



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

LICENSED VICTUALLERS SCHOOL, ASCOT

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Licensed Victuallers School, Ascot

Full Name of School	Licensed Victuallers School, Ascot		
DfE Number	867/6005		
Registered Charity Number	230066		
Address	Licensed Victuallers School London Road Ascot Berkshire SL5 8DR		
Telephone Number	01344 882770		
Fax Number	01344 891674		
Email Address	reply@lvs.ascot.sch.uk		
Head	Mrs Christine Cunniffe		
Chair of Education Committee	Mrs Anita Adams		
Age Range	4 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	888		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (560 boys; 328 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 134
	3-5 (EYFS):	45	11-18: 709
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	717	
Number of Boarders	Total:	171	
	Full:	171	Weekly: 0
Inspection dates	20 Nov 2012 to 22 Nov 2012		

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. 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 March 2009 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, a range of boarding staff and with a governor. They observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions, house meetings and a school assembly. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses and the medical centre, and took meals with boarders. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation and records, and other written policies, procedures and handbooks made available by the boarding houses and the school.

Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate

Mrs Rani Tandon

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head
Pastoral, GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The school was founded in 1803 by the Licensed Trade Charity in a “wholesome and airy environment” in Kennington, London, to provide a caring and challenging education for the children of those working in the licensed drinks trade. As industrialisation increased and London spread outward, the school moved to a ‘green field’ site in Slough in 1921, and when history repeated itself, the school moved again in 1989 to Ascot in Berkshire. The current school was purpose-built to provide modern facilities for a large co-educational boarding and day school. The school is governed by trustees of its founding charity, with day-to-day powers delegated to its education committee.
- 1.2 The school’s vision is to develop caring, confident citizens for the future. To this end, it aims to realise each pupil’s full learning potential through an enriching, stimulating, broad and challenging curriculum, to encourage them to experience a range of opportunities and challenges, and to develop a range of skills and talents. It wishes to provide a secure, happy and flexible school environment for pupils to become highly motivated life-long learners. The school seeks to foster a pupil’s self-esteem, respecting themselves, others and the environment, as well as creating the ability to work independently and collaboratively. It wishes to nurture in all its pupils a desire to extend themselves in mind, body and spirit, developing an enquiring mind, a sense of curiosity and respect for other races, religions and ways of life.
- 1.3 The school currently educates 888 pupils (560 boys and 328 girls). Of these, 179 are in the junior school, including 45 in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils transfer to Year 7 in the senior school, on the same site, at the age of 11. The 171 boarders are accommodated in four houses, one for boys and girls in Years 3 to 7, and one each for boys and girls in Years 8 to 11. A co-educational sixth-form house caters for boarders in Years 12 and 13.
- 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 does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, and therefore it must:

- ensure that all staff receive refresher training in child protection at least every three years, and ensure that its governing body carries out an effective annual review of the school's child protection policies and procedures and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged [National Minimum Standard 11 under Child Protection];
- ensure that checks through List 99/ISA barred list are always carried out and recorded for staff starting work before the completion of the check through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), and that risk assessments and appropriate supervision arrangements are always clarified for such staff [National Minimum Standard 14.1 under Staff Recruitment and Checks on Other Adults];
- ensure that checks of identity, relevant qualifications, right to work in the UK, medical fitness, and any necessary overseas checks are always carried out before staff start work in the school, and are recorded accurately [National Minimum Standard 14.1 under Staff Recruitment and Checks on Other Adults];
- confirm with its contract catering company the checks it requires them to carry out on the school's behalf, and ensure that the school carries out its own check of identity when catering staff start work [National Minimum Standard 14.1 under Staff Recruitment and Checks on Other Adults].

(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. Improve the arrangements at weekends to look after boarders who are ill or injured.
2. Ensure that records of staff training in first aid and child protection are used more efficiently to identify in good time those requiring re-training.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in March 2009. Effective progress has been made in implementing two of its recommendations, by improving medication protocols, and providing appropriate higher-level training for designated child protection officers. Some progress has been made towards ensuring that ancillary staff have received appropriate child protection training. Progress in ensuring that all staff recruitment checks are carried out in a timely manner and recorded accurately has been insufficient.

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 are effectively guided and supported on entering the school and when transferring to a new house through helpful written booklets and close attention from staff. Boarders confirm that they are well supported in times of difficulty and have many approachable adults to turn to for help with problems. They have access to an independent listener and school counsellor, and contact numbers for external agencies such as ChildLine and the Children's Rights Director are clearly displayed in houses. [NMS2]
- 3.3 Clear and efficient protocols and recording processes have been developed to promote boarders' health and medical care, including effective policies for first aid, the administration of medication and support for those with chronic medical conditions. Prescribed medicines are carefully controlled, and older boarders are able to self-medicate after careful assessment. The school has an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid, although some are over-due for re-qualification. Boarders have access to nurses throughout the school week and school doctors visit twice. Additional health care is readily available off-site. A small in-patient facility is suitably equipped and staffed to accommodate boarders who are ill and injured. However, this facility is not available at weekends, and ill boarders have to be taken home. The medical centre respects the privacy and rights of boarders and ensures appropriate confidentiality in medical matters. [NMS3]
- 3.4 Boarders can readily keep in touch with family and friends through regular weekends at home, and through mobile and fixed-line telephones. Mobile phone use by younger boarders is appropriately monitored. Boarders are also able to contact parents by email and through the internet, although on-line access is not always readily available for some. [NMS4]
- 3.5 Accommodation in the boarding houses is comfortable, and appropriately lit, ventilated and furnished. Sleeping accommodation ranges from dormitories of six for younger boarders to single bedsits for those older. The layout and provision of space in the houses is appropriate to the ages, gender and needs of the boarders. Bathroom facilities are clean and have suitable privacy. Common room facilities and the recreational space provided are much appreciated by pupils. Suitable arrangements are made for organised and private study sessions. Boarders are able to personalise their own living or sleeping areas. Boarding accommodation is effectively protected against entry by unauthorised persons. [NMS5]
- 3.6 The food provided is of an adequate quality and variety, and boarders are offered a range of choices, especially at lunch time. Boarders report that evening and weekend choices are somewhat more limited and older pupils feel that the size of portions is sometimes insufficient. The facilities for food preparation and consumption are suitable. Boarders have access to drinking water, hot drinks and snacks in houses. [NMS8]
- 3.7 The laundry service for boarders' clothing and bedding is efficient and much appreciated by them. They are able to obtain necessary personal items from within the house and from local shops. All boarders are provided with lockable storage facilities, and items such as pocket money and other valuables for younger boarders are kept securely by the staff. [NMS9]

- 3.8 Boarders benefit from the wide range of activities on offer both in the evenings and at weekends and they appreciate the many leisure opportunities organised by boarding and activity staff. Boarders have access to many recreational facilities and resources within the school, and have an appropriate amount of free time for relaxing together socially, or being alone if they so wish. Boarders have easy access to the world outside school, through newspapers, television, trips and outings to the local or wider area. [NMS10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school does not meet two of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Health and safety matters are taken very seriously by the school. Effective measures are taken to identify and minimise risk and efficient records are kept. Effective policies and protocols in place have appropriate regard to official guidance. Boarders feel that the school keeps them safe. [NMS6]
- 3.11 All necessary measures to reduce risk from fire are robustly implemented and documented. Fire drills, effectively recorded and monitored, are regularly carried out in boarding houses both during daylight and at night. [NMS7]
- 3.12 The safeguarding of boarders' welfare is given a high priority by staff. Appropriate procedures for child protection are known and understood, and the policy contains all items required and recommended by government guidance. However, shortcomings in the staff recruitment process, and a failure to ensure that all staff have received the necessary training every three years, mean that the policy has not been effectively and fully implemented. The governors' annual review of safeguarding practices has not been efficient enough. [NMS11]
- 3.13 Boarders form supportive and co-operative relationships with each other and with staff. These are underpinned by a range of appropriate policies to promote good behaviour which outline clear and effective sanctions for any misbehaviour. Boarders confirm that bullying is not an issue of concern to them, and state that staff deal effectively with any conflict and relationship problems. The required policies for physical restraint and searching boarders' possessions are in place. [NMS12]
- 3.14 All staff are appropriately checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) on appointment. However, not all other required checks have been carried out recently for a few staff in a timely manner, and recorded efficiently. Shared responsibilities for catering staff appointments between the school and the contractor have not been clearly defined. Family members of resident staff are appropriately checked, and suitable written agreements covering the use of their accommodation have been drawn up. Efficient and robust procedures have been implemented to control the access of visitors to boarding accommodation. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders. [NMS14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A clear statement of boarding principles is available to parents, staff and boarders and is seen to work in practice. Whilst houses have their own identity, boarding within the school embraces a consistent set of aims and expectations. [NMS1]
- 3.17 Senior leaders provide strong support for boarding, and houseparents foster a unity of purpose and corporate spirit among their boarding teams. Detailed procedures

and handbooks promote consistency of practice among houses whilst allowing them to develop their own character. Each house carries out a thorough annual self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Boarding staff are well equipped to perform their duties, and the tutor teams provide links between boarders' academic and pastoral lives. The required records kept by the school are monitored by senior staff. [NMS13]

- 3.18 Boarding staff have a clear statement of their responsibilities, receive effective induction when new in post, and have opportunities to take part in a wide range of relevant training courses. Their performance is regularly reviewed through the school's appraisal system. Houses benefit from a generous deployment of suitable staff by day and night. Boarders know who is responsible for them and how to contact them at all times. Staff have effective means to check the whereabouts of boarders at all reasonable times through roll calls and signing out procedures. Policies are in place to search for any missing boarders. Boarders' access to staff accommodation is appropriately managed. [NMS15]
- 3.19 Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination. The school and boarding houses promote a clear ethos of tolerance and equality of opportunity and embrace diversity. [NMS16]
- 3.20 Boarders feel that they are listened to and that their opinions matter. They are represented on a variety of councils and committees, and boarders of all ages are able to express their views. Houses also provide suggestion boxes, and encourage boarders to participate in house meetings. [NMS17]
- 3.21 The school's complaints policy for parents complies with regulations. Any complaints received are appropriately logged and resolved according to the published procedure, and files of relevant correspondence are carefully kept. [NMS18]
- 3.22 Prefects, appointed in all the houses, are given well-defined and appropriate responsibilities and guidance. All senior prefects undertake training in safeguarding. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to apply for senior positions and clearly respect the role they are given. Prefects recognise and value the important pastoral dimension to their roles. [NMS19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-term lodgings for boarders. [NMS20]