



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**WARWICK SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Warwick School

The preparatory school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	<b>Warwick School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>937/6020</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>1088057</b>		
Address	<b>Warwick School Myton Road Warwick Warwickshire CV34 6PP</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01926 776400</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01926 401259</b>		
Email Address	<b>enquiries@warwickschool.org</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Edward Halse</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Roger Dancey</b>		
Age Range	<b>7 to 19</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>1216</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>		
Numbers by Age	7-11:	<b>250</b>	11-19: <b>966</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>1161</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>55</b>	
Inspection dates	<b>09 Oct 2012 to 12 Oct 2012</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2008.

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. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://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', 'satisfactory' 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 chair of governors and the boarding governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the 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

Dr Anthony Dachs	Reporting Inspector
Mr Mark Allen	Team Inspector (Senior Manager, HMC school)
Miss Rowan Edbrooke	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr Jim Hawkins	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr Geoffrey Hill	Team Inspector (Former Senior Manager, HMC school)
Mr Richard Johnson	Team Inspector (Former Head, IAPS school)
Mr Toby Mullins	Team Inspector (Head, HMC school)
Mr John Parsonage	Team Inspector (Former Senior Manager, HMC school)
Dr Michael Yates	Team Inspector (Senior Manager, HMC School)
Mrs Rosalind Hayes	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Warwick School is a day and boarding school for boys aged between seven and nineteen. Together with a girls' senior school and a mixed preparatory school, it constitutes the Warwick Independent Schools Foundation. The Foundation provides the Warwick School Committee as the school's governing body. The school seeks that, within a friendly and supportive environment, each pupil strives for higher things to achieve his full potential. It aims to provide the finest, broad education for boys aged 7 to 19 in the Midlands, so that pupils develop as responsible, self-reliant and compassionate men of character within a safe and caring community.
- 1.2 The school has occupied its 50-acre site adjacent to the River Avon since 1879. Its buildings are within easy reach of each other. New building has been extensive in both the junior and senior parts of the school. Since the previous inspection, in November 2008, the school has developed its provision for information and communications technology (ICT) and the library, and enhanced both teaching and dining facilities. It has also expanded its provision for boarding with a second house. The school's playing fields and sports facilities are within the site. Work has begun on a new sports pavilion.
- 1.3 The school has currently 1216 pupils, of whom 55 are boarders. The junior school has 250 pupils, none of whom is a boarder. Pupils join the junior school following assessment in English and mathematics, reading and non-verbal reasoning. Passage to the senior school is expected, although junior school pupils do undertake the senior school's entrance assessments. These include tests in mathematics, English and non-verbal reasoning as well as interview. Entry to Year 12 depends upon success in GCSE examinations. Overall, the pupils' abilities are above the national average, with about half the pupils well above this national average. Boarders are mainly from the Far East and occupy two international boarding houses on the site. Day-pupils are drawn mostly from professional and business families in the area. Many travel to and from the school on a dedicated coach service. About a quarter of pupils receive financial assistance from the school. Almost all pupils leaving the school proceed to university in the United Kingdom.
- 1.4 The school identifies 163 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 59 are in the junior school. Of these, 86 receive specialist learning support within the school, 51 in the junior school. None has a statement of special educational need. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) number 64, of whom 32 receive support.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following tables.

### ***Junior School.***

School	NC name
First Year	Year 3
Lower Two	Year 4
Upper Two	Year 5
Third Year	Year 6

**Senior School**

School	NC name
Lower Fourth	Year 7
Upper Fourth	Year 8
Lower Fifth	Year 9
Middle Fifth	Year 10
Upper Fifth	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 Throughout the school the quality of the pupils' achievements is excellent. They are eager to learn, to demonstrate their learning and to share it. Literacy and numeracy skills are high and constantly drive on shared learning and success in all subjects. Teaching is good. The pupils are keen to participate so that they respond strongly to stimulating and challenging teaching. Such teaching is often evident, but not all teaching consistently meets the pupils' desire to learn. Achievement in public tests and examinations is well above the national average for boys in maintained schools and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools. Most students proceed to their preferred university or institution of higher education. Sporting achievement is high and pupils excel in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, the combined cadet force, in art and music, drama and debating. They also engage eagerly and extensively in public service to the wider community. The curriculum is wide and activities are plentiful; pupils engage keenly in these and they achieve well. The school's resources, and the pupils' use of them, are excellent.
- 2.2 In both the junior school and the senior school the quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. They respond eagerly to the guidance and challenge given to them, including taking public roles and making public presentations. Relationships between staff and pupils, and among the pupils themselves, are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding; courtesy abounds and helpfulness thrives. Pupils are eager throughout the school to hold positions of responsibility and to serve. The high quality of pastoral care ensures that each pupil feels himself an important member of the school. Excellent standards of welfare, health and safety are maintained ensuring the pupils' well-being. The quality of boarding is excellent. Boarders contribute an exciting cultural and learning dimension to school life, appreciated and enjoyed by all.
- 2.3 The quality of governance and of leadership and management in all parts of the school is excellent and purposeful. Governors have all appropriate measures in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils. They are also appropriately ambitious for the school and pursue their objectives eagerly. They have improved buildings and grounds, invested heavily in technology and provide a safe, exciting, stimulating and challenging environment for all pupils. Leadership and management at all levels in the school are excellent, in their commitment, in their skills and in their sensitivity to need. Regulatory issues from the previous inspection have been met, and all policies are appropriately in place and followed. The junior school has significantly improved its formal observation of lessons, enhanced the pupils' awareness of differing cultures and established action plans that are regularly reviewed. Links between the school and parents, carers and guardians, are excellent. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed almost universal, enthusiastic support and appreciation. Inspection evidence supports these views.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure consistent opportunities in lessons for pupils to question, challenge and develop new lines of enquiry.

### **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 of their learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils achieve extremely well, in line with the school's declared aim to provide a fine and broad education and the achievement of higher things. Pupils show excellent knowledge and an eager intellectual curiosity, they apply academic rigour and they are highly successful. In many subjects, such as art, music, drama, classical and modern foreign languages, they show high levels of creativity, imagination and fun.
- 3.3 The pupils relish opportunities to learn cooperatively and they are outstandingly good at it, demonstrating shared understanding and enjoyment of learning. When given the opportunity, whether in formal lessons or in extra-curricular activity, they present cogent arguments, give clear presentations and articulate views with excellent insight and perceptiveness. Within the Scholars Society for older pupils they achieve high standards of independent learning and debate. Further excellence emerges from the Science in Action scheme, where pupils demonstrate high levels of co-operative research and skill in presenting their findings.
- 3.4 Pupils, in all parts of the school and including those with SEND or EAL, acquire excellent subject knowledge and understanding. The pupils enjoy their learning. They display high standards of literacy and numeracy and they present very careful and thorough written work. They use technical language well in science and demonstrate foreign language skills eagerly. Creative work in art, design and technology is to the highest standard. Boarders from overseas are fluent in English and at ease in their studies and social life.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve high standards in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Rugby teams achieve at national level in both senior and junior age-groups. Water polo succeeds in major competitions, and junior school teams perform competitively in both golf and swimming. Achievement in music is outstanding, with high quality public performances taking place in both the junior and senior schools. Performance in drama is similarly high. The school presents a wide and extensive amount of art. Numerous two- and three-dimensional pieces across the school demonstrate a high level of achievement in the creative arts. The combined cadet force and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme are strong, well-supported and successful.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. The pupils' performance in public examinations, at both GCSE and A level, is well above the national average for boys in maintained schools and above that of the national average for pupils in maintained selective schools. Performance in the International GCSE is above the international average and in line with the average achieved in the United Kingdom. These levels of attainment indicate that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. The attainment of pupils in the junior school cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be high in relation to national age-related expectations. Recently all pupils in the junior school have qualified for entrance to the secondary school of their first choice. They hold also a significant number of scholarship places in the senior school.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of the school's curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 In all parts of the school the academic curriculum is broad, carefully balanced and flexible to the particular needs of the pupils. It covers thoroughly the required areas of learning and it ensures by its provision high standards of achievement. It also combines successfully with a wide extra-curricular programme and meets very well the school's aim to foster intellectual rigour, creativity, imagination and service to others. Since the previous inspection, the school has significantly increased its provision of ICT in both the junior and senior schools to excellent effect and it has integrated this most effectively throughout the curriculum.
- 3.9 Throughout the school, pupils enjoy access to a wide and comprehensive curriculum. The school offers the three sciences separately to encourage specialist interest. It provides also three modern foreign languages, as well as the classics, Latin, Greek and classical civilisation. It teaches drama, music, including regular public performance, art, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and religious education. Each pupil's choice of options is carefully guided at every stage. A broad and challenging general studies programme in Years 12 and 13 ensures pupils are well prepared for the wider world beyond school.
- 3.10 The curriculum provides excellent support and intellectual stimulus for pupils of all abilities. Specific strategies, devised and monitored by each department, challenge and extend able pupils. A Scholars Society successfully promotes sustained intellectual curiosity beyond the classroom. Those with SEND or EAL are carefully identified and provided with additional support within the classroom as well as specialist guidance beyond it. Staff readily access each pupil's curriculum support record, which is constantly reviewed and updated.
- 3.11 Pupils' learning in both the junior and senior schools is strongly supported by modern and welcoming libraries, which are well stocked with printed and electronic resources. The recent refurbishment of the junior school's own library has significantly increased its value to the curriculum and to the pupils' learning. Pupils use these resources widely and skilfully. They are assisted readily by qualified staff.
- 3.12 The school provides excellent careers advice to all pupils. This includes guidance with pupils' choice of subject options to secure a successful transition to higher education and to the world of work. Pupils moving from the junior school to the senior are well prepared for the transition. The school arranges regular visits from outside speakers, as well as careers conventions and a successful work experience programme at the end of Year 11. A wide range of educational visits, within the United Kingdom and beyond it, further enhances the pupils' learning.
- 3.13 The school's extra-curricular programme is outstanding. The school offers all pupils a wide and diverse selection of clubs and activities, ranging from bell ringing and 'brass attack' to the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme to gold level and the combined cadet force. Drama and music offer activities at the highest standards, and a comprehensive sporting programme is available throughout the year. Pupils take keen advantage of numerous opportunities to engage with the local community, including shared activities with local state schools. Each year pupils raise considerable sums for charities, local and national and international. Not only does this indicate high levels of vigour and commitment, it also strongly develops the pupils' leadership skills.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 Teaching in both the junior and senior schools enables excellent progress. It is well-informed and demanding, keenly encouraging and responsive to the pupils' own questioning and pursuit of learning. The pupils are keen and eager learners so that they often challenge received understanding or stretch beyond it to new levels of enquiry. In the most successful teaching, this receives a prompt response. Teachers pursue the new and emergent reasoning and thereby foster new and vigorous learning by their pupils. In some teaching, greater reluctance to venture beyond the regular syllabus and planned activity persists.
- 3.16 Throughout the school, lessons are very well prepared and planned and they benefit strongly from the teacher's own clear subject knowledge and experience. Teaching is strongly stimulating. It employs a range of strategies and expectations of learning are high. The outcomes are evident in the pupils' written work and in their oral contributions.
- 3.17 Marking is carefully done. Frequently, but not always, it indicates yet further routes for pupils to follow, sets new targets and encourages additional enquiry. The school has already begun a review of marking with its own annual work scrutiny to ensure consistency. The school also has a teaching and learning committee to develop additional strategies and to embed habits of independent learning.
- 3.18 Teaching makes excellent use of outstanding resources. These support well the full range of abilities within the school. Additional and particular support for pupils with EAL or SEND, and those identified as gifted and talented, is outstanding. It encourages confidence, assertiveness and rapid progress. Teaching within the school's PSHCE programme enables pupils to explore and develop strategies for independent learning.
- 3.19 Excellent relationships exist between teachers and pupils in every part of the school. Pupils recognise that teachers are always willing to help them, both within the classroom and beyond it.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.**

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' strong spiritual development is encouraged by the Christian ethos of the school and its aim that the school engenders an appreciation of Christian values, whilst welcoming and respecting members of other faiths and those of no faith at all. Pupils take an active role in the regular chapel services, leading prayers and playing the organ. Pupils appreciate and enjoy the tranquillity and the spiritual guidance they receive.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, fostered by regular discussions in lessons and during PSHCE sessions. They understand well the personal and social need for considerate and sensitive behaviour. They demonstrate real concern for those less fortunate than themselves through a strong commitment to the school's programmes of charitable and voluntary work in service to the community. Pupils raise funds in support of their efforts and those of local and national charities. They identify each year a local charity, a national charity and an international charity. Thus they become aware of and concerned with needy causes locally and throughout the world. Pupils work in local charity shops, they provide music at charity concerts, they help teachers in local primary schools and they engage in international causes.
- 4.4 The pupils' social development is excellent. Pupils have a high standard of personal development by the time they leave the school. Pupils relate extremely well with each other, across ages, cultures, religions and traditions. They are at ease with each other and interested in each other. The school strongly encourages social interaction between all groups and pupils pursue this naturally and openly. They display high levels of courtesy, maturity and consideration for each other. Pupils are proud of their school and of each other's achievements as well as their own. Pupils eagerly take on positions of responsibility. Systems of peer supporters, boarding house buddies and reading buddies enable a sharing of need, recognition of any difficulty and of appropriate steps to alleviate it. A buddy scheme exists successfully for boarders to visit the homes and families of day-pupils, thus stretching hospitality and friendship well beyond the boundaries of the school. Sixth Form enrichment and PSHCE programmes for younger pupils increase their understanding of life and include visits from the police, anti-drug agencies, members of parliament and local councillors. The school's own council encourages pupils to exercise personal and collective responsibility within the school. It is well respected and effective.
- 4.5 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Pupils benefit from widespread musical experiences, participating in many ensembles and taking an eager part in concerts and recitals. By their art, pupils display imagination, creativity and the highest standards of skill. Pupils respond eagerly to the cultural mix within their school as well as to the opportunities for foreign travel. The school arranges exchange trips to China, Sweden and France and some pupils go to townships in South Africa with used sportswear for the residents. Eighty musicians from the school participated in the Olympic Games celebration at Warwick Castle.

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

- 4.6 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.7 Pastoral arrangements are clear in all parts of the school and they are highly successful in providing effective support and guidance to the pupils. This meets well the school's aim to develop responsible, self-reliant and compassionate men of character within a safe and caring community.
- 4.8 Form tutors, year heads, section heads and senior managers throughout the school are committed to the welfare of all pupils. They know the pupils well as individuals and in return the pupils respect their teachers and fellow pupils. Pupils enjoy their time at school and they know also precisely whom to approach for guidance or support when it is needed.
- 4.9 Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent. This is based on clear trust and on mutual support and interest. Twice daily form-time allows opportunity for pupils to discuss difficulties and for the tutor to praise successes. The heads of year oversee this regularly and effectively. Form reports are issued each half-term and give tutors opportunity to discuss progress and to suggest routes to improvement. A pastoral committee meets each week and issues alerts of particular concern for teachers to address. The system works both smoothly and quickly to the benefit of the pupils.
- 4.10 The school expects and ensures the highest standards of behaviour. Guiding policies on behaviour and to guard against bullying are very clear and pupils agree that when any incident does occur it is dealt with promptly and carefully. The pupils' respect for and treatment of each other are of the highest standard. Positive behaviour is promoted and house points and commendations indicate the school's endorsement of good and considerate behaviour. The school counsellor visits twice a week and the school offers training in e-safety for both pupils and parents.
- 4.11 Regular exercise is provided through the school's extensive sports provision and its extra-curricular programmes. The sports hall is used widely and well. So too are the school's excellent outdoor facilities. The school's catering provision is centralised and it is good. It promotes regular and healthy eating with a wide variety of choice, including vegetarian options. Staff are trained and attentive to detect any eating disorder.
- 4.12 The school has taken considerable steps to improve access for those with SEND or physical disability and it meets these needs very well.
- 4.13 The school is highly sensitive to both the views and the needs of all pupils and it is keen to receive these. Pupils are confident that the school listens to their views and acts upon them in their best interests. Pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire showed very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. Some expressed a desire to be consulted more and some looked for changes in the food available. On enquiry, inspectors found this more a matter of personal taste and preference. In their discussions with pupils, inspectors found the pupils happy, open and very proud of their school and of their share in its successes.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 The school takes careful and full measures to ensure that all members are safe and able to pursue their interests with ease and security. The school is thorough and successful in its attention to issues of safeguarding. It provides a high quality of child protection training for all staff and it gives appropriate guidance, outlining responses and actions to possible occurrences. It further maintains excellent relationships with local welfare agencies. Year 13 peer supporters and school prefects all receive careful training in raising self-awareness.
- 4.16 Risk assessments covering all areas of school life are securely in place, including rigorous procedures for any educational visit beyond the school site. The health and safety committee meets regularly. All regulations regarding fire safety are carefully followed and all appropriate measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire. Fire drills are regular and carefully recorded. Visitors and access are managed carefully.
- 4.17 The school's medical centre is staffed throughout the extended day. Medical care is to a high standard and nurses store and administer the pupils' medication with care and safety. All staff receive first-aid training on a three-yearly cycle. A trained counsellor visits the school regularly and is well known to all pupils.
- 4.18 All registers, including those dealing with admissions and attendance, are maintained and preserved appropriately.

#### **4.(d) The quality of boarding**

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. The school provides a stimulating, supportive and caring environment which successfully allows the boarders to grow in confidence, independence, integrity and tolerance. Boarders enjoy friendly and constructive relationships with each other and with the boarding staff. International boarders integrate well into the school community and participate keenly in all aspects of school life. Friendship and support are enhanced by the recently introduced 'boarding house buddies' scheme of links with day-pupils and their families. Boarders appreciate and value this. Standards of behaviour are high and pupils are well-mannered and courteous. The boarding ethos is based on accepting personal responsibility and the boarders demonstrate a mature approach to communal living. The boarding committee and the boarding food committee provide for the boarders' opinions to be expressed. Boarders are confident that their views influence decisions. The appointment of house prefects provides boarders with opportunity to develop leadership skills and for younger boarders to aspire to this role. Boarders organise many house events, such as 'Boarders Got Talent' and Christmas Dinner. They show loyalty to their house and to the boarding community.
- 4.21 The quality of boarding care and provision is excellent. House staff know the boarders well and boarders value the care they receive. A comprehensive induction programme encourages new pupils to settle in quickly. Excellent communication between pastoral and academic staff via the house log ensures that individual needs are met. House parents draw up individual care plans where necessary. These are well formulated and followed carefully. The school's medical centre oversees the boarders' health well. All boarders register with the school doctor, who holds a weekly surgery at the school. Emergency appointments can be made at the local

- surgery. House matrons arrange appointments with, and accompany boarders to the dentist, optometrist or other specialist service. All boarding staff are qualified in first aid. All medications kept in the houses are suitably stored and appropriate records are maintained. Pupils have access to the independent listener who visits the school twice each week. Excellent communication between the house and the school's medical centre demonstrates that the welfare of boarders is paramount.
- 4.22 Boarders have access to an outstanding range of activities which includes sport, music, drama, the combined cadet force and community action. At weekends, house staff, in consultation with boarders, arrange trips such as a canal barge trip, a visit to a premier football fixture and to places of cultural interest. Supervised access to the sports hall and the swimming pool is available in the evening and at weekends. A significant number of boarders are involved in community service in the local areas, including help in charity shops and visits to a local hospice. Interviews with boarders and responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that boarders were very happy with the wide variety of activities on offer.
- 4.23 Food is of good quality and plentiful. Individual dietary needs are well catered for, avoiding allergies, and fruit and water are always available. All boarders are able to make themselves snacks and drinks in the boarding house, and older boarders, having received training in food hygiene, may prepare more adventurous meals.
- 4.24 The quality of boarding accommodation is good. Recent refurbishment of common rooms, showers and study areas, as well as the opening of a second boarding house, provide a comfortable and pleasant environment. The recent changes to staffing include provision for minor maintenance matters to be dealt with promptly. All bedrooms have internet access allowing pupils to communicate easily with parents or guardians and friends by email or telephone. Each house has a private room for telephone calls and internet telephony.
- 4.25 At the beginning of the school year, the school invites new parents to lunch to meet house staff and medical staff and to attend an induction session. Thereafter regular communication is maintained by email or telephone. House parents attend academic parent evenings and email a report on progress and achievement to parents.
- 4.26 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding in boarding is excellent. All staff receive appropriate child protection training and this is updated regularly. Policies for the health and safety of boarders, as well as risk assessments, are detailed and complete. Clear and effective systems exist for boarders to sign in and out of the boarding house. Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those pupils designated to it, although other pupils may visit by invitation.
- 4.27 School policies for countering bullying are clear and boarders report very little bullying in the school. Boarders understand clearly what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and report that sanctions are fairly administered.
- 4.28 House parents and assistant house parents are supported by house matrons and boarding tutors to provide a good level of supervision within each boarding house.
- 4.29 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent, demonstrated amply by very happy and fulfilled boarders. The school's boarding principles and practices are clearly stated and made available to parents, staff and boarders in comprehensive boarding handbooks. All staff new to boarding

initially shadow more experienced staff and follow this with a comprehensive performance management programme. All boarding staff have the opportunity for continued professional development. Weekly meetings take place between boarding staff to share best practice. Strong leadership, with a commitment to providing the best care possible for boarders, has led to a significant improvement in boarding provision and experience since the last inspection, including the opening of a second house.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance has improved since the previous inspection. As part of a restructuring process, the governors have reduced their number and improved their exercise of responsibility within each part of the foundation and within each part of the school. Moreover their implementation of a policy to share services across the site has increased practical efficiency in maintenance and reduced costs.
- 5.3 Governors accept roles and responsibility for each part of the school, including boarding, as well as shared responsibility for academic and pastoral matters. This they discharge highly efficiently and effectively. The governors have expanded boarding through the introduction of a second house and supported the school in raising this to a level of excellence. They have also undertaken extensive new building and improved old, as well as establishing highly attractive garden and recreational areas. The governors' commitment to this continuing programme is strong and shared.
- 5.4 The governors provide effective oversight of all areas of school activity. They are well known within the school. Financial planning is prudent and it ensures that appropriate human and material resources are provided. Academic standards are monitored carefully and new targets are agreed. Governors plan ambitiously for the school's further development. They visit the school regularly and they have discussions with senior members of staff.
- 5.5 Governors discharge thoroughly their responsibilities for child protection and for the welfare, health and safety of all pupils, which they formally review each year. They undergo appropriate training for this purpose and they review policies each year. They ensure a high standard of pastoral care. Since the previous inspection, they have secured that all regulatory checks of staff and visitors are completed and recorded.
- 5.6 A governor responsible for boarding visits the houses regularly and meets the house parents and boarders. She has also a clear interest in the EAL provision and progress of boarders, their academic success and their engagement in recreational activities.

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

- 5.7 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.8 At all levels, leadership is outstanding. The headmasters of the junior school and senior school provide strong personal direction with a sensitivity that carries managers, teachers, support staff, parents and pupils with them. The excellent leadership teams give clear support and direction. They constitute well respected, cohesive, compassionate and committed teams. They give educational direction confidently and regularly. They share a strong and clear-sighted corporate vision for

the school. Management and performance at all levels is committed to achieving the school's ambitious aims.

- 5.9 The senior leaders understand their school well. They recognise its strengths and they identify well areas for development. Strategic planning is founded on their rigorous evaluation and wide consultation. The five-year school development plan is comprehensive, expressing broad strategic intent, and the detailed annual plans have clear targets, success criteria and anticipated completion dates. Staff appreciate the opportunity given to them to contribute to the plan and the committee structure invites voices to be heard. The open-door policy of the senior management team is perceived as a strength by the staff.
- 5.10 Pastoral leadership and management are excellent. They ensure that the school's aim of sustaining a safe, caring community in which all members are able to realise their potential is met. The pastoral committee ensures fully effective care for the pupils and the 'pastoral alert' weekly electronic distribution ensures that up-to-date information reaches all staff. The school leaders and managers are carefully attentive to their safeguarding and child protection roles. Consequently the school is a safe and attractive environment.
- 5.11 Academic heads of department manage their areas of responsibility well and many are actively involved in planning school development. The informal academic committee is greatly valued and the system of three-yearly review for teaching departments is appreciated. The means of sharing best practice are available to address shortcomings. Training is encouraged.
- 5.12 Support staff, ground staff and security staff all ensure that the school is a happy and safe environment. They recognise the importance of the school's success and work hard to make it secure.
- 5.13 The school's management of staffing checks is thorough and careful. The induction programme for new staff is rigorous and includes a significant number of lesson observations as well as work scrutiny. Regular lesson observations are embedded at all stages and performance management is well established, ensuring that staff professional development needs are met. All staff are trained in child protection, welfare, health and safety and all managers are carefully attentive to their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 5.14 Financial resources are well managed. Accommodation and facilities are outstanding and fully meet the needs of pupils, enriching their experience with well-planned space and outstanding resources.
- 5.15 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent. Parents responding to the confidential pre-inspection questionnaire showed very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's provision. They are pleased with their child's progress and they recognise that their child is happy and safe at school. They feel able to contact staff who care for their child, that their child is well-supported and that information about the school is readily available. Inspection evidence supported these feelings.
- 5.16 Many opportunities exist for parents to be involved in the school, through the parents association, by attending school events and by raising issues at the head's forum. Published material about the school is of the highest quality and covers all aspects of school life, including required information for parents of current and prospective

pupils. The school's web-site is informative and regular newsletters are attractive and celebrate the life of the school.

- 5.17 Academic and pastoral reports are sent to parents, carers and guardians twice each year and formal parents' evenings take place at least once in each year. The school has an appropriate complaints policy. Complaints are very few and they are dealt with promptly.

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