and boarding to form the senior school management team, which deals with day-to-day school management. This change in structure has resulted in an extremely well-run environment in which all pupils

enjoy a broad, challenging but accessible curriculum, a wide range of extra-curricular activities and a very high standard of personal development.

- 5.8 Communication between the various levels of management involved in pastoral care is meticulously structured, overseen by the head of pastoral care, and central to the support that pupils and parents value highly. Pastoral teams, house and tutor, meet regularly to discuss pastoral provision and to raise any concerns about individual pupils. Tutors are supported by the heads of school, who much appreciate the frequent and regular communication amongst staff regarding pupils' welfare. The head of pastoral care liaises closely with the school counsellor and holds weekly meetings with the school nurse, chaplain and head of learning support.
- 5.9 Heads of academic departments meet twice each term. Since the previous inspection, an enhanced appraisal system has ensured that the quality of teaching and learning is more effectively monitored, good practice is more widely shared and clear targets are set for improvement. There is an effective system for supporting staff in their continuing professional development. Educational and pastoral systems and policies are evaluated regularly, and targets are set at all levels to support the school's priorities. All staff are appropriately involved in the development of the school. The introduction of a new management information system has strengthened communication amongst all members of staff; the strong links between academic and pastoral teams ensure comprehensive knowledge, understanding and support of each pupil.
- 5.10 Highly effective leadership of strong teams of support staff with responsibility for the estate, finance, boarding, catering, domestic and administrative areas of the school ensures successful provision of the holistic education that lies at the heart of its vision. The building and grounds are very well maintained, and all areas are kept clean and tidy.
- 5.11 The school has a rigorous procedure for the recruitment and appointment of staff, and is successful in appointing and retaining high quality personnel in teaching and support roles. There is an excellent programme of induction for all staff, including appropriate training in safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety of the pupils. The safety and welfare of all are a priority and training of all staff is updated appropriately. The school has effective, nationally recognised systems in place to ensure that teachers new to the profession can progress to newly qualified and qualified teacher status.
- 5.12 Strong, co-operative and caring relationships between staff and pupils are evident at all times. The sense of inclusion and friendship pervades every area of school life. Pupils commented with enthusiasm that this is a 'joining in' school, one where the leadership encourages, promotes and embodies a 'can do' approach to life.
- 5.13 The school has excellent links with parents, guardians and carers. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of education, care and support for their children and communication with the school. The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents; they receive information through email and are also able to access social networking websites to further enhance communication. Parents' views are sought by the school through an annual questionnaire. A small number of parents indicated in their questionnaire responses that they are not satisfied with the school's handling of concerns and of alleged bullying. Inspectors found that the school fully implements its policies and procedures in both areas.

- 5.14 The school website contains all required information and policies for current and prospective parents, and the news section includes copies of the headmaster's and chaplain's whole-school assembly addresses. A small minority of parents were not satisfied with the information they are given about their children's progress. Inspectors found that clear and informative half-termly and termly reports on pupils' progress and how to improve their work, with handwritten comments from the headmaster, are sent to parents, and from other inspection evidence that the school makes a positive effort to keep parents well informed. Parents are encouraged to attend formal and informal meetings with staff and to contact the school with any concerns. The school arranges individual consultations with staff if required, and flexible and varied opportunities for contact with parents and guardians benefit those unable to visit the school in person. Boarding houses are staffed throughout the day so that parents can raise concerns directly with the house staff. The headmaster hosts a regular Friday afternoon tea to which all parents are invited, as they are to the many sports fixtures, plays, concerts and other school events. The parents' association organises well-attended social functions throughout the year.

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