



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

WORKSOP COLLEGE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Worksop College

This inspection covered the senior school only (ages 13-18)

Full Name of School	Worksop College		
DfE Number	891/6001		
Registered Charity Number	1103326		
Address	Worksop College Sparken Hill Worksop Nottinghamshire S80 3AP		
Telephone Number	01909 537100		
Fax Number	01909 537102		
Email Address	headmaster@wsnl.co.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Gavin Horgan		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Colin Anderson		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	370 (senior school)		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (221 boys; 149 girls)		
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	151	
Number of Boarders	Total:	219	
	Full:	119	Weekly: 100
Inspection Dates	10 to 13 February 2015		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous full inspection was in May 2009 and an intermediate inspection of boarding welfare took place in March 2012.

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

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 chairman of governors and other 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

Mr George Fisher	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Pamela Evans	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, GSA school)
Mrs Susan Smith	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Andrew Waddington	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr John Wharam	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Sally Cunliffe	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Crispin Dawson	Boarding Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Worksop College is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 18. The school was founded in 1895 as a boys' boarding school and became co-educational in the 1980s. This inspection covered the senior part of the school only. The senior school educates pupils between the ages of 13 and 18 and occupies a 330-acre site on the edges of Sherwood Forest and Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire, about 19 miles east of Sheffield. The preparatory school is situated in a 30-acre estate at Ranby, five miles away. The preparatory school and the college, which have been governed by the same board for many years, merged formally in 2015. The school is a member of the Woodard Corporation, a group of schools whose ethos stems from the Christian faith and values of their founder, Nathaniel Woodard. Oversight of the school is by the directors of Woodard Schools (Nottinghamshire) Ltd, a subsidiary of the corporation.
- 1.2 The school aims to develop resilience, adaptability and independence amongst its pupils and to provide a supportive community, encouraging and guiding pupils for their time at the school and in preparation for the future. Furthermore, the school seeks to support, challenge and extend the academic and individual endeavours of the pupils, and to develop strength of character and sound moral values.
- 1.3 Since the previous full inspection, the senior and preparatory schools have been united under a new headmaster, who has responsibility for both sections. A new chairman of governors has been appointed. The curriculum and the structure of the school day have both been changed.
- 1.4 There are 370 pupils in the senior school, of whom 219 are boarders and 151 are day pupils. The majority of entrants into Year 9 transition from the preparatory school. Around three-fifths of pupils are boys; there are 157 pupils in the sixth form. Boarders are accommodated in houses which cater for all ages, four for boys and two for girls. The school provides for full, weekly and flexi-boarding. Day pupils are allocated to one of the boarding houses, or to one of two dedicated day houses, one each for boys and girls.
- 1.5 The ability profile in Years 9 to 11 is above the national average with around two-thirds of pupils having at least above average ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is in line with the national average for pupils in sixth-form education. Around a fifth of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, where no group predominates; the majority of pupils are of white British origin. Of the boarders, around one-third are from overseas. The majority of pupils are from professional backgrounds. Twenty-two boarders are from families with a member serving in the armed forces.
- 1.6 There are 43 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 10 receive specialist, one-to-one tuition, mostly for literacy difficulties, including dyslexia. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The school has 88 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL), of whom 63 receive additional support from the school.
- 1.7 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
Year 9	Year 9
Year 10	Year 10
Year 11	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Worksop College is successful in meeting its primary aim of developing resilience, adaptability and independence amongst its pupils. The pupils' overall achievement is good, as demonstrated by their performance in public examinations and in their work. Pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able, make good progress. Pupils demonstrate strong learning qualities. The pupils' achievement in extra-curricular activities is excellent, in response to strong provision. The curriculum is wide ranging and well balanced and offers suitable choice, including within the sixth form. It is modified carefully according to the needs of the individual. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been strengthened significantly since the previous full inspection, as has the quality of careers education and guidance. The broad extra-curricular programme provides for all interests and also leads to strong links with the local community. The quality of teaching is good with a significant proportion being excellent, and is characterised by strong subject knowledge, energy and enthusiasm, and mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Assessment methods are effective, but there is still a variation in the quality of marking, as at the time of the previous full inspection. This limits some pupils' progress. The school makes excellent use of data to track the progress of pupils.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. The pastoral systems are highly effective and provide a secure base within which pupils feel confident and can flourish. Pupils are friendly, happy and open in their relations with one another and with staff. Healthy living is successfully promoted for all pupils. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good. Thorough risk assessments are in place and the health and safety committee is diligent in responding to deficiencies around the site, including within boarding. The quality of boarding is good. Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders feel secure, happy and valued, with the houses acting as home. There is a significant difference in the quality of accommodation provided in the different houses; the overall quality of provision and care is good. Arrangements for lodgings, whereby boarders may live with a host family when not in boarding accommodation, have improved since the previous boarding inspection, but the recording of checks is not centralised which restricts oversight.
- 2.3 Governance is good and includes strong and far-sighted financial management. Governors maintain a clear, strategic role in shaping the development of the school, and in meeting their responsibilities for the safeguarding of pupils. Governance has ensured that all of the regulatory requirements from the previous boarding inspection have been met, and that the recommendations have been partially met. Leadership and management are good; senior leadership is particularly strong and is supported by effective middle management. Monitoring has been insufficiently rigorous in the past, and there have been historic failures to record correctly pre-appointment checks on some staff. By the start of the academic year the school had identified the issue and modified its systems; these are now rigorous and are being implemented fully. Links with parents are excellent and their endorsement of the school and its values was evident in the very positive responses to the parental questionnaires.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Improve the monitoring of all school procedures to provide greater rigour, including in the marking of pupils' work.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aims to develop resilient, adaptable and independent learners. Pupils demonstrate good levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in all of their subjects. They are attentive listeners and articulate their ideas clearly, both in lessons and in informal situations. Those with EAL are confident speakers of English. Pupils read a wide range of texts with a good level of understanding and their written skills are well developed; they write accurately and persuasively. They apply mathematical skills appropriately, including within the sciences and geography. Pupils are logical thinkers and the more able can analyse and synthesise arguments with increasing levels of sophistication. However, some pupils' reasoning skills are less developed so that they lack the confidence to tackle harder problems for themselves. The pupils' physical skills are excellent and they show high levels of enjoyment and commitment towards physical activity. Pupils are proficient users of ICT, employing it readily in a variety of contexts. Creativity is strongly developed, with excellent outcomes evident in some subjects.
- 3.3 Pupils with SEND and EAL attain at a good level and become confident learners across the curriculum. The more able pupils develop their work through additional challenge within lessons and through further enrichment activities, achieving excellent standards. The majority of pupils go on to higher education, many going to their first choice of university or college, including art schools and music conservatoires.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve excellent levels in a rich variety of extra-curricular activities. Significant numbers of pupils gain selection at regional and national levels in a range of team sports, as well as in individual pursuits. There are high levels of achievement in instrumental music and voice examinations. Pupils participate strongly and with success in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) and in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF).
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 – 2013, the most recent three years for which comparable statistics are available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools and results in 2014 maintained a similar level of performance. Results in IGCSE have been generally higher than worldwide norms. A-Level results have been in line with the national average for maintained schools and results in 2014 were broadly similar. Results in 2013 were lower than in preceding years.
- 3.6 The levels of attainment at GCSE, IGCSE and A level, and the nationally standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils make good progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar ability. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, and the school's own tracking data, suggests that current pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and the more able, are making good progress.
- 3.7 Pupils enjoy learning and relish the challenges set by their teachers, including the opportunity to work collaboratively. They are well motivated with a disciplined approach to their work, with many exhibiting a well-developed, intellectual curiosity.

They are receptive to new material and react positively to stimulus and feedback. Pupils show an increasing ability to become independent learners.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum provides effective coverage of all areas of learning, fully meeting the school's aim of providing academic challenge for all pupils. The range of choice has been extended significantly since the previous full inspection at both GCSE and A level. Provision for ICT has been strengthened considerably by establishing a suitable range of qualifications for pupils to access, thus meeting the recommendation of that inspection. A diploma in food and nutrition has also been introduced within the sixth form. The creative, expressive and practical subjects have a strong place in the curriculum.
- 3.10 The curriculum is carefully monitored by senior leadership, and provides appropriate choice at every stage. In Year 9 the broad range of subjects provides suitable flexibility, such as the ability to study up to three languages, allowing the needs of all abilities to be met well. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum allows pupils to study an appropriate core of GCSE or IGCSE subjects, including at least one modern foreign language, and provides the opportunity to take separate science subjects.
- 3.11 The programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well structured, and plays a significant part in enabling pupils to become confident and responsible citizens. The provision for careers guidance is strong. An annual careers fair, allied to excellent guidance on higher education, ensures that pupils are able to make informed choices at all stages. The recommendation made in the previous full inspection has been fully met.
- 3.12 Setting by prior attainment is used successfully in many subjects, allowing smaller classes for less able pupils, so that their needs can be more carefully supported. The provision for pupils with SEND and EAL is excellent. Pupils are carefully screened on entry and one-to-one teaching is provided, as necessary. Their progress is carefully tracked and regular subject clinics enable additional support to be provided. The more able are provided with excellent opportunities to develop their interests; for instance through the 'master class' partnerships with local universities.
- 3.13 Throughout the school, there is a carefully designed programme of trips, including to places such as New York and Morocco. The academic societies and the extensive lecture programme are also highly effective in stimulating the pupils' interest and in broadening their horizons.
- 3.14 The extra-curricular provision is excellent and contributes significantly to the pupils' personal development and achievement. Sporting choices are particularly extensive; in addition to strong provision for traditional team games, a wide variety of other options is provided, including climbing, golf, kayaking, trampolining and Zumba. Inter-house sporting competitions, such as the traditional Dorm and Clumber cross-country runs, are very popular and provide further opportunities for all pupils to participate. A wide range of music and drama allows pupils to develop their strengths and to excel in performances and competitions. There are numerous ensembles and choirs, and regular international music tours. The range of activities is further extended by activities that pupils instigate, ranging from model building to 'nerf wars'.

- 3.15 There is an extensive community service programme which is supported strongly through DofE and the CCF. Additionally, pupils work for charities, assist in local primary schools, visit the sick and elderly, and volunteer at animal sanctuaries.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.17 Teaching is successful throughout the school in promoting the pupils' progress and in meeting the aims of the school and a significant proportion is excellent. It is based on a clear understanding of pupils as individuals, and of their existing levels of knowledge and understanding. Teaching demonstrates strong knowledge of the subject and of recent developments within it, and can show its relevance to the world outside the classroom.
- 3.18 Teaching promotes high expectations of the pupils, and is authoritative. The classroom atmosphere is one of equality, respect and tolerance and is a positive environment for learning. Careful planning which enables pupils to build upon their previous learning and which successfully captures their interest. Good use is made of the excellent physical and electronic resources, as exemplified by the innovative use of tablets within Year 9, although the library is under-used as a resource to support learning.
- 3.19 Time is managed effectively, and, in the most successful lessons, a brisk pace is achieved through frequent changes to the classroom activity. The alteration to the length of lessons, introduced since the previous full inspection, is highly effective in almost all cases and is welcomed by teachers and pupils. Occasionally, where the lesson activity is not changed frequently enough, the pupils' levels of interest, and their consequent progress, are reduced.
- 3.20 A wide variety of methods are used in teaching, including group work, individual research, pupil presentations and experimental work. This helps to maintain their interest and enthusiasm and encourages good behaviour. At their most successful, lessons move at a swift pace and carefully targeted questioning is used effectively to check the pupils' understanding and allow learning to be adapted to meet their needs. In such teaching, the interest and enthusiasm of pupils is palpable.
- 3.21 Teachers are alert to the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL who are well supported in the classroom and through subject-specific clinics. The support provided for pupils with statements is excellent. The more able maintain progress successfully by being given more demanding tasks or through being asked more challenging questions in class. Further enrichment for the more able and for pupils of all abilities is provided through academic societies and a well-planned and stimulating programme of external lectures.
- 3.22 Homework is set regularly and provides good opportunities for both the reinforcement and extension of classwork. As at the previous full inspection, the frequency and quality of marking varies significantly, both within and between departments. The most helpful provides very clear guidance to pupils on how to improve further and this is much appreciated by them. However, some marking lacks detail and is not helpful in guiding improvement. This slows the rate of the pupils' progress.
- 3.23 Several departments have begun to use pupil questionnaires to help to identify aspects of teaching provision which pupils find helpful. The recommendation of the

previous full inspection to make better use of baseline data to inform teaching has been fully met. Teaching is carefully informed by careful target setting based on the pupils' potential, and by the systematic tracking of their progress.

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 pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils demonstrate an excellent spiritual awareness. They have a clear appreciation of the non-material aspects of life, evident in their response to the aesthetic impact of the many pieces of artwork displayed around the school. They have a strong sense of personal identity and their respect for themselves and others is apparent through the mutual support and celebration of each other's achievements, both within house and whole-school activities. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to reflect on their own spirituality, whether in class or through taking part in chapel services and assemblies. Pupils, particularly in the sixth form, show an advanced emotional maturity through their responses in PSHE, religious studies, philosophy and the performing arts. They develop self-confidence through their work in lessons and also through the wide range of other opportunities available to them, for example within the CCF and DofE. These characteristics are equally true of pupils with SEND and EAL.
- 4.3 The pupils' moral development is excellent. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and are respectful towards school rules and the law. They agree wholeheartedly that good relations and manners are fundamental to the success of their community. Pupils are unfailingly courteous and considerate to each other and to visitors, and the school has a distinctive feeling of warm collegiality. Pupils exhibit excellent standards of behaviour and they fully understand the school's code of conduct. They show an understanding of British values such as the democratic process and recognize and embrace their own responsibilities. They appreciate opportunities to bring about constructive change within school and the wider community, for example through the students' council and the boarders' committee.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils said that there are insufficient opportunities to be given responsibility. Inspection evidence shows that pupils rise to the challenge of leadership, and willingly take on roles of responsibility across a good range of areas, for example, Year 12 pupils volunteer to teach appropriate PSHE to Year 9 pupils within the houses. Pupils show consideration for others and sensitivity towards those less fortunate or different from themselves. They undertake regular fund-raising within their houses, and give help outside the school, for instance through assisting in local charity shops. Pupils demonstrate care and consideration for others through community service and by visiting local primary schools and the elderly. A strong sense of social responsibility and generosity is apparent when pupils work collaboratively to raise considerable funds through events such as 'Worksop's Got Talent' and charity runs. Pupils develop a broad general knowledge of the public services and institutions of England, and also gain a good understanding of global, economic and political processes.
- 4.5 Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of other faiths and cultures, and they accept cultural diversity as the norm. Pupils develop tolerance, which is fostered throughout all aspects of school life, and which encompasses the many faiths which are represented in the school. They value the achievements of both the Western tradition and of other cultures. Pupils from all backgrounds feel equally welcomed in accordance with the school's emphasis on social inclusiveness, and their cultures are respected and celebrated. For example, pupils from different cultures and

backgrounds, such as Spain, Russia and China, contribute to an annual international week. This enables pupils to become familiar with a wide variety of cultural traditions, relating to national dress, cuisine and sports. Additionally, many pupils benefit from the range of opportunities to travel abroad on school visits, developing further their cultural understanding.

- 4.6 By the time pupils leave the school, they are well balanced, thoughtful and considerate individuals with an excellent standard of personal development.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The school is highly effective in meeting its aim to provide a supportive community based on the house system, where housemasters and housemistresses act as the key point of contact for all pupils. All staff strive to provide pastoral care for pupils and display a thorough knowledge of each pupil as an individual. The high quality of relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, further contributes to this.
- 4.9 Pupils are encouraged to be healthy by taking part in regular physical activity, and healthy eating is actively promoted through the availability of high quality, fresh and nutritious food.
- 4.10 The school promotes excellent standards of behaviour and guards effectively against harassment and bullying. Clear policies are in place to ensure that all pupils can thrive. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of pupils, and a few parents, said that the school does not always deal effectively with incidents of bullying. Scrutiny of the relevant records shows that incidents, although rare, are taken extremely seriously, and that clear procedures are followed, in line with school policy. A small minority of pupils commented that teachers are not always fair in the way that they give rewards and sanctions. Inspection evidence, including interviews with pupils and a study of school records, shows that sanctions and rewards are awarded fairly, and in line with school, house and departmental policies. Further scrutiny of documentation, shows that appropriate sanctions are imposed for more serious matters, according to school policy.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of pupils said that their views are not listened to. Inspectors found that pupils are actively encouraged to express their opinions, for example through the school and boarding councils. These groups have been successful in bringing about change, for example in the planning of an assembly on the importance of reducing waste at mealtimes, and in the provision of a fresh water fountain in one of the boarding houses. There is effective feedback to pupils on matters raised both through the house system and via assemblies.

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 The policy to safeguard the pupils' welfare is comprehensive and accurately matches current guidance. The designated senior persons ensure that all teaching and support staff have a thorough knowledge of their responsibilities for safeguarding, and that they receive appropriate training, including on induction.

There are effective links with local agencies. The school has been vigilant in meeting the most recent changes to regulations, and has introduced a more rigorous system from the start of the academic year for ensuring that all checks on staff are made correctly and recorded properly.

- 4.15 A health and safety committee, with wide levels of participation, monitors and reviews the implementation of policy effectively. Access to school buildings is very well controlled and this helps to provide a secure environment for pupils. The fire policy clearly defines emergency procedures; fire drills are regularly carried out, logged appropriately and any issues arising are promptly addressed. Additionally, fire and electrical equipment is systematically tested and any deficiencies are quickly remedied. The school is strengthening its training programme for those with responsibility for fire prevention. Risk assessments for activities, off-site visits and for the premises are suitably detailed, although some risk assessments for the premises are generic in nature.
- 4.16 The health care centre provides highly effective medical care for pupils who are sick or injured, as well as a sympathetic ear. Medical records are accurately maintained and accidents are appropriately recorded. Medicines are stored correctly and the needs of pupils with specific conditions are also dealt with sensitively. The first aid policy is suitably detailed, and sufficient numbers of staff have appropriate qualifications.
- 4.17 Admission and attendance records are correctly maintained and stored.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.19 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are confident, self-reliant, tolerant and polite. They behave with integrity and demonstrate high standards of conduct. The house is at the centre of a boarder's life, and boarders express real affinity for their houses, where they live within a highly supportive community. They recognise that their personal development is clearly promoted by their boarding experience, and this view is highlighted in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Relationships between house staff and boarders are strong and built on mutual respect and trust. In addition to house staff and tutors, boarders have confidence that there are a number of other people to whom they can turn for help. Details of external sources of help are clearly displayed in all the houses. Boarders are supported and encouraged by academic tutors, with whom they meet weekly. Both younger and older boarders are well integrated into the boarding community. The induction programme before the start of the academic year ensures that boarders from overseas are welcomed and are quickly made to feel at home. The prefect system offers plenty of opportunities for older pupils to take on greater responsibilities, for example in helping with the running of the house and as role models for younger pupils. The boarders' views are represented through the boarding council, which meets regularly and ensures that the outcomes are reported back. Boarders have benefited from refurbishment of their common rooms and the option to wear casual clothes to breakfast as a result of suggestions to the council.
- 4.20 Boarding provision and care are good. Boarders are suitably accommodated in generally comfortable rooms of varying size, according to their age. Full, weekly and flexi-boarders are all integrated well into their houses. Houses are generally well maintained, although some accommodation is dated and the furnishings are tired

and need replacement. Overall, the quality of accommodation has improved since the previous boarding inspection, including privacy in most of the washing facilities. The standard of shower and toilet facilities is good. However, some showers do not have private dressing areas, as recommended by the previous boarding inspection. The school's commitment towards improving the quality of boarding accommodation is evident in the building of a new boarding house for boys.

- 4.21 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed concern about the safety of their belongings. Inspection evidence shows incidences of theft are rare, and that each boarder has a lockable space to protect their belongings. The central system for pocket money is efficient and boarders can buy personal items from the school shop. The laundry system works well, and boarders can use washing machines and dryers provided within their house. Boarders are confident that they can maintain regular contact with their families. There is an extensive range of activities in the evenings, and boarders appreciate the recent improvements which have been made in this area. There is also a wide-ranging number of weekend events which boarders welcome, whilst also enjoying the time to relax in their houses during free time. Boarders have ready access to the internet and to television so they are able to access information about the world outside school.
- 4.22 Each house has several well-furnished kitchen areas with toasters, kettles and fridges. Bread and milk is provided for boarders. A small minority of pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they would like a greater variety of snacks. Inspection evidence found the provision to be adequate. The central dining room, housed in the college's Great Hall, provides food of a high standard with extensive choice. During interviews, a very few boarders felt there was not sufficient variety in the menu, but inspection evidence does not support this view, and the vast majority of boarders speak very highly of the food. Food is nutritious, well presented and meets any special dietary requirements. Themed meals and house dinners are very much enjoyed. The school arranges lodgings for overseas boarders so that they have a home to go to during school holidays. Much work has been done to improve the thoroughness of this process, including the recording of boarders' satisfaction, thus meeting the requirement of the previous boarding inspection. The required references are obtained for host families but some lack detail. Documentation is not centralised which restricts oversight. The health care centre provides a warm and friendly environment for any boarders who are ill or injured, including good quality, separate facilities for boys and girls. Staff are well qualified and caring. The school doctor holds surgeries twice a week, and staff are happy to make arrangements for boarders to see a doctor, dentist or other professional as required. Prescribed medicines are correctly stored and secure systems are in place to ensure that only the relevant boarder receives them. There is good communication with parents, carers and guardians.
- 4.23 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. Boarders are well cared for and feel safe. The recruitment procedures for newly appointed staff are robust, following revision of the school's systems to check and record staff appointments. Outside persons visiting boarding accommodation are properly supervised. Fire drills are held regularly, including overnight, and are properly logged. Boarding behaviour policies are clear and are implemented effectively and fairly, including rewards and sanctions. The anti-bullying policy is implemented fully across boarding, and incidents of bullying are rare. All prefects are trained in safeguarding and a comprehensive prefects' handbook provides clear guidelines on how to fulfil their role. Houses always have sufficient staff on duty to ensure the well-being of

boarders, including at night. Boarders report positively on the adult support in the house.

- 4.24 The leadership and management of boarding are good. The statement of boarding principles and practice is published in the boarders' handbooks and displayed prominently on house notice-boards. A recent self-evaluation of provision shows a very thorough approach to the meeting of regulatory requirements and demonstrates the school's commitment towards continued improvement. Since the previous boarding inspection, the leadership and management of boarding has been strengthened significantly through the appointment of a head of boarding. Dedicated teams of senior and assistant house staff, together with tutors and housekeepers, combine to provide effective management of the houses. Senior managers spend time in the boarding houses each week. House staff take a genuine interest in the boarders, promoting good links between the academic and pastoral aspects of their development, and ensuring that accurate records are kept. Job descriptions for house staff are suitably detailed and help to ensure that they carry out their roles as expected, with high quality training being given.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governance strongly supports the aims and ethos of the school. The governing body benefits from the presence of governors with a wide range of relevant professional backgrounds, and from energetic and clear-sighted leadership. Since the previous full inspection, an education committee has been formed to ensure that governors focus attention on academic developments and performance. The finance and general purposes committee provides thorough and thoughtful oversight of expenditure and investment, allowing the school to plan confidently for the future. Governors discharge fully their responsibilities for academic standards, financial planning and investment in staff and resources. Governors recognise the inconsistencies in some of the current boarding provision and this had led to the current construction of a new boarding house for boys.
- 5.3 Governors are informed by detailed reports and presentations from senior staff. They ensure that school policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. The monitoring of the implementation and recording of checks on staff prior to appointment has not been sufficiently effective to prevent inconsistencies in the past although this has been more rigorous since the start of the academic year. Governance explores issues in appropriate depth, ensuring that governors and senior staff work together harmoniously in planning and developing provision and policy. Governance is thus successful in providing both support and challenge for the school.
- 5.4 Governors support school events, and a recent development has seen governors spending a day in school, following a structured programme of visiting lessons and other activities. The increased information provided to governors, and the openness of their relationship with the school, mean that governors are better placed to help the future development of the school than at the time of the previous full inspection.
- 5.5 Governors meet their responsibilities for child protection and for welfare, health and safety. Governors collectively undertake an annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures. Governors undertake training appropriate to their role, including about safeguarding, and there is a thorough induction programme for new members involving support from the Woodard Corporation.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.7 Visionary and ambitious senior leadership gives strong impetus to the school's development. The course for the school's future progress has been set with great success and it has the support of all. This approach, supported by a highly effective leadership team, provides clear educational direction for the school, articulated within a comprehensive development plan. This plan reflects the aims and needs of the school and is underpinned by the Christian values of the Woodard Foundation.

- 5.8 Since the previous full inspection, senior leadership and management responsibilities have been clarified and strengthened to create a cohesive team which shares values and priorities. These include a number of initiatives which support the school's aims to develop pupils as resilient, adaptable, independent learners, and to support, challenge and extend the academic and individual endeavour of every member of the community. A major successful initiative has been the development of a rigorous system of pupil tracking, which uses value-added data to monitor pupils' progress and to set targets for improved achievement.
- 5.9 Regular meetings of the leadership team, both formal and informal, lead to effective planning, and decisive actions in response to issues raised by staff. Parents and pupils comment positively on the approachability and accessibility of the senior team, and on the effective manner in which issues are addressed. The roles of academic and pastoral middle managers are clearly defined and they also meet regularly, providing effective forums in which to debate and resolve key issues. Clear emphasis is placed on improving the quality of teaching and on ensuring that teaching responds to the individual needs of pupils.
- 5.10 The strong policies and procedures developed to underpin all aspects of the school's work are not implemented evenly. For example, whilst the most successful departments share expertise and best practice, this is not consistent amongst all. There are also inconsistencies in the monitoring of the quality of marking by departments, and the associated feedback to pupils on how to improve. A comprehensive, annual quality-assurance report to the leadership team includes an element of departmental self-evaluation, which then acts as a basis for future planning and informs the school development plan.
- 5.11 Heads of house, strongly supported and directed by senior pastoral leadership, lead their teams effectively, resulting in excellent pastoral care in the school which provides well for pupils' individual and collective needs.
- 5.12 The school is successful in recruiting high quality staff and supporting them in their professional development. A thorough induction programme has helped the successful integration of many new staff in the last few years. Comprehensive training, supported by detailed documentation, provides clear information and guidance on their role in the safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety of pupils. A range of support staff, from those working as technicians, to catering, administrative and estates staff, all play a vital role in the school's success, and are an integral part of the school community. Historically, there have been weaknesses in the implementation of procedures to check staff before appointment and to record these correctly. At the start of the academic year the school had already modified its systems, which are now rigorous and are being implemented fully.
- 5.13 Professional development and training for all staff is well resourced, although training priorities are not systematically identified. A pilot appraisal process is being trialled, which links professional development and training to development planning in a more effective manner.
- 5.14 The quality of links with all parents, carers and guardians is excellent and reflects the school's aim to have a constructive and dynamic relationship with parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed strong support for the school's provision for the education of their children and their personal development. They also said that communication is reliable, thorough and sympathetically responsive. A very small minority of parents said that their concerns

had not been dealt with satisfactorily. However, inspection evidence noted that parental concerns are taken seriously and that the school deals with them promptly and carefully. The complaints policy and its procedures are clear and comprehensive, and scrutiny of documentation indicated that the school recognises, addresses and resolves complaints in a timely and transparent manner, learning from events and changing practice as necessary.

- 5.15 Of the parents who responded to the questionnaire, a very small minority raised concerns about the school's management of bullying. However, inspection evidence, including a study of school records and other documentation, found that such concerns are taken seriously and that the school deals with them promptly, and in line with agreed policies.
- 5.16 Parents of current and prospective pupils are able to access the required information about the school through its attractive and accessible website, and by means of the comprehensive, informative prospectus. Regular newsletters and the annual school magazine ensure that parents are kept fully abreast of school life. Meetings with parents are held regularly, together with a number of open mornings and information evenings.
- 5.17 Parents have many opportunities to be involved with the work and progress of their children and they are always welcomed at the school. A strong and active parents' association, with teacher representation, operates throughout the year in supporting the work of the school. The association meets regularly and arranges a range of events such as the annual ball and quiz nights, to which all parents are invited. Parents also have valuable, informal contact with staff through their attendance at house or school events in sport, music and drama. The school values highly the contribution of its parents, and is proactive in seeking further ways of improving parental involvement and awareness.
- 5.18 Full reports to parents are provided each term. These are thorough, helpful and suggest ways in which improvements can be made in subject-specific ways. Interim reports are also provided every four or five weeks, so that parents are fully informed about their child's progress. Additionally, staff are easily contacted via email if concerns exist, and there is excellent oversight of all aspects of communication.

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