



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

DAUNTSEY'S SCHOOL

INTERIM INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Dauntsey's School

Full Name of School/College	Dauntsey's School
DCSF Number	865/6007
Registered Charity Number	309480
Address	Dauntsey's School West LavingtonDevizes Wiltshire SN10 4HE
Telephone Number	01380 814500
Fax Number	01380 814501
Email Address	headmaster@dauntseys.wilts.sch.uk
Headmaster	Mr Stewart Roberts
Chair of Governors	Mr Richard Handover CBE
Age Range	11 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	797
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (441 boys; 356 girls;)
Number of Boarders	Total: 301
Inspection Dates	01 Dec 2009 to 02 Dec 2009

PREFACE

This report is according to the *Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) schedule* for INTERIM inspections. The inspection is a two day visit with a focus on compliance with regulatory requirements. ISI inspections occur every three years and have two formats, interim and standard, which usually occur in an alternating pattern. The school's next inspection will therefore follow the standard schedule, which includes two visits totalling five days and places greater emphasis on the quality of education and care in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance. The school's previous inspection was in November 2006.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

A specific inspection of boarding was not carried out and the report does not contain judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Any comments on boarding arising from this inspection are in the context of the school as a whole. The existing report on boarding was produced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

CONTENTS

Page

1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

3 ACTION POINTS

(a) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(b) Recommended action

4 INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Dauntsey's School is an independent co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from eleven to eighteen. It was founded in 1542 and is located in the village of West Lavington, Wiltshire. It is set in substantial grounds with extensive facilities. It is governed by a board of trustees, and is linked to the Mercers Company. It aims to ensure that all its pupils realise their full potential and emerge as responsible citizens. It seeks to offer a dynamic curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sport, music and the arts. It is committed to high standards in pastoral care and strong spiritual, moral social and cultural values, and regards close co-operation with parents as essential. Since the previous inspection, some new buildings and facilities have been completed.
- 1.2 The school roll comprises 797 pupils, 441 of whom are boys and 356 girls. Four hundred and ninety are day pupils and 307 are boarders. The sixth form has 275 pupils. Entry to the school is by selective examination at the age of eleven or thirteen, and some 30 pupils enter at sixth form level. Standardised national tests taken in Years 7 and 9 indicate that, with very few exceptions, the ability of pupils is above the national average, and some three-quarters of the pupils are well above average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, 96 have learning support and 52 receive help with English.
- 1.3 Pupils come primarily from professional and business families. Boarders are from all parts of Britain, other European countries and, substantially, from the Far East. Many day pupils travel in by coach, and all day pupils are able to complete their prep under supervision before returning home. About ten pupils per year leave after completing GCSE examinations. Virtually all sixth form pupils proceed to higher education, some after taking a gap year.
- 1.4 National Curriculum 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 (NC) equivalence are shown in the following tables.

Senior School

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 7
Form 2	Year 8
Form 3	Year 9
Form 4	Year 10
Form 5	Year 11
Lower 6 th Form	Year 12
Upper 6 th Form	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and basic skills

- 2.1 The pupils are highly successful in their learning, showing real understanding and making excellent progress. They are orally fluent and write with precision in factual tasks, and with style and fluency in imaginative work. They are numerate, they apply their mathematical skills well in different contexts and conduct scientific experiments with confidence and understanding. They work with enjoyment and commitment. At both GCSE and A-level, they achieve results that are above those of pupils in selective maintained schools and their progress is good in relation to their above average ability. All pupils qualify academically for higher education and most proceed to top quality universities. They achieve high performance levels in individual and team competitions, and are highly successful in mathematical and scientific challenges and in music, speech and drama grade examinations.
- 2.2 Success in academic, sporting, musical and dramatic activities owes much to the high quality of teaching which is varied, highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Staff know their pupils very well and fully address the needs of pupils of different abilities including those with learning difficulties and English as an additional language. Support for those with statements of special educational needs is good, and statements are reviewed annually with the local authority. Lesson planning is thorough and marking is encouraging, but does not always indicate how the quality of work can be improved. Independent learning is strongly encouraged and pupils use excellent ICT and library resources effectively. The curriculum includes a varied programme of personal and social education. Pupils throughout the school follow a broad range of subjects and the accessibility of courses enables them to achieve high standards at all ages. The curricular provision is broad and offers the separate sciences, three modern languages and Latin in Year 7, the availability of at least two modern languages thereafter, an outdoor and team-building programme in Year 9, and a wide options programme, allowing individual subject choice, at GCSE and A-level. Increasing numbers of IGCSE subjects are being provided in Years 10 and 11. Creative and expressive subjects are particularly well represented and special courses to stretch pupils of all abilities have been introduced. Many extra-curricular activities are available with an emphasis on sport, music, drama and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Opportunities exist for outdoor pursuits, exciting adventure trips abroad and sailing on the school's ocean-going vessel. Over seventy clubs and societies, some established as a result of pupils' initiative, cater for a particularly wide range of interests.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 2.3 Throughout the school pupils are open, friendly and self-assured. They display excellently developed personal qualities. In a school with a Christian ethos, they have a sense of the spiritual, and experience feelings of awe and wonder at the natural world. Their behaviour is excellent and they have a deep appreciation of what is fair and just. They have a welcoming and tolerant approach to those from different cultural backgrounds, and are concerned for those less fortunate than themselves, as shown by their strong commitment to charity fund raising. They take on tasks as school and house prefects, team captains, and lower school council representatives with enthusiasm and a strong sense of duty. Pupils, including boarders, benefit greatly from the outstanding relationships in the school, and the

availability of a full range of amenities including extensive sports facilities, the music school, art and drama studios, computer facilities and the library. They take advantage of all that is on offer, gain in self-confidence and leadership skills, and carry out their responsibilities with enthusiasm and good humour.

- 2.4 The excellent pastoral care system, based on both day and boarding houses, plays a vital part in pupils' all-round development and success. In the questionnaire returns, the pupils felt strongly that the school encouraged them to be independent, and that it listened and responded to their views. Pupils commented on the helpfulness of senior pupil listeners. The anti-bullying and safeguarding policies cover all required procedures. Necessary staff training has taken place. The accessibility plan for those with learning or physical difficulties is comprehensive and includes specific area for improvement. Fire precautions and health and safety matters are fully addressed. The sanatorium is well staffed and outstandingly equipped, and the medical protocols for boarders are fully followed. Admissions and attendance procedures are in order.

The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management

- 2.5 The trustees are strongly committed to the school, govern it well and visit regularly. They oversee welfare, health and safety effectively, and are most successful in maintaining the high quality of resources and staffing. Considerable attention has been given to extending and upgrading facilities. Having fulfilled the objectives of the previous development strategy, governors and senior managers are producing a new plan, with modified academic and pastoral aims. The school is dynamically and sensitively led. Those in senior positions are highly effective, very hard working and approachable, and the pupils' needs are foremost. Departmental monitoring is thorough. A revised staff review system has received increasing common room support and includes an extension of lesson observations, by departmental colleagues and senior staff.
- 2.6 The central register is largely secure in its coverage of required appointments, but there are some unexplained gaps in relation to several non-teaching staff. Special attention is given to the induction of new staff. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the parents indicated that they were particularly pleased with the teaching, pastoral care, pupil behaviour and attitudes, extra-curricular opportunities, quality of information, and governance and management provided. The complaints procedure complies with regulatory requirements.

3. ACTION POINTS

(a) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 3.1 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003 as subsequently amended, with the exception of those indicated below.

Under Standard 3 (Welfare, health and safety) it must:

- ensure that safeguarding checks are carried out [Regulation 3.(2)(a)];

Under Standard 4 (The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors) it must:

- for each appointment, enter on the central register the completion of all required checks [Regulation 4C.(2) and (3)];

(b) Recommended action

- 3.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. in marking and assessment, ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement.

4. 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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and tutorials. Inspectors visited 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 Neil Gamble

Mrs Jenny Longbourne

Reporting inspector

Senior Team Inspector (Former Head of Dept, GSA)