



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
WYCLIFFE COLLEGE**

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## Wycliffe College

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

Full Name of School	<b>Wycliffe College</b>
DfE Number	<b>916/6018</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>311714</b>
Address	<b>Wycliffe College Bath Road Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 2JQ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01453 822432</b>
Fax Number	<b>01453 827634</b>
Email Address	<b>senior@wycliffe.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Nick Gregory</b>
Chairman of Governors	<b>Brigadier Robin Bacon</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>388</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys and Girls (213 boys; 175 girls)</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>169</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>219</b> Full: <b>219</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>1 to 4 March 2016</b>

## PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI boarding intermediate inspection was in March 2014 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in March 2010.

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.

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 children aged under two), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the vice-chair of governors, 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

Mr Rodney Fox	Reporting Inspector
Miss Julia Bowden	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, GSA/HMC school)
Mr Magnus Cowie	Team Inspector (Deputy Head Pastoral, HMC school)
Mrs Linda Macfarlane	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Neil Mason	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Linda Trevethick	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Christian Kendall-Daw	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, GSA school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Wycliffe College aims to inspire initiative, create community and stimulate success amongst its pupils, so that they are enabled to achieve their full potential, feel safe and secure, and become good communicators. It sets out to encourage pupils to be creative, innovative and independent; to have a social and environmental conscience, and demonstrate self-belief, responsibility and generosity of spirit; and to have respect for others and resilience to meet the challenges of life ahead. The school consists of two sections: the preparatory school, for pupils from two to thirteen, and the senior school, for those from thirteen upwards. The school is an educational charity, governed by its trustees.
- 1.2 Founded for boys in 1882, the school is now co-educational and is situated in the small Cotswold town of Stonehouse, close to Gloucester and Cheltenham. It occupies a 54-acre site, with buildings which reflect the continuous development that has taken place since the foundation. Pupils belong to one of eight houses, all of which, except one day house, accommodate both day pupils and boarders. Each house has its own premises and residential staff. The school is accredited by the National Association for Gifted Children and the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils.
- 1.3 The headmaster took up his appointment in September 2015. Since the previous inspection, science laboratories, the medical centre and a range of classrooms and boarding houses have been refurbished. A campus-wide wireless network has been installed.
- 1.4 Of the 388 pupils in the school at the time of the inspection, 91 boys and 66 girls were in either Year 12 or Year 13. Standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of pupils in Years 9 to 11 is above the national average, with most pupils having above average ability and few below average. The ability profile of pupils in Years 12 and 13 is slightly below the national average for pupils in sixth-form education, with a wide spread of abilities represented. Day pupils mainly come from professional and business families of white British ethnicity living within 20 miles of the school; boarders come from a wide variety of countries, with no single nationality other than British dominating. About a fifth of boarders have a parent serving in Her Majesty's forces.
- 1.5 No pupil has a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school has identified 127 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 41 receive specialist individual learning support for a variety of learning disabilities, about half of which relate to mild to moderate dyslexia. In total 128 pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL), 78 of whom receive specialist support.
- 1.6 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

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

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

- 2.1 Wycliffe College is largely successful in achieving its aims that pupils should achieve their full potential and feel safe and secure. Pupils are educated well and achieve good academic and often excellent extra-curricular results, especially in sport. They benefit from excellent curricular and extra-curricular programmes that meet the needs of a widely diverse pupil population. Teaching at all stages is good and teachers provide substantial additional help outside classroom time, although marking is inconsistent, both in quality and frequency. The support for pupils with SEND or EAL is excellent and enables these pupils to achieve at least as well as the majority of their peers. Most pupils are conscientious learners who want to do their best.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They are articulate and at ease with themselves, and understand the values that underpin the way of life in Britain. They appreciate the difference between right and wrong, and are noticeably tolerant of each other. The pastoral care is excellent, being based on membership of a house community, although tutorial time is too rushed to be fully effective. Boarding is good, with excellent outcomes for the boarders. The boarding accommodation is good, although there is wide variation between the houses. The school's policies and procedures with respect to safety and safeguarding are fully in accord with official guidance and are well implemented and properly monitored by trustees.
- 2.3 The trustees provide excellent governance of the senior school. The leadership and management are good, and have ensured fresh drive and vision since September 2015. A very large majority of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied or very satisfied with the school, whilst similarly large majorities of the pupils reported that they like being at the school and that boarding is enjoyable. The previous full inspection of the school was in March 2010. That inspection found that the school did not initially meet all the regulations with respect to checking the suitability of staff. That deficiency has now been rectified. It was also recommended that the school should: improve the quality of teaching, particularly the extent to which work is matched to pupils' needs; improve the tutorial system so that there is greater consistency of good practice amongst tutors; and ensure that the pupils' views are listened to and considered. Progress has been made in all these areas, particularly in matching teaching to pupils' needs and listening to pupils, but further work remains to be done to improve consistency in the quality of teaching and the effective use of tutorial time. At an intermediate boarding inspection in March 2014 it was recommended that the school should implement plans for the refurbishment of Ward's house. Some refurbishment has been carried out in Ward's house, but further measures are needed to bring the provision more closely in line with that in other houses.

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

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

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Increase the effectiveness of the monitoring by senior staff in all areas, including house management, teaching and marking, to ensure greater consistency of good practice across the school.
  2. Make better provision for tutorial periods within the timetable so that they can be more effective.
  3. Take further measures to bring the provision in Ward's house more closely in line with that in the other houses.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aim that all should fulfil their potential. They acquire good levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in their academic work. They are articulate, listen and read well, are able to reason things out and apply their knowledge effectively. They have good literary and numerate skills, which they deploy successfully across the curriculum. Particularly in practical subjects, such as art and design and technology, they display considerable creativity and the ability to work independently, and their good physical skills are evident in their games and sports activities.
- 3.3 Pupils' achievement in extra-curricular activities is often excellent, as is apparent from the extensive list of their individual and team accomplishments. Their success in sport is strong, with regional, national and international representation, especially in squash, athletics, hockey and rowing. They also achieve significant success in music (including membership of The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain), drama and film making, poetry and creative writing, and chemistry and mathematics challenges.
- 3.4 Pupils with SEND or EAL are particularly well supported and helped to achieve results commensurate with their peers, which was recognised and appreciated by the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire. In some departments, the most able pupils are effectively stimulated to produce work of high quality.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses national data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for maintained secondary schools. Results at A level have been similar to the national average for maintained schools, and in 2012 and 2014 similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. At A level, girls' results are consistently higher than boys' and improving from year to year, being above the national average for girls in maintained schools, and above the national average for girls in maintained selective schools in 2014. The GCSE and A-level results in 2015 were less strong than in 2014, though broadly in line with the previous three years. At GCSE in 2015, more than two-thirds of all grades were at A\* or A, and nine out of ten were at B or higher. At A level, four in ten of the grades gained were at A\* or A, and seven in ten at B or higher.
- 3.6 The levels of attainment at GCSE and A level, and the standardised measures of progress available, indicate that pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and the most able, make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar abilities, with girls making faster progress than boys in Years 12 and 13. A small number of pupils taking Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses achieve high levels of success, indicating the good and sometimes high level of progress that they make relative to their abilities.
- 3.7 Pupils are typically well motivated and often eager learners. Most have high levels of application and perseverance. They take pride in their work and, given the opportunity, display good independence and imagination. They work well in groups or on their own. Pupils answer readily when questioned in class. It is uncommon for them to ask challenging questions of their teachers, being, in the main, receptive

rather than probing learners. They take evident interest in and enjoyment from their work.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum offered is generous in both breadth and flexibility. Together with a varied and full extra-curricular programme, it is designed to support part of the school's vision to enrich the whole person and allow all pupils to achieve their full academic, spiritual, physical and creative potential. Pupils are taught in a fortnightly cycle and a good balance of examined and non-examined subjects is offered at each stage, with a particularly wide choice of more than 30 different sixth-form courses. This includes A levels as diverse as Japanese and media studies alongside more traditional subjects, and more applied subjects such as a BTEC in travel and tourism or in sport. A developmental year (known in the school as the DY year) programme is also offered to pupils from overseas as preparation for sixth-form study. Pupils in this programme benefit from intensive English language support, in conjunction with a wide choice of examination and non-examination subjects.
- 3.10 Excellent advice and support are given to pupils regarding future careers through the careers department, the life skills (personal, social, health and economic education) programme and the tutorial system. Sessions offer good insight into different career pathways and pupils engage in a range of enterprise activities to develop their business and employability skills, such as Young Enterprise, Young Dragons and a bespoke careers and employability skills project for pupils in Year 12. Specialist preparation is offered for admission to universities in the USA. Pupils report how much they value the individual guidance received as part of the university application process. The life skills programme, which extends to all years, includes discussion of the fundamental values on which British society is based, and guidance on e-safety and on the risks of extremism.
- 3.11 The curriculum is designed successfully to meet the needs of all pupils across a range of abilities. Small class sizes enable particularly effective individual attention to be given to support pupils with SEND or EAL, as well as providing suitable opportunities for challenging the more able.
- 3.12 The extra-curricular programme is excellent, offering an extensive range of activities, as was appreciated by a very large majority of pupils and parents responding to their questionnaires. Similarly, parents, pupils and staff have welcomed the reorganisation of the daily schedule since the previous inspection so as to provide activities with a protected time each day. Music, drama and art all offer numerous opportunities for participation, including a jazz band, a youth theatre group and a pottery club. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DoE) scheme and the Combined Cadet Force flourish, along with activities as diverse as bee keeping, yoga, cryptology, fencing and fly fishing. In addition, a strong sporting programme includes activities such as rowing, squash and modern pentathlon, as well as more traditional sports such as rugby and netball. Pupils are encouraged to try new sports and to develop their talents and skills so as to enjoy sport for recreation or to pursue it at an elite level. Individuals involved in elite sport are very well supported through the Wycliffe Advanced Sports and Performance programme, and flexible curriculum arrangements are made to accommodate training and competition commitments and ensure that the demands of their programme are reasonable.

- 3.13 Numerous trips and visits further enhance pupils' educational experience, with Washington, Iceland and Norway amongst recent overseas destinations. In addition, the school has developed a valuable range of local community links. A local youth theatre project offers drama opportunities, and a science, technology, engineering and mathematics event attracted 400 children from local preparatory and primary schools to enjoy a range of workshops and lectures, with Wycliffe pupils from Years 12 and 13 acting as tutors and teachers.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.15 A very large majority of the teaching throughout the school is good or excellent. This helps to foster academic ambition and to promote good progress in accordance with the school's commitment to enable individual pupils to fulfil their potential. Most lessons have clear objectives and are well planned, making good use of resources, with a brisk pace and effective time management. For example, in a religious studies lesson with pupils in Year 12, the use of film clips alongside well-chosen worksheets stimulated rapid learning about the criteria for a just war. New ideas are carefully introduced in stages so as to be accessible to all. Less productive lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge, allowing pupils' interest to falter and their progress to slow.
- 3.16 Teachers' good and often excellent knowledge is evident in most subjects. Appropriate and sometimes large quantities of work are set, particularly in Years 12 and 13. In a minority of subjects, the number of photocopied handouts and worksheets inhibit opportunities for independent learning. Questioning is effectively used across a wide range of subjects to provoke reflection and to test the pupils' understanding. Teaching creates a positive and purposeful learning environment in nearly all lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally excellent. Pupils are aware and, as expressed in their questionnaire returns, highly appreciative that they can ask for help, both in and out of class time, and that it will be given willingly and promptly.
- 3.17 Teachers understand the needs of their pupils well. Pupils with SEND or EAL are well supported by the relevant departments, who ensure that all teachers are made aware of pupils' individual needs and how best to support them. Learning needs are assessed before or on entry to the school and, where appropriate, specific support programmes are arranged. Regular in-service training is provided for staff to ensure that teaching approaches for pupils with SEND or EAL are suitable. Good support for pupils who are able, gifted and talented (AGT) is evident in a number of subject areas, although the way that this is managed by departments is not consistent. The well-resourced library is used effectively by the school community and has good links to the SEND, EAL and AGT co-ordinators.
- 3.18 Clear target grades are set in all year groups and these are used alongside baseline data to assess and monitor progress. Pupils understand the significance of these grades and how they can be used to augment the other assessment and reporting feedback they receive, although this tracking is not consistently used across all departments. The quality of marking varies across departments and year groups, although it is sound overall. A good deal of work is marked carefully, indicating areas for improvement with clear, constructive suggestions, but some marking is cursory and offers few comments to help pupils further enhance their learning.

Feedback to pupils in class is also variable, although on many occasions the quality of verbal feedback observed was highly valued and appreciated.

- 3.19 At the previous inspection the school was recommended to monitor and improve the quality of teaching, particularly the extent to which work is matched to pupils' needs and how teaching approaches engage pupils. Although inconsistencies remain, teaching generally has improved since the previous inspection, in particular in matching teaching strategies to pupils' needs.
- 3.20 A very large majority of the pupils responding to the questionnaire said that they find their work interesting and believe that they are making good progress. These views were reflected in pupil interviews during the inspection. Teaching successfully promotes tolerance and respect, is non-partisan in discussing political issues and does not undermine British values.

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

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils' personal qualities are excellent and accord well with the school's aim that they should exhibit self-belief and willingly take responsibility. Pupils are unassumingly confident, self-aware and emotionally mature. Their spiritual development is strong. It is supported by the ethos of the school, which recognises and celebrates pupils' successes and talents. Their spiritual development is furthered by the reflective content of chapel services and by lessons that often include elements of reflection, such as peer evaluation and self-assessment. Pupils in Year 9 responded thoughtfully to learning about enlightenment and discovering that there is more than one way to look at things. Many pupils are actively involved in the opportunities available for hearing and playing music, studying literature and art, and visiting the theatre. They clearly appreciate non-material aspects of life.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They respect the school's values, and good behaviour is the norm in and outside the classroom. They demonstrate a strong sense of right and wrong—in discussion on Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, pupils in Year 9 evidently appreciated the complexities often involved in making the right decision. Pupils identify with the school's ethos, and accept the ideals of fairness and respect for the civil and criminal law of England, and they relish the opportunities for considering a wide range of moral and ethical issues offered by the taught curriculum. They thoughtfully engage with issues such as poverty, euthanasia, abortion and the arguments for and against foreign aid in class discussions. They are accustomed to hearing many approaches to a single issue and are respectful of the opinions of others.
- 4.4 The social development of pupils is excellent. They accept responsibility willingly and so contribute to the society of the school and the wider community. For some this is achieved in leadership roles within school, and for other pupils it is in service to others through the DoE scheme, in mentoring younger pupils or in involvement in the paired reading scheme with preparatory school pupils. Pupils are involved in fund raising for charity. Each house supports a good cause of its choice, whole-school charitable fund raising takes place and school prefects have organised a cycle ride to raise money for a children's charity. In the life skills course, pupils develop social and political awareness by studying British democracy and how the government in Britain works. A lively discussion with pupils in Year 11 focused on the problems that occur when law and democracy disintegrate, as in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Pupils have little opportunity in school to experience democracy in action to support their thinking, since members of the school council, the food committee and the boarding forum are not elected but appointed by staff. Outcomes from their meetings, however, are reported back to pupils and some pupil suggestions have been implemented.
- 4.5 The cultural development of pupils is excellent. The multi-cultural community of the school is highly valued by pupils, who say that they enjoy the friendships they form with pupils from other cultures and faiths. Celebrations of food and costume on International Day and at Chinese New Year are another way in which pupils appreciate the customs and traditions of others, and in religious studies they study major world faiths. International pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school, and pupils are appreciative and respectful of others, whatever their background.

- 4.6 By the time they leave school, pupils are very well prepared and positive about meeting the challenges of the next stage of their lives, and are well versed in the values that underpin British society.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Staff know the pupils extremely well and provide highly effective support and guidance, in accordance with the school's aims. In their questionnaire responses, most parents said that their children are well looked after, happy and safe. The pastoral structure is based on the eight houses, augmented by the tutorial system, so that pupils have a good variety of adults to whom they can turn for support or guidance.
- 4.9 Relationships are positive across the entire school community. In their questionnaire responses, very large majorities of the pupils expressed that they appreciate the help that they receive from their teachers and are confident that there is someone to whom they can turn for help and guidance.
- 4.10 Pupils understand the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily, and the wide range of sporting opportunities enables them to take exercise. A majority of those responding to the questionnaire expressed concern about the food, although this was not confirmed during interviews. Inspectors found the food to be suitably nutritious, varied and appetising, and sufficient in quantity. The catering staff go to considerable lengths to meet the needs and expectations of the pupils, a Russian food evening being one example. The food committee and suggestions box seek the views of pupils, and notices on the dining hall doors display changes that have occurred following consultations. Clearly labelled drinking water sources are located throughout the school.
- 4.11 Pupils' behaviour is usually excellent, reflecting the effective pastoral structures and measures to promote positive behaviour. A concern registered by a small minority of pupils in questionnaire responses that teachers use sanctions unfairly was not supported by inspection evidence. Pupils in interviews confirmed that teachers are fair, and records indicate that sanctions are used sparingly, properly recorded and monitored by senior staff. A small minority of pupils also expressed concern about the management of bullying. Inspectors found that the school takes appropriate measures to counter bullying, including cyber-bullying, and has a suitable anti-bullying policy which is properly implemented. Pupils interviewed reported that incidents are rare, and that any that do occur are dealt with quickly and effectively. Scrutiny of records confirmed the care with which instances of bullying or unkindness are handled.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 At the previous inspection it was recommended that more attention should be paid to pupils' views. Although a small minority of pupils responding to the questionnaire were still not satisfied that the school listens to their views, inspectors found a variety of ways in which pupils can make their views heard. These include house and school councils, year group and boarding forums, and the food committee. Pupils were able to identify changes made following their representations, such as improvement of wi-fi access in the houses and increased food portion sizes.

#### **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's policies and procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of the pupils accord with official guidance and are effectively implemented.
- 4.16 All members of staff receive training in safeguarding which is in accordance with the requirements of the local safeguarding children's board, and which recently has included training in awareness of the risks of extremism. New members of staff are suitably trained as part of their induction. Regular retraining keeps staff up to date. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and prefects are trained in safeguarding. Rigorous filtering systems are used to prevent access to unsuitable internet sites on school equipment. Appropriate procedures monitor the suitability of visiting speakers. The trustees exercise proper oversight of safeguarding.
- 4.17 Measures to promote health and safety are comprehensive and regularly reviewed. Risk assessment and management are scrupulous. All the required measures are taken to reduce risk from fire. Fire evacuation practices are held regularly, with additional practices outside school hours in the boarding houses. Pupils reported in response to their questionnaire that they feel safe and well looked after. Health and safety issues are properly monitored by the health and safety committee, which reports to the trustees.
- 4.18 The school has a recently refurbished and well-equipped medical centre, with suitably qualified staff, to support pupils' medical, physical and emotional needs. A sufficient number of staff are trained in first aid and in how to respond to sudden allergic reactions. Pupils have access to an independent listener and the school counsellor. Records of accidents, treatments and medication are accurately maintained, and the frequency and nature of accidents are closely monitored by the health and safety committee.
- 4.19 Attendance and admissions registers are properly maintained and safely stored for the required time. Appropriate procedures are in place to follow up unexpected absences.

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

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Parents responding to the questionnaire overwhelmingly believe that boarding helps their children's progress and development. Boarders are polite and friendly, confident, sociable and articulate, speaking appreciatively about their boarding experience and of the staff who look after them. Relationships are extremely supportive, both between staff and boarders and amongst the boarders. Boarders are able to contribute their views about the organisation of their houses formally, through house and school councils, and informally, through house staff. Boarders from different year groups, with SEND or from overseas integrate exceptionally well and confirm that they are well supported.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. Boarders are well cared for as individuals and report that they feel safe in their houses. Boarding staff are readily accessible both day and night. New boarders, whenever they arrive, receive an effective induction programme, underpinned by support from older pupils, which helps them to settle quickly. The pre-sessional programme for boarders from

overseas is much appreciated. Informative pupil handbooks are distributed. Boarders confirm that they have a good range of adults to whom they can turn for help and guidance. Suitable access is available to quiet spaces if they want to be alone. House notice boards provide all required information and contact details. A school counsellor and an independent listener are available, and the school has recently identified the need for a Chinese-speaking counsellor. All pupils have mobile telephones, as do the house staff, so that boarders and staff may contact each other at all times.

- 4.23 Suitably qualified staff and a well-equipped medical centre ensure that the needs of boarders who are ill or injured are well met. The local surgery is across the road and access to other health care professionals is readily available. House staff work closely with medical centre staff so that medical interventions are suitably communicated between them. Medication is correctly and appropriately stored and dispensed. Boarders assessed as being competent to self-medicate are properly informed about their responsibilities. The confidentiality and rights of boarders are respected. All necessary parental consents are in place.
- 4.24 Boarders enjoy access to the school's extensive grounds and sports facilities in order to keep fit and healthy. The grounds also provide opportunities for a quiet walk for those who want time alone. Boarders appreciate the wide range of supervised activities available to them during the week and at weekends. House trips include the theatre, bowling, shopping and other excursions requested by boarders. Although in the questionnaire a small minority of boarders were not satisfied with the balance between organised and self-directed time, inspectors found that a good balance is maintained, and boarders in interviews said that they appreciate learning to organise themselves and make independent decisions about how they manage their time. Information about local and international events is easily accessible in the houses every day through television and newspapers.
- 4.25 Most bedrooms are attractive, homely and appropriately furnished. Many rooms are spacious. All are adequately heated and provide clean, warm and comfortable spaces for boarders. All houses offer adequate accommodation but the oldest of the boys' houses, despite having been recently decorated, does not provide the same level of comfort that prevails in the other houses. Responses to the questionnaire indicated that a small minority of boarders are concerned about the safety of their belongings. Inspectors found that boarders are able to lock their rooms, and that a lockable space for valuables is provided in each room. Boarders interviewed did not agree with the concern. Rooms are frequently personalised by boarders and, in some houses, artwork and informative posters are on display. Showers and toilets are amply sufficient and suitably private. They are kept clean and boarders report that hot water is plentiful. Although a small minority of boarders responding to the questionnaire indicated concern about the availability of hot drinks and snacks, inspectors found that all houses have suitable kitchens and receive ample provisions to make evening or teatime toast, although the supply of fruit in the houses is sparse. Suitably comfortable and inviting recreation areas, with appropriate furnishings, are available for boarders. In-house laundry facilities, overseen by the matrons, provide an efficient service for boarders. The central dining hall provides an extremely pleasant space where all meals are served. Despite a majority of pupils responding to the questionnaire expressing dissatisfaction with the food, inspectors sampled the full range of meals and found them to be well prepared, nutritious and of good quality. Boarders spoken to were complimentary about the food. Menus are varied and are rotated regularly. Locally sourced ingredients are used whenever possible, and those with special dietary requirements are suitably

catered for. Fresh fruit and water are available at all meals. Contact between boarders and their parents is readily available through the use of email, mobile telephones or the internet.

- 4.26 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is good. The school's policies and procedures for welfare and safeguarding are properly implemented. All staff are suitably trained in safeguarding procedures. The school has a suitable code of conduct for staff, which gives appropriate guidance, including that boarders may only go into staff accommodation for a specified purpose and accompanied by other boarders. The school has a suitable health and safety policy. Safety checks are regularly conducted and recorded. Boarding houses are properly maintained so as to protect boarders from risk. Most maintenance and safety issues are reported and remedied promptly, although inspectors noted a small number of issues that needed to be reported and resolved. Risk assessments are carefully conducted for school premises, activities and trips. The school complies fully with all fire regulations. Fire evacuation practices are conducted during boarding hours at least termly in all boarding houses. Fire risk assessments are reviewed annually. Although a small minority of boarders indicated in response to the questionnaire that the school does not handle bullying well, in interviews boarders overwhelmingly reported that if an incident did arise it would be dealt with promptly and fairly.
- 4.27 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. The statement of boarding aims and principles is widely understood and displayed in each house. In discussions with boarders it was clear that these aims are reflected in the way that they relate to one another in their houses. House staff meet regularly to discuss and reflect on matters affecting the boarders; some inconsistency of practice remains. Effective links are made between academic and residential staff. Electronic record keeping means that information about boarders' welfare and academic progress is easily shared amongst those responsible for them. Boarding staff, including academic tutors, have clear job descriptions and receive appropriate induction. Pupil heads of houses fulfil a crucial role in supporting staff and other boarders, and take their responsibilities very seriously. They are suitably trained for their role and closely supervised. A boarding forum provides good opportunity to discuss matters that concern them with the deputy head pastoral. The trustees appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the leadership of boarding through their welfare committee.

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

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

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 A well-constructed committee structure ensures that trustees have excellent oversight of all aspects of the school's life. In particular, the education and welfare committees enable trustees to monitor educational standards and the quality of pastoral care, including boarding. The trustees are highly committed to the school and conduct regular self-evaluation in order to ensure that they are continuously striving to improve their own performance.
- 5.3 The trustees have conducted surveys of the school community, including the parents, in order to ensure their own clear and detailed insight into the working of the school. Through their regular visits and their work on committees, as well as the frequent reports and presentations that they receive, the trustees know the school and its staff well. They are in a good position to offer effective support, challenge and stimulus for improvement to the staff.
- 5.4 Safeguarding and health and safety are high priorities for the trustees and feature on the agenda of every meeting of the full council. In addition, a nominated governor visits the school regularly to talk with the designated safeguarding leader and to audit the recruitment register and files. Reports on the implementation of policies are carefully considered and discussed, and the trustees ensure that the annual review of safeguarding takes place. The trustees work hard to ensure that the school actively promotes the well-being of the pupils.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 Leadership and management at all levels of responsibility successfully promote the aims of the school and fulfil their responsibilities.
- 5.7 The leadership and management provide clear educational direction to promote the school's aim that all pupils should achieve their full potential. This objective has been successfully communicated to the staff and is reflected in the pupils' good academic and excellent extra-curricular achievements, as well as in their excellent personal development. Pupils are known and valued as individuals by the senior managers and this contributes to the warm, welcoming atmosphere around the school, which enables positive relationships to flourish.
- 5.8 The school's leadership team listens to the views of pupils, staff and parents, and incorporates their views into improvement priorities. This consultative approach ensures support of the school's development objectives. Parents and staff comment favourably on the accessibility and responsiveness of the leadership team. Weekly meetings of the leadership team contribute to effective planning and decisive action being taken to resolve issues raised by staff. Meetings with wider management teams serve to identify and swiftly address matters relating to individual pupils or

particular groups. The leadership team and all staff are fully committed to the personal development and well-being of each pupil.

- 5.9 A comprehensive policy framework has been put in place, which meets requirements, although the implementation of all policies is not yet fully embedded. The school's self-evaluation process is shared well amongst staff, but not all aspects of school life receive the level of rigour in monitoring that is necessary for the school to achieve all its targets. For instance, there has been evident progress in academic monitoring by senior and middle managers, but inconsistencies remain in the quality of teaching and in marking. The school has correctly identified the lack of designated time that tutors have with their tutees and has plans to resolve this next year.
- 5.10 Progress has been made with all three of the recommendations made at the previous inspection. Systematic monitoring of teaching by academic departments is now taking place in order to raise the quality of teaching to a consistently high standard. A new management role has been introduced to resolve concerns about the variable standard of tutoring in Years 9 to 11, and the monitoring of tutors' files and their relationship with their tutees are now strong.
- 5.11 All the required checks on new staff are meticulously conducted and accurately recorded on the recruitment register, thereby satisfying a requirement of the previous inspection. The school is successful in recruiting high quality staff and supporting them through their induction and in their further training. A detailed induction programme helps new staff to settle quickly. Training in safeguarding, supported by detailed documentation, provides staff with good guidance on safeguarding procedures, including those relating to the risk of radicalisation, and related matters regarding welfare, health and safety. Professional development for staff is well resourced, with priorities linked to those of the school. A new performance management system for teaching staff has recently been introduced in order to promote high standards in teaching. It is too early to judge its effectiveness. A wide range of staff, including estates, administrative, domestic, technician and catering staff, play a vital role in contributing to the friendly environment that enables pupils to flourish. These staff are proud to be recognised as an integral part of the school community and play a significant role in supporting the pupils' personal development.
- 5.12 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. The school has sought the views of parents through a recent full survey, through the parents' panel set up by the school and through regular informal communication. The pre-inspection questionnaire showed high levels of parental satisfaction with the school, its curriculum, the range of activities, the quality of pastoral care and the effectiveness of management, and a very large majority of the parents said that they would recommend the school. A very small minority of the parents responding were not satisfied that parental concerns are well handled. Scrutiny of the school's records showed that formal complaints are rare because most concerns are promptly resolved at an earlier stage following careful consideration.
- 5.13 Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. The parent portal on the school website provides access to subject-based summaries of the work being covered with particular year groups. A school sport 'app' and the website keep parents informed about last-minute changes relating to sports fixtures. A well-established parents' committee allows pupils to bid for funding to pay for school-related projects in departments and houses. The school

values the contribution parents make, and actively seeks further ways of improving parental involvement in and awareness of their children's education.

- 5.14 Parents of current and prospective pupils are able to access all required information regarding the school through its website and prospectus. Parents' meetings, information evenings and open mornings are held regularly. These contribute to an inclusive and open atmosphere, which is appreciated by parents.
- 5.15 In their responses to the questionnaire, a very small minority of parents were not satisfied with the information that they receive from the school about their children's progress. Inspectors found that reports to parents on pupils' progress provide clear and useful information about what level the pupil is working at and advice about what will help them to improve. The statement of intent form, signed by both parents and their children, ensures that there is a shared understanding of the pupil's aspirations and potential. In addition to regular formal reporting, members of staff are easily contacted through email. In their questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents appreciated the ease of contact with the staff.

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