



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

DULWICH PREP LONDON

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Dulwich Prep London

Full Name of School	Dulwich Prep London
DfE Number	210/6001
Registered Charity Number	312715
Address	Dulwich Prep London 42 Alleyn Park Dulwich London London SE21 7AA England
Telephone Number	020 7665500
Email Address	information@dulwichpreplondon.org
Head	Mr Michael Roulston
Chair of Governors	Mr David Smellie
Age Range	2 to 13
Total Number of Pupils	850
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (828 boys; 22 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 136 5-11: 530 11-13: 184
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 838
Number of Boarders	Total: 12 Weekly: 1 Flexi: 11
Inspection dates	10 Nov 2015 to 12 Nov 2015

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

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, as amended. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with 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.

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 judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Bridget Windley

Mr Chris Ward

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Head, IAPS school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 SUMMARY	2
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendation for further improvement	2
(iii) Progress since the previous inspection	2
3 COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS	3
(a) Boarding provision and care	3
(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding	4
(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision	5

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dulwich Prep London is an independent school for boys aged between three and thirteen years, with girls in the Nursery. It is predominantly a day school, which also offers weekly and flexi boarding opportunities to boys in Year 4 and above. Originally founded in 1885 as an independent preparatory school, it is now one of two preparatory schools administered as a charitable trust by a single board of governors, the other being Dulwich Preparatory School Cranbrook. The leadership and management of the two schools are entirely separate. The dedicated boarding house, Brightlands, which has capacity for sixteen boarders, is situated a short distance away from the main school in five acres of ground. Since the previous inspection a new chair of governors and a new boarding team have been appointed. A recent initiative has been the introduction of extended care either end of the school day.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection the total number of pupils was 850, including one weekly and eleven flexi-boarders. The school has identified 117 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities [SEND] and six pupils who have English as an additional language. All are receiving specialist learning support. Two pupils have individual health care plans which are funded by a local authority. The school is a Christian foundation which welcomes pupils of all faiths and of none. Almost all of the boarders are of white British origin, live locally and come from families with professional or business backgrounds.
- 1.3 The school aims to sow the seeds of possibility in the mind, heart and spirit of each pupil and then create the right culture and conditions to allow these possibilities to flourish and become real. The school strives to challenge all pupils in their pursuit of excellence and seeks to inspire them to achieve their full potential. Above all, the school prioritises the well-being and happiness of its pupils.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Formalise the system for evaluating the boarding provision against the requirements of the National Minimum Standards.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by ISI in October 2012. The quality of boarding was judged to be excellent. No recommendations were made in relation to boarding welfare provision.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 Boarders new to Brightlands receive a suitable induction from staff, and the older boarders help them to become accustomed to routines within the boarding house. They are aware of people they can speak to if they require support and they understand the role of the independent listeners. Contact details for outside agencies are prominently displayed within the boarding accommodation. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The school has appropriate arrangements for all aspects of health care. These are implemented effectively to provide for boarders' physical, mental and emotional well-being, ensuring that all medical needs are met. Arrangements for first aid, care of boarders with chronic conditions and dealing with medical conditions are clear. Well-qualified staff administer first aid on the main school site and they also oversee the medical provision at Brightlands, including a weekly visit. Boarders have access to local medical services, if required. Medicines are carefully administered, and records of medical treatment and the dispensing of medicines, including homely remedies, are securely stored. The provision for boarders who are unwell is well-equipped and comfortable. Appropriate care is taken to respect the confidentiality and rights of boarders. No boarders currently self-medicate. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders are able to contact home easily, and can do so in private. They are allowed to use their own mobile phones under the supervision of the house staff. The use of electronic devices is monitored carefully by the boarding staff. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 The accommodation provided for the boarders is suitable for their needs, and is risk-assessed in order to ensure their safety. The dormitories are clean, well-maintained and have reasonable heat and ventilation. The boarders are encouraged to personalise their own areas in the boarding accommodation. Adequate warm, clean bedding is provided. Washing and toilet facilities are appropriately private and are located close to dormitories. Several areas are available for social activities, including a well-equipped games room that provides comfortable sofas, a television and table tennis equipment. Boarders also have use of a computer suite, music practice rooms, and private study areas. Suitable arrangements are in place to protect boarders from unauthorised access by visitors. No surveillance equipment intrudes on boarders' privacy. Boarders all say that they feel safe and are satisfied with the accommodation provided. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In response to the pupils' questionnaire, a very small minority of pupils identified the availability of snacks as an issue. However, during the inspection it was noted that healthy snacks were available upon request by the boarders throughout the course of the day and at the boarding house. Facilities for the preparation of food are hygienic, both in the main school and in the kitchens of the boarding house. Three nutritious meals are prepared on a daily basis, with plentiful amounts of food and a varied choice. Breakfast and lunch are served in the school's dining room and supper is eaten in the boarding house, where pupils commented on the homely atmosphere. Any special dietary needs are catered for and drinking water is readily available. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Clothing and bedding are laundered by staff in the boarding house and promptly returned to the correct boarders. If required, toiletries and stationery items are

available within the house. Personal items may be kept in bedside lockers or lockable cupboards and valuable electric items are stored securely with house staff. Arrangements for searching boarders' possessions follow official guidance. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 The activities offered to boarders throughout the week are suitably varied. During the inspection the boarders were observed taking part in clubs which included cookery, pistol shooting, percussion and computing. Weekly lectures from visiting speakers are offered to the boarders and they frequently visit local places of interest. Appropriate risk assessments are in place for these activities. There is access to safe recreational areas, both within and outside the house, and space and opportunity for boarders to be alone, if they so wish. Newspapers, television and the internet provide opportunities for daily access to the news. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The health and safety committee ensures through its weekly meetings that procedures are managed well and thoroughly documented. Suitable risk assessments cover all aspects of school life and are appropriately implemented and recorded. All boarders and parents who responded to the questionnaire feel the school keeps boarders safe. The school premises and accommodation are well maintained. Relevant procedures are in place for electrical testing and plant maintenance. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 Appropriate fire safety arrangements are implemented effectively. Fire equipment is tested regularly. The requisite fire drills are carried out, both in the day and during boarding time, and boarders have a clear understanding of evacuation procedures. Records are suitably maintained. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Measures to ensure safeguarding follow the latest guidance and are regularly reviewed. Child protection procedures are known to staff at all levels and are implemented consistently. New staff are trained promptly in child protection as part of their induction and frequent updates from the designated leader ensures safeguarding matters are given high priority. Close links are maintained with the local safeguarding board. The school governors review and ratify the child protection policy on an annual basis. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policies outline the school's expectations of boarders. Boarding staff offer appropriate support and guidance to implement these policies. In the pupils' questionnaire, and in interviews, all boarders report that there is no bullying in the boarding environment. A separate system of behaviour management operates within the boarding environment from that of the day school, and particular consideration is given in boarding to providing positive rewards. Misdemeanours lead to a loss of privileges. Boarders feel that this is a fair system. As required, the school has policies in place for the use of reasonable force and restraint, and the arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions, and appropriate records are kept. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Staff recruitment procedures are carried out with due care. The centralised register of appointments maintains clear records of all the required information. Safer recruitment training has been completed by relevant staff. Adults living in the boarding house who are not employed by the school have been checked appropriately and have signed a written agreement about the terms of their

accommodation. Visitors have no unsupervised access to the boarders or the boarding house. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS 14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section
- 3.16 The aims and ethos of boarding are clearly displayed on the house notice board and in the boarders' and parents' handbook. The warm and friendly atmosphere in the house accurately reflects these aims. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Many initiatives have been introduced by the new leadership of boarding and in interviews the boys spoke enthusiastically about these recent changes. Both parents and pupils are highly positive about many aspects of boarding life. Leaders have suitable levels of skill, knowledge and experience appropriate to their role, and actively promote the well-being of pupils. Currently, the self-evaluation of provision lacks sufficient detail of how the school is monitoring and reviewing each standard and there is no formal system for the new house leadership to review boarding matters with senior staff. Liaison between boarding and academic staff regarding the pastoral care of boarders is effective. All the required boarding records are maintained and appropriate procedures followed. Governors monitor and take any action on aspects of boarding through visits and discussions with staff. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Job descriptions detail the roles and responsibilities for boarding staff, who also receive appropriate induction and appraisal. Adults living in the boarding house have clearly defined roles. The supervision arrangements for boarders are effective and all boarders know which member of staff is in charge of them. Boarders know how to contact boarding staff at night should the need arise. Staff accommodation is suitable and not accessible to boarders. Staff know the whereabouts of boarders at all times and effective procedures are in place in the event of a missing boarder. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders are treated equally and there is no discrimination. Those with particular pastoral needs, such as those with SEND, receive appropriate care and support to enable them to participate in school life. In discussions, all boarders reported that staff treated them fairly. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 In the questionnaire a small minority of boarders indicated that their opinions are not asked for or responded to. The inspectors found no evidence to support this view. Boarders' opinions are gathered through house meetings and a suggestion box. The recent creation of a quiet study room occurred as a direct result of a request from the Year 8 boarders. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school follows appropriate policies and procedures for complaints, in line with regulatory requirements. A small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that the school does not deal well with complaints. Having checked the school's records and its responses, the inspection evidence did not support this view. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Boarding house captains have a clearly defined role and are suitably trained and supported through regular meetings with the house leaders. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]