



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
WOODCOTE HOUSE SCHOOL**

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Woodcote House School

Full Name of School	Woodcote House School			
DfE Number	936/6102			
Address	Woodcote House School Snows Ride Windlesham Surrey GU20 6PF			
Telephone Number	01276 472115			
Fax Number	01276 472890			
Email Address	hk@woodcotehouseschool.co.uk			
Head	Mr Henry Knight			
Proprietor	Mr Nick Paterson			
Age Range	7 to 13			
Total Number of Pupils	91			
Gender of Pupils	Boys			
Numbers by Age	5-11:	51	11-13:	40
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	33		
Number of Boarders	Total:	58		
	Full:	45	Weekly:	13
Inspection Dates	07 October 2014 to 10 October 2014			

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in January 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor, 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 Jan Preece

Mr Andrew Potts

Mr Richard Gibbs

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector (Headmaster, IAPS school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Woodcote House School is a boarding and day preparatory school for boys aged from 7 to 13. It is situated in the village of Windlesham in north-west Surrey. The school was established in 1854 and since 1931 has been owned by three generations of the same family. The current headmaster is not part of the proprietorial family but two members are still involved in the running of the school. The proprietor, who also teaches in the school, provides governance. Since the previous inspection boarding facilities have been redeveloped and a boarding house in the grounds to accommodate pupils in Year 8 has been re-opened.
- 1.2 The school's motto is *Vive ut discas et discas ut vivas*; live to learn and learn to live. The school aims to fulfil this by encouraging pupils to enjoy learning, working, playing and co-operating with their peers, to the very best of their abilities. Central to the school's philosophy is the traditions and values implied in its family ethos.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection there were 91 pupils on the school roll, of whom 58 were boarders. Forty-five of these are full boarders and a further 13 stay for at least two nights a week. Boarding accommodation is mainly on the upper floor of the main school building but boarders in Year 8 now live in a separate house in the grounds. The ability range of pupils is above the national average. Most pupils come from professional, military or business backgrounds and are of white British heritage. The majority live in the locality or in London and a minority come from overseas.
- 1.4 The school has identified 19 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), all of whom receive extra support. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Fourteen of the 15 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) receive additional support.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Junior 1	Year 3
Junior 2	Year 4
Form 3	Year 5
Form 4	Year 6
Form 5	Year 7
Form 6	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Woodcote House fulfils its aims well. The quality of pupils' learning, academic and other achievements is good and most pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, make progress which is good; for some individuals progress is excellent, given their starting points. Pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills very effectively across academic subjects, the creative arts and sport due to the provision of a broad curriculum, which allows time for a wide range of activities to develop the pupils' interests and abilities. The pupils' achievements are well supported by good teaching in small classes which affords much individual attention. The strong subject knowledge evident in teaching is very effective in promoting the extremely positive attitudes of pupils towards their work. In response to the previous inspection, teaching is now supported by stronger curricular documentation though some of this is insufficiently detailed to ensure continuity and progression in learning in different year groups.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They develop self-confidence and self-esteem through daily time with their form tutors and say they are valued within the close school community. They have a keen sense of justice and fairness and an excellent sense of social responsibility. Their manners are impeccable and they are exuberant yet well behaved and respectful. The pupils' good appreciation of their own and others' cultural backgrounds is enhanced by living and working alongside boarders from overseas. Pupils are particularly well cared for and relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils themselves are exceptionally good. The pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires were very positive and confirmed that they like their school. Attention to health, welfare and safety is excellent and safeguarding is given high priority. Training for all staff at a level appropriate to their responsibilities is now up to date. The quality of boarding is good overall; outcomes for boarders and provision and care for them are excellent. Boarding is central to the school's ethos and boarders feel proud to be part of the boarding community. Formally recorded audits of the boarding provision and plans for development were under developed.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good, particularly in relation to the commitment to the school of the proprietor, who is supported by an advisory board. He has close insight into the school's strengths and challenges through his daily presence as a member of the teaching staff. Insufficient attention has been paid to monitoring all regulatory requirements to ensure they are compliant. Consequently there have been omissions in the recruitment checks for visiting music teachers and sports coaches. When made aware, the school made strenuous attempts to rectify these. Leadership and management of the school are good. Senior leaders are a cohesive team and strongly committed to maintaining its ethos and giving it clear direction. An over-reliance on informal communication limits the extent and effectiveness of self-evaluation, which is sometimes insufficiently rigorous, and monitoring procedures are inconsistent.
- 2.4 The recommendation from the previous boarding welfare inspection has been implemented. The school has also improved its use of assessment data, as recommended at the last interim inspection.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.5 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- ensure that the required recruitment checks are undertaken on all staff, including visiting music teachers and sports coaches, before they begin work and are entered in the single central register [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(b)(ii) and (iv) and 19.(3); paragraph 22.(3)(c) and (4) under Suitability of staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), paragraphs 8.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults, and National Minimum Standard 11, under Child Protection].

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Strengthen continuity and progression in pupils' learning through ensuring that each subject has a scheme of work which assigns topics to year groups.
2. Devise formal structures to evaluate with rigour the school's educational provision and its impact on outcomes for the pupils.
3. Ensure boarding provision is audited regularly and systematically to inform development planning.

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 accordance with the school's motto *learn to live and live to learn*. They develop their knowledge, understanding and skills very effectively in academic areas, the creative arts and sport, whilst becoming motivated and enthusiastic learners. Pupils are articulate, converse confidently and are eager to contribute their ideas in discussions. They usually listen attentively and most read competently for their age. Mathematical skills, particularly in number work, are strong throughout the school and more able pupils make well-reasoned links between current and previous learning; for example they made excellent links to Pascal's triangle from their studies on probability. Inspection evidence found few specific examples of problem-solving and investigative work. Pupils have good scientific knowledge and skills to undertake science investigations. However, few opportunities to conduct investigative work, particularly in mathematics and science, limit the pupils' ability to develop initiative and independent learning skills. The youngest pupils demonstrate a good understanding of basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills and older pupils use ICT effectively to present their work and, when given the opportunity, for research. Pupils of all ages develop strong reasoning skills. They display logical thinking in mathematics and science and reflect deeply on ethical issues in subjects such as history and English. Their creativity is evident in artwork, craft and design technology (CDT), and music and in excellent pieces of creative writing including poetry. They are given more frequent opportunities for extended writing than at the previous inspection.
- 3.3 As a result of daily sports sessions, pupils enjoy physical activity and most demonstrate well-developed physical skills. Despite being a small school, teams regularly play and win against larger schools and have fine records of success in both football and rugby. Individual pupils have competed in national schools athletics finals successfully for their age. Many pupils learn at least one musical instrument and all those entered for external music examinations have achieved success. All pupils develop their musical or thespian skills in the school's twice-yearly productions.
- 3.4 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests, but on the evidence available is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Pupils follow a broad and challenging curriculum, which includes a modern language and Latin and, since the previous inspection, all have been successful in gaining places at their first choice of senior school. The school's assessment data indicates that most pupils make progress that is good in relation to those of similar ability; the progress of some from their starting points is excellent. Inspection evidence gained from pupils' learning in lessons, their written work and in interviews, confirms this. Pupils with SEND make good and sometimes rapid progress due to highly effective individual specialist support. Those with EAL also make good progress through excellent tuition in individual lessons, though less so when insufficient provision is made for them in class. The more able also make good progress and each year some gain awards to their senior schools, including academic and music scholarships.
- 3.5 Pupils throughout the school have highly positive attitudes towards their learning. They are invariably enthusiastic in their participation in lessons and are keen to

answer questions and offer their ideas. They settle to their work quickly and generally sustain high levels of concentration and perseverance. Most pupils take care to present their work carefully. They behave co-operatively in class and their excellent relationships with their teachers contribute much to their good progress and achievement.

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

- 3.6 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.7 The curriculum offers considerable variety during the extended school day and fulfils the school's aim of providing a full and rounded education. Each day many non-academic opportunities are offered, including a wide range of activities, and chapel services or assemblies. The curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities, and presents broad and generally balanced provision that meets the wide range of abilities exceptionally well. All the National Curriculum subjects are taught and given appropriate amounts of time. The programme includes Spanish, Latin and morals for younger pupils replaced by current affairs for older ones. Teaching of ICT and CDT continues to Year 6 and reasoning is studied in Years 5 to 7. There is a strong focus on the core skills of English and mathematics and vibrant provision for music. Games sessions each afternoon offer team sports that include cricket, rugby, football and hockey. A full fixtures programme affords all pupils the opportunity to represent their school and many individual sports are available, including athletics, swimming, fly-fishing, golf, archery, riding and shooting.
- 3.8 The provision for pupils with SEND is excellent. They are withdrawn for specialist teaching either as individuals or within a small group. This highly effective support helps them to consolidate work covered in class or to work towards a specific target set in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). The individual needs of pupils are well met; this includes setting at the upper end of the school, so that all pupils, including the most able, receive appropriate challenge and support for their senior school aspiration. Arrangements for pupils with EAL are also strong; their proficiency in English develops well through helpful specialist teaching out of class.
- 3.9 The school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that allow pupils to explore their own particular interests. A large majority of pupils learn an instrument and there are two school choirs and two bands. Pupils enjoy opportunities to join the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and enjoy hobbies such as modelling, board games, photography, debating and film clubs. Daily periods of free time and rest provide pupils with quiet times to read or to pursue their particular interests. This provision strongly supports the school's aim to produce all-rounders who have a genuine love for learning. The educational experience of pupils is enhanced by a regular programme of visiting speakers and trips to places of interest, often related to their academic studies. These include residential visits in the UK and abroad such as geography and history field trips, CCF camp, the Somme and a football tour to Geneva.
- 3.10 The school has developed good links with the local community; for example pupils helped in a presentation about the history of the school for the Royal British Legion, made bird boxes for a local arboretum, painted a mural in the local town hall as well as the outside fence of the local infant school. Pupils and their parents raise considerable sums of money for local, national and international charities, which raises their social conscience.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.11 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.12 The quality and consistency of teaching has improved since the previous inspection so that overall it is good. A significant strength of teaching is that staff know their pupils and their individual needs exceptionally well, and provide committed encouragement and support in small classes. Relationships within the classroom are notably supportive and teachers motivate the pupils with praise and encouragement. Pupils' learning is supported by appropriate homework, which is graduated so that, by Year 8, pupils take greater responsibility for allocating their time to it. In the pre-inspection questionnaire every pupil expressed the view that their teachers help them learn and that they are making good progress. This was confirmed in interviews with inspectors and is in accordance with the school's aim for pupils to enjoy their learning.
- 3.13 Teachers, many of whom are subject specialists, demonstrate strong subject knowledge and impart their enthusiasm to the pupils. They teach confidently and give clear explanations. Many use questioning highly effectively both to encourage pupils to develop their ideas and also to check their understanding. Most lessons are well-planned to ensure that learning objectives are met and that pupils' interest remains engaged. Much teaching is excellent. The most effective includes a variety of activities and proceeds at a brisk pace. Teachers make creative use of resources to arouse and maintain the pupils' interest, particularly video clips. Sometimes paired work is used productively to enable pupils to share their learning and ensure that all are participating. When teaching is less effective, time is not well managed; the lesson is overly directed by the teacher or too long is spent on one activity. As a result, the pupils' interest and attention flags, which limits progress. Some use is made of ICT to develop learning; for example pupils are taught to use software for word processing and presentations but teaching does not extend to programming and control.
- 3.14 Pupils with SEND, including any with a statement of special educational needs, receive excellent teaching from specialist staff in withdrawal sessions. Form teachers are made aware of the content of IEPs but this information is not always taken into account in lesson planning, so that whilst sympathetic support is offered, tasks are not adapted sufficiently to enable pupils to work independently. This reduces the otherwise good progress that they make. Pupils with EAL receive similar effective support out of the classroom by a specialist teacher, though the class curriculum is not always sufficiently modified to take note of any disparity between their academic ability and language proficiency. More able pupils generally receive sufficient challenge through high expectations from teachers and extension activities.
- 3.15 In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, planning for each subject is now supported by documentation, the best of which gives clear guidance on the content for each year group and appropriate teaching strategies. This documentation is inconsistent in detail so that in some subjects, such as Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), ICT and music there are no clear schemes of work indicating what will be studied in each year group. Consequently subject teachers occasionally cover the same topic at different times of the year or different year groups repeat topics. This impedes continuity and progression in the pupils' learning.

- 3.16 The quality of marking has improved since the previous inspection. The pupils' work is often marked with encouraging comments and sometimes, but not consistently, guidance for improvement. Pupils appreciate the oral feedback that is frequently given. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the school now uses a range of standardized assessments as well as internal examinations to measure the pupils' attainment. This is used very effectively to track the pupils' progress and identify those pupils whose progress is limited. It is beginning to inform lesson planning, but not consistently so.

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 awareness is strong, founded within the Christian faith and promoted through themed chapel services and assemblies during which they have the opportunity to think and to pray. Many parents join the whole school community which meets for chapel after Saturday school. The pupils demonstrate a balanced assurance and self-awareness; whilst naturally exuberant, they carry themselves with composure. The pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem is well developed and they say they feel valued and able to develop as individuals. They are capable of insightful reflection such as when they perceived that the lyrics of a popular song being learned for a chapel service could either be interpreted as expressing that support in times of trouble comes from God or from friends.
- 4.3 The pupils show a keen moral awareness. They have good staff role models to follow and adhere to a strong moral code that guides their behaviour. Since most board for at least part of the week, older pupils understand and accept the implications of living in community, showing pride and loyalty as boarders. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, and of justice and fairness. Consequently they understand their actions have consequences which may invoke sanctions. Older pupils display a strong awareness of social, economic and political issues, promoted well by current affairs lessons. They demonstrate clear regard to moral and ethical values when teaching in some subjects encourages them to research and debate issues such as the death penalty.
- 4.4 Pupils demonstrate an excellent sense of social responsibility. They are co-operative and well mannered. The school's code of behaviour is based on respect, courtesy, thought for and empathy with others, as well as common sense and pupils' behavior is generally excellent. Those of all ages mix well together and senior pupils who hold positions of responsibility such as being head of house or chapel, library and tuck shop monitors develop leadership skills and carry out their duties conscientiously. The election process for the school council affords an opportunity for the pupils to learn about the democratic process and they speak positively about the role the council plays in the life of the school. Pupils develop an understanding of financial management and the exercise of choice when, after discussion in tutor time, they decide how much money they want to withdraw from their school account for the weekly charitable collection.
- 4.5 The pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures is well developed. The centrality of the Christian ethic is combined with consideration of other world faiths in religious studies lessons. Pupils are aware of world events, for example maturely discussing the impact of the Japanese Tsunami in a geography lesson. They also develop a sense of their own and other cultures and traditions, enhanced by their positive interactions with boarders of different nationalities. This was evident in a Spanish Day, particularly through the sharing of prayers in both Spanish and English during morning assembly. Overseas pupils are welcomed into the school and integrate well through the kindness and openness they meet. Pupils develop a good understanding of Western European history, culture and institutions through well-planned topics and visits within the curriculum.

- 4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed excellent personal qualities. They are proud of, and loyal towards, their school and take pride in their own achievements whilst also being respectful of, and taking genuine pleasure in, the accomplishments of others. This is in accordance with the school's aim for them to hold personal conduct and courteous behaviour paramount. In the pre-inspection questionnaires they were highly positive about the school, the overwhelming majority saying how much they like attending.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Committed staff provide effective and caring support and guidance for pupils, fulfilling the school's aims to generate and sustain self-confidence in each individual. Relationships between staff and pupils, and between the pupils, are strong. Staff contribute very effectively to an atmosphere of tolerance, friendliness and mutual respect. They monitor individual pastoral needs through the tutorial system very effectively. Form periods enable tutors to develop an excellent rapport with their pupils and to provide sensitive and individual support and guidance. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all the parents expressed the view that their children are well cared for.
- 4.9 Numerous sporting events and activities throughout the school week ensure that pupils take daily exercise and help them to keep fit. Menus are nutritious and well-balanced and friendly staff encourage pupils to eat healthily. All dietary needs are fully met and the chef is happy to meet personal requests. Meals are home cooked with locally sourced produce and pupils are unanimous in their praise of the food that is provided.
- 4.10 Procedures to promote respect and positive behaviour are effective. In questionnaires all the parents agreed that standards of behaviour are high and inspection evidence confirms this. Pupils say that any sanctions given are generally fair. In discussion and through their responses to the questionnaire, they say that if any bullying occurs, staff deal with it promptly and effectively. An examination of school records confirms their view that incidents are few; any which occur are well recorded together with their resolution, including the use of suitable sanctions. The overwhelming majority of pupils say they know to whom they can turn for help and advice.
- 4.11 Although a few pupils commented in questionnaires that they are not satisfied with the way the school seeks their opinions or responds to them, inspection evidence found that they are able to contribute to the life of the school in various ways. They have the opportunity to give their opinions and ideas formally through the school council and the food committee, and minutes indicate that, where appropriate, requests are met. Pupils can also informally share any concerns that they may have in daily form times.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.14 Effective arrangements promote the welfare and safeguarding of pupils. The safeguarding policy and procedures meet current requirements and give staff clear

guidance should there be any concerns. All staff are given key information on health and safety and safeguarding when they start work. The school now ensures that information on safeguarding given at induction is followed up by more detailed training for any staff who join mid-way through the regular training cycle. Recently appointed staff have now received additional training and training for the designated safeguarding lead is up to date, though systems for monitoring all regulatory requirements have not been sufficiently rigorous. All staff have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check though not all the other checks have been correctly undertaken for visiting music teachers and sports coaches. Once alerted to this omission, the school acted with alacrity to rectify this where possible. In the pre-inspection questionnaires and interviews pupils all said they feel safe in school.

- 4.15 The school takes all necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards, including regular maintenance of fire-fighting equipment, the weekly testing of the fire alarm system and termly evacuation drills. Most staff have been trained as fire marshals. The school has successfully attended to any urgent issues from the recent fire risk assessment and has constructed a plan to address less pressing recommendations, in consultation with the assessor. Testing and maintenance of gas, water and electrical supplies and equipment are carried out at the required intervals. Risk assessments for both the school site, more hazardous activities such as archery and shooting, as well as external visits, indicate careful attention to the pupils' safety.
- 4.16 Pupils who are ill or hurt themselves are well cared for. Most staff are trained in first aid and the matrons undertake training at a higher level. Medicines are correctly stored and records of treatment and accidents properly maintained. The admission and the attendance registers are correctly maintained and stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.17 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.18 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders feel considerable loyalty and pride in their place in the school because boarding is central to its ethos. Relationships across the boarding community are friendly and indicate that both part-time and full boarders regard the boarding house as their term time home. It is clearly evident that boarders enjoy each other's company and that they acknowledge the beneficial effect that boarding has on their independence and self-reliance. Boarders, including those from overseas and those with SEND, report that they feel fully integrated. Those with EAL mix well with English-speaking boarders and appreciate the opportunity to develop their knowledge of English. Boarders who are heads of house in school do not have a supervisory role in boarding though older boarders provide support to younger ones. Boarders are satisfied that they have a voice through the food committee and school council, though some would like to contribute specifically to the boarding community through the re-introduction of a boarding committee. Boarders are well informed about the world outside school through access to newspapers and the radio news during breakfast, as well as through television and the Internet.
- 4.19 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Induction for new boarders is very effective. They are provided with a handbook and buddies so that they settle well. Part-time boarding is encouraged as a first step and most pupils convert to full boarding at the end of Year 7, in preparation for the next stage in their education. Boarders say that they are well looked after and can speak to a tutor or matron if

unhappy or worried. Contact details for national helplines and the independent listener are displayed in the boarding house, though she has not been formally introduced to boarders in this role. Arrangements for the boarders' medical care are well managed and generously staffed. These ensure excellent care for those who are injured or unwell and the administration of treatment and medication is carefully recorded. Sickbay accommodation is adequate for short stays though most boarders return home if they are unwell. The school's thorough attention to health and safety ensures a safe boarding environment. Evacuation drills are practised every term in boarding time and boarders state that they feel safe. The catering staff are committed to providing healthy menus that will be enjoyed. Boarders praise the quality of food. Boarders' pocket money is kept in a school account. They make choices about how they want to spend it and accounts are carefully maintained. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority expressed the view that their belongings are not safe. These views are not confirmed by inspectors' observations since mobile phones and electronic devices are stored in locked cupboards and each boarder has a suitable space for storing personal belongings.

- 4.20 The school grounds are much appreciated by boarders as a pleasant, safe and healthy recreational environment. They say they enjoy using the wood-fired pizza oven and rope assault course in good weather. Boarders enjoy the wide variety of evening activities organised for them, such as archery, table football, board games and rip-sticking. They attend school on Saturday morning and have sporting fixtures in the afternoon followed by free time and an evening activity. On Sundays there is a well-organised programme of trips and activities. Boarding accommodation is adequately heated, clean and comfortable. Washroom provision is easily accessible though that on the ground floor is less welcoming than that upstairs. There has been some investment in upgrading boarding accommodation in recent years and the school has correctly identified the need for an on-going programme of decoration, refurbishment and refurnishing. Some boarders choose to personalise their dormitories with posters and photographs. They have access to common rooms for television or games such as table football, table tennis and pool. Boarders in Year 8 spend a term in a separate boarding house in the grounds. They appreciate the added independence and preparation for their senior schools that this experience brings. In-house laundering of boarders' clothes and bedding is organised efficiently. Boarders may easily contact their parents by mobile phone, electronic mail and video messaging and also correspond by post. Staff keep parents well informed by electronic mail or telephone and senior managers use video messaging to have face-to-face conversations with parents of overseas boarders.
- 4.21 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. All boarding staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding and those with boarding duties have been subject to all the required checks on appointment although this has not been consistent for some teaching staff. All boarding house staff and adults associated with boarding, such as domestic and catering staff, have received suitable training in safeguarding procedures and know how to react should an incident occur or a disclosure be made. The boarders benefit from a good number of adults being resident in the house and can easily contact them at night. Duty staff monitor the whereabouts of boarders and frequent checks are made. Unsupervised visitors do not have access to boarding accommodation. Boarders of all ages have no concerns about harassment or aggressive behaviour. They report that boarding staff are approachable and willing to help settle a concern or offer guidance as necessary. Suitable anti-bullying and behavioural policies are in place and boarders

understand the clear sanctions for any misbehaviour, though serious incidents are very rare. Good behaviour and achievement are recognised and rewarded, for example with privileges for the Dormitory of the Week. The overwhelming majority of boarders enjoy boarding and state in their questionnaires that staff treat them fairly.

- 4.22 The leadership and management of boarding are good. Boarding principles and practice are made available to parents and the school implements its philosophy for boarding well. The extended school family is committed to ensuring that boarders are fulfilled, happy, properly looked after, and relaxed. Boarding is well led by dedicated resident staff, including matrons, who are highly regarded by boarders. Senior staff and a number of teaching staff are integral to the organisation of boarding and contribute very effectively to the personal development of boarders. Boarding staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and strong and positive relationships between boarders and staff are a strength of the boarding community. Formally recorded audits of the boarding provision and plans for development are under developed, so timescales for actions to be completed and the evaluation of outcomes lack rigour. Boarding staff develop their expertise through attendance at external courses, though some have not had a recent appraisal of their performance. The recommendation of the previous boarding welfare inspection to increase the availability of drinking water during the day has now been met. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires all the boarders' parents were content with every aspect of boarding and a very large majority of boarders were similarly happy.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The involvement in the school of three generations of the same family provides the continuity which helps to sustain the traditional family ethos of the school. The proprietor, informed by his teaching role, has a comprehensive oversight of all aspects of the school. He is supported by an advisory board which meets with the senior leadership team at least twice a year. Its membership offers additional experience to the proprietor, such as in financial and legal areas but does not include an external figure with educational expertise. Prudent financial management allows appropriate investment in accommodation, staff and resources. The involvement of members of the proprietorial family in teaching gives the proprietor a close insight into the workings and performance of the school. As a daily presence he is well known to both staff and parents. The proprietor meets informally with the headmaster on most days to provide advice, support and appropriate challenge and he assists the leadership in drawing up the school development plan.
- 5.3 The advisory group receives a report on health and safety and safeguarding at each meeting. This indicates the proprietor's strong desire that arrangements for the welfare, health and safeguarding of the pupils are correct and being properly implemented. Since this report does not regularly include information about changes to statutory requirements, the proprietor has not ensured that all regulatory requirements are fulfilled. Consequently at the time of the inspection omissions in recruitment checks had not been identified. The proprietor's annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures is now correctly recorded.

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

- 5.4 The leadership and management of the school are good.
- 5.5 The school's clearly articulated vision and aims underpin the leadership. Senior leaders have designated areas of responsibility and work very effectively together. The high levels of informal communication and excellent relationships between senior leaders, who share a common purpose, ensure that the school fulfils its aims well. The leadership and management are highly committed to the school and are fully immersed in all aspects of its work, from participation in activities through to strategic planning. The leaders are mindful of their delegated responsibilities, and systems have been established to ensure careful monitoring of health and safety, including the provision of appropriate training for all staff. All staff receive induction training which includes essential information.
- 5.6 The leadership and management provide very clear direction for the school ensuring that its family ethos underpins its procedures, as demonstrated at lunchtime when nearly all staff sit and eat with the pupils. Strategic planning is documented in a development plan, but this does not include focused targets in relation to teaching and learning, reducing the effectiveness of monitoring of this area. The care and support provided for the pupils by senior leaders, fully supported by staff at every level, make a very significant contribution to the pupils' personal development and the high standards of behaviour and manners seen throughout the school.

- 5.7 Leadership is devolved throughout the school and responsibilities are delegated to staff according to their roles and experience. This strengthens the commitment of all staff to the school community and provides individual staff with opportunities to develop management skills as part of their own professional development. An over-reliance on informal communication and systems limits the extent and effectiveness of self-evaluation, which is sometimes insufficiently rigorous. Monitoring procedures to ensure all regulatory requirements are fulfilled are inconsistent.
- 5.8 A system of staff appraisal has been established but the processes have proved unsustainable and as a result many staff have not had opportunities recently for formal, professional dialogue. A plan to delegate appraisal responsibilities across the senior leadership team is currently being established. The headmaster's appraisal is carried out informally by the proprietor, whose intimate knowledge of the school provides helpful guidance. There is good provision of training for all staff on a range of pastoral, welfare and health and safety matters. Very few staff, other than those on the school's graduate teacher-training programme, have undertaken external training on topics relating to teaching and learning or the curriculum.
- 5.9 The quality of links with parents is excellent. The school successfully fulfils its aim for an extended family ethos where interaction and communication with parents is strongly encouraged. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents were very happy with the education and support provided for their children and no areas of concern were expressed. Parents are particularly pleased with the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities offered, the care given to their children, and that they feel safe and happy at the school.
- 5.10 The senior leaders and managers are very accessible. Pupils, parents and staff have many opportunities to speak with them. The morning registration of day boys provides an opportunity for parents to have a quick word about any minor concerns or worries. Parents currently resident abroad have individual opportunities to meet with senior staff when they visit the school. The school has a suitable complaints procedure and records show that invariably concerns are resolved without recourse to it.
- 5.11 Parents are confident that their child is well known and valued as an individual by all the staff. The relationships established between parents and staff are informal, relaxed and friendly. The school provides many opportunities for parents to be actively involved and informed about school life. Many parents attend chapel on Saturday mornings and then stay to lunch, matches and tea, where they have the opportunity to liaise with staff informally. Parents were provided with a summary of life in school in a regular blog on the website. There are parent representatives from each year group who support the school through offering help and re-assurance to other parents, or by directing them to the leadership. A number of parents also support the school through the organisation of charitable events and social activities.
- 5.12 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with required information about the school in a prospectus and information books for parents and new pupils. Electronic mail is used effectively to ensure timely responses between staff and parents. Parents receive an informative report at the end of each term. These are supplemented with grade cards at half term holidays which indicate the pupils' effort and attainment. Together with annual formal parents' evenings and regular informal opportunities to meet with teachers, parents are kept very well informed of their children's work and progress. Where pupils are identified with SEND requiring

further assessment, parents are contacted, and they then have the opportunity to contribute to the development of any intervention plan.

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