



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

KIMBOLTON SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Kimbolton School

Full Name of School	Kimbolton School
DfE Number	873/6012
Registered Charity Number	1098586
Address	Kimbolton School Kimbolton Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE28 0EA
Telephone Number	01480 860505
Fax Number	01480 860386
Email Address	headmaster@kimbolton.cambs.sch.uk
Headmaster	Mr Jonathan Belbin
Chairman of Governors	Mr Charles Paull
Age Range	4 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	963
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (487 boys; 476 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 268 3-5 (EYFS): 23 11-18: 672
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 905
Number of Boarders	Total: 58 Full: 38 Flexi: 11 Weekly: 9
Inspection dates	11 to 13 Nov 2014

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) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in February 2011 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 chairman of governors and the two governors with particular responsibility for boarding, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses 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

Mr Paul Spillane

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Sarah Godfrey

Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant Head, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Kimbolton School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 4 to 18. It is situated in the Cambridgeshire village of Kimbolton and its foundation dates from 1600. In 1950 the senior school moved from the buildings which now house the preparatory school into the former castle and estate of the Dukes of Manchester. The school is run as a charitable trust, administered by a governing body.
- 1.2 The school aims to create a caring, challenging environment in which all pupils are encouraged to fulfil their potential and are given opportunities to flourish in a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular interests. It endeavours to provide a close family environment where young people are educated to be tolerant, socially responsible and independent of mind. It also seeks to challenge pupils to discover their talents, develop socially and excel.
- 1.3 There are 963 pupils in the school, 487 boys and 476 girls, of whom 23 are in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 268 are in Years 1 to 6 and 672 are in Years 7 to 13. Those who board at the school number 58, of whom 20 are boys and 38 are girls.
- 1.4 The two boarding houses are situated on the high street in Kimbolton village and back onto the school grounds. Boys live in Kimbolton House and girls in White House. Boarding staff comprise a resident housemaster or housemistress, assisted by teams of tutors, some of whom are resident.
- 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 senior school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Senior School

School	NC name
1 st Form	Year 7
2 nd Form	Year 8
3 rd Form	Year 9
4 th Form	Year 10
5 th Form	Year 11
Lower VI	Year 12
Upper VI	Year 13

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.1 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, and therefore it must:
- ensure that pupils and members of the public using school facilities do not mix on the school site [National Minimum Standard 5.7, under Boarding Accommodation];
 - meet all the safeguarding requirements, regarding ensuring that all non-teaching staff have read Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* [National Minimum Standard 11, under Child Protection];
 - ensure that all required checks are carried out before an employee takes up his or her appointment, particularly non-teaching and peripatetic staff, and ensure that any person over the age of 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as boarders has a written agreement concerning the terms of their accommodation [National Minimum Standards 14.1 and 14.3, under Staff Recruitment and Checks on Other Adults, and, for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 11, under Child Protection].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Appoint and train a deputy designated safeguarding lead for the senior school.
 2. Collate the records of medication administered in houses discretely from other issues.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

- 2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in February 2011. Its recommendations, relating to medical provision, boarders' furniture and their access to facilities for preparing snacks, have all been met.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school does not meet one of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New boarders are assigned pupil mentors and given helpful house handbooks as part of an induction programme which introduces them to life in their boarding house and in the school as a whole. Boarders readily identify staff to whom they can turn with personal concerns; these include the chaplain and the independent listener. Contact details of helplines, including that of the Children's Commissioner, are published on house noticeboards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Appropriate policies are implemented for the care of sick or injured boarders. The provision covers first aid, pupils with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies, including those at night-time, and administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication. There is close liaison between the medical and residential staff. Patient confidentiality is respected and medicines are safely stored. Any medication taken by boarders in their house is accurately recorded, but this information is not systematically collated or separated from other entries in the 'duty book'. Parents give written consent to certain treatments and to boarders' access to local medical, dental, optometric and other specialist services. Medical staff have access to named doctors in the local practice, in accordance with the recommendation from the previous inspection. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders can easily contact family and friends, either electronically or by landline telephone. The school educates all pupils in e-safety and operates suitable controls regarding appropriate use of the internet. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 In the boarding accommodation, public and private rooms are well furnished and decorated. The recommendation from the previous inspection that all furniture should be in good repair has been met. The lighting, heating and ventilation in the two boarding houses are sufficient and the standard of cleanliness throughout is high. Lavatories, showers and bathrooms afford privacy. Bedding is clean, suitable and warm. Boarders are able to personalise their own areas with posters, photographs and items from home. Appropriate facilities are provided for organised and private study. Whilst a health and safety issue was raised with the school during the inspection concerning the use of school facilities by organised groups, access to houses is secure, with all visitors having to follow signing-in procedures. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food. This view was not supported by the experience of the inspection, during which meals were found to be nutritious and plentiful, with a good choice of hot and cold dishes. Food is prepared and served in hygienic conditions. Pupils with particular dietary needs are appropriately catered for. The well-appointed house kitchens satisfy the recommendation from the previous inspection and boarders say that they can prepare snacks and other refreshments at reasonable times. Drinking water is readily available throughout the day. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 The laundry arrangements are efficient. Boarders may deposit valuables, money and passports with house staff. They also have lockable cupboards and, in the girls' house, safes in their own rooms. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a minority of boarders said their possessions were not safe: at interview it emerged that this concern referred to food in house kitchens rather than

to money or expensive possessions. With the boarding houses situated on the high street, it is easy for boarders to purchase personal items and stationery in the village. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 Boarders are able to enjoy a wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities, as well as having access to extensive indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Furthermore, they are able to opt into a good variety of activities over the weekend, including outings to places of cultural and recreational interest. Information about current affairs and the wider world is available through television, newspapers and the internet. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school does not meet two of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The policies for ensuring boarders' safety are suitable. The school premises as a whole are maintained to a standard whereby, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, welfare and safety of all pupils are ensured. Risk assessments for activities at school and elsewhere are thorough and regularly reviewed. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 All precautions are taken to minimise the risk from fire. The regular fire practices are carefully logged and include ones carried out at times when boarders may be expected to be asleep. Fire warning and prevention equipment and fire-fighting appliances are suitably tested and maintained. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders are not sufficiently rigorous. Child protection training forms part of the induction of all members of staff who are also trained on a regular cycle, but not all of the training requirements have been undertaken for non-teaching staff, such as ensuring that they have read Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. Staff with responsibility for safeguarding are suitably experienced and trained, but the senior school does not have a trained deputy on site to carry out these duties in the designated safeguarding lead's absence. Links have been established with the local authority's children's services, enabling support and advice to be sought. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Policies and procedures to promote good behaviour are clear and well understood. Boarders confirm that sanctions are fair. Those interviewed said that they had not come across any bullying, and records show that the rare instances of bullying in the school have been dealt with promptly and effectively. Boarders responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire affirm that they get on well together and feel safe. This is confirmed by the responses to the parents' questionnaire; those who responded are satisfied with almost all aspects of the boarding provision. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The staff recruitment policy is clear in content. However, it has not always been implemented rigorously, in that the school has not ensured that all required checks on members of the non-teaching and peripatetic staff have been carried out before their appointment, and the single central register has not been completed accurately. The school has not ensured that any person, such as a spouse, who is over 16 and not employed by the school but living in the same premises as boarders has completed a written agreement regarding the terms of their accommodation. Visitors to the boarding houses are appropriately supervised and their access is normally restricted to the public rooms. The school does not make the arrangements for guardians to be appointed. [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 A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is available to parents and staff, is made known to boarders and was seen to work effectively. [NMS1]
- 3.17 Boarding is led and managed clearly and consistently. Senior management works closely with boarding house staff, holding regular timetabled meetings and participating in frequent informal communication about the boarders' academic and welfare development. Boarding staff are fully trained and experienced. The house 'duty book' is an important contributor to good communication between members of each house staff team. All required records are suitably monitored and maintained. Recognising the importance of boarding to the character and life of the school, the governors have a clear vision for the future of boarding. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff benefit from clear job descriptions, appropriate induction, regular appraisal and career development opportunities. The latter include the provision of courses which have recently covered topics such as counselling, safeguarding, child protection and the leadership of boarding. Recent in-house training sessions have also addressed mental health, domestic abuse, self-harm and cyber-bullying. Supervision of boarders is appropriate; at all times boarders know who is responsible for them and how to contact members of staff, by day and at night. At least one member of staff sleeps in each boarding house overnight and the role of spouses in boarding accommodation is made clear. Any boarder access to staff accommodation, all of which is separate from that of the boarders, is properly conducted and supervised. Registration is carried out correctly and each house has a signing-in and signing-out procedure. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the case of a missing pupil. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 The school successfully implements its equality and anti-discrimination policy and no inappropriate discrimination was found. The care shown by boarding staff to all pupils is sensitive to their needs. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A small minority of boarders, in their response to the questionnaire, said that the school did not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspection evidence found that this was not the case. Through the pupil forum, surveys, weekly house meetings and the readiness of staff to listen, boarders have many opportunities to express their opinions, and proposals made in these various ways have led to initiatives and improvements, such as extra facilities and additional clubs. Pupils are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school's complaints procedure is available to parents. A very small number of parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their concerns had not been handled well. Detailed records are kept of all complaints, and the very few formal complaints that have been received in recent years have been responded to carefully and professionally. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Heads of house are expected to set a good example, help with the smooth running of the boarding house, lend a sympathetic ear to concerns and convey boarders' opinions to house staff. Younger boarders describe the heads of house as kind and helpful. Heads of house have job descriptions which include measures to ensure they do not go beyond expected boundaries and they receive training in child protection and safeguarding, as do school prefects. [NMS 19]

3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]