



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**DAUNTSEY'S SCHOOL**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## Dauntsey's School

Full Name of School	<b>Dauntsey's School</b>
DfE Number	<b>865/6007</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309480</b>
Address	<b>Dauntsey's School West Lavington Devizes Wiltshire SN10 4HE</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01380 814500</b>
Fax Number	<b>01380 814501</b>
Email Address	<b>info@dauntseys.org</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Mark Lascelles</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Richard Handover CBE</b>
Age Range	<b>11 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>766</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (425 boys; 341 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	11-18: <b>766</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>477</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>289</b>
	Full: <b>289</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection dates	<b>16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> 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 December 2009.

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.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. A meeting was held with a small number of parents. 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

Dr Stephen Grounds	Reporting Inspector
Mr John Davidson	Team Inspector (Director of Administration, HMC school)
Mrs Anne Griffiths	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
Miss Karen Hollingdale	Team Inspector (former Deputy Head, GDST school)
Mr Nigel Lashbrook	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Simon Northcote-Green	Team Inspector (Deputy Master, HMC school)
Mr Mark Twells	Team Inspector (Director of IT, HMC school)
Mr David Bell	Team Inspector (former Headmaster, ISA school)
Mrs Linda Trevethick	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Pamela Leech	Team Inspector for Boarding

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Dauntsey's School has a Christian ethos and aims to provide a friendly, happy and supportive environment in which pupils have every opportunity to fulfil their potential and aspirations, both academic and otherwise. The school endeavours to encourage independent thinking, and a desire for individual achievement. It seeks to foster spirituality, social responsibility and moral values.
- 1.2 The school is co-educational with a large number of pupils who board, located in the Wiltshire village of West Lavington. It was founded in 1542 by William Dautesey who was an Alderman and a member of the Mercers' Company. The school has a governing body, which includes representatives of the Mercers' Company.
- 1.3 Since the school had its previous full inspection in 2006, it has improved its facilities for day girls, completed a science building, made small modifications to the curriculum, and introduced a free-place bursary scheme.
- 1.4 The age range of the school is eleven to eighteen. There are 766 pupils on the school roll; 425 boys and 341 girls. There are 289 boarders: 146 boys and 143 girls. There are 505 pupils altogether in the main part of the school and 261 in the sixth form.
- 1.5 Entry to the school is by selective examination at the age of eleven or thirteen, and approximately 30 pupils enter at sixth form level. Standardised national tests taken in Years 7 and 9 indicate that the ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, with over two-thirds of pupils being of well above average ability, and very few having ability that is less than above average. Because all but a very small minority of pupils transfer to the sixth form, its ability profile is similar to that of the main school.
- 1.6 Pupils come primarily from professional families. The boarders are principally from southern England, other European countries and, notably, south-east Asia. There are 130 pupils in receipt of support from the school, the Ministry of Defence or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Many day pupils travel in by coaches from towns such as Swindon, Salisbury and Andover. Most Year 13 pupils proceed to higher education.
- 1.7 The school identifies 219 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these 105 receive support from the school. There are 111 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) of whom 67 receive support for their English.

- 1.8 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 table.

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

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

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

- 2.1 All pupils, at all levels in the school, including those with EAL and SEND, achieve at an excellent level and make good progress in their learning compared with pupils of similar ability. They listen attentively, speak confidently and express views articulately. Good creativity is evident, notably in English, art and design technology (DT). Pupils much enjoy their lessons. The performance in examinations at GCSE and A level is excellent. As a result nearly all pupils go on to higher education with the large majority gaining places at highly selective universities. The academic curriculum is well-balanced, very wide ranging and offers a good amount of choice at GCSE and A level. It is supplemented by an extensive extra-curricular programme, which includes a very large number of clubs. Teaching is a major strength of the school: it is well-planned in order to meet pupils' needs. However, some marking is of limited use in providing feedback to pupils. The quality of special provision for those with EAL and SEND is excellent. Pupils' excellent attitudes to their teachers and their studies is a major contributory factor to the school's success.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent and is a major strength of the school. They have very good social skills and their behaviour is mature for their ages. Personal development is supported by excellent pastoral and welfare arrangements as well as effective procedures for safeguarding, health and safety. The pupils' questionnaires showed a very high level of satisfaction with the provision of the school. The provision for boarding is excellent and the school meets all the National Minimum Standards for boarding. The boarding houses are very comfortable and well-maintained.
- 2.3 The governance of the school is excellent. The impact of the governing body is evident in the continuous nurturing of the school site and its facilities, the high quality of the staff, and, above all, the educational and social outcomes of the pupils. Leadership and management are, at virtually all levels of the school, excellent. The school's senior managers form a very effective and dynamic team, which has worked closely with the governors to evaluate the school's development and to establish a set of well-defined priorities to meet a diverse set of aims. The boarding arrangements benefit from excellent leadership and management. The school has responded to the regulatory requirements of the previous interim inspection and the recommendations of the previous full inspection, leaving some work still to be completed on the sharing of good practice in teaching.



## **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) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve further the marking and assessment of pupils' work and generally strengthen the monitoring of the processes of assessment.
  2. Improve the quality of teaching still further by developing a programme of cross-departmental staff observation.

### **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' achievement and learning throughout the school is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils show good and often excellent levels of knowledge and understanding and skills across the whole age and subject range. They listen attentively, speak confidently and can express views articulately. They organise their written work to a high standard and present it with care. They have high levels of competence in numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). They can work independently, for example in research tasks in personal, social and health education (PSHE) in Year 10. They produce imaginative and creative work, as witnessed in English, art and DT.
- 3.3 Pupils are successful in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and a striking feature is the high proportion of pupils taking advantage of the opportunities available. Considerable numbers achieve notable successes in academic competitions such as the UK Maths Challenge, and in English Speaking Board examinations. In music, over twenty pupils achieved grade 7, 8 or higher in Associate Board and other examinations in 2011 to 2012, with pupils gaining places in the National Youth Choir and the National Children's Band. Pupils represent their county or region in cricket, hockey, and rugby, and national representation has been achieved in shooting and athletics. Approximately 75 pupils achieve their Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award each year with around half working on Gold in the sixth form, and seven gaining their Gold award while at school in 2012. The school's team of canoeists was placed in the top five of the Devizes-Westminster canoe race in each of the last three years, and a team of pupils won the Tall Ships race in 2011. A very large number of pupils are engaged in drama, which is a major strength of the school, and this year included a performance of Miss Saigon at a West End theatre.
- 3.4 The pupils' excellent achievements prepare them well for future study and nearly all pupils go on to higher education with around three-quarters gaining places at the most selective universities.
- 3.5 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. Results at GCSE level have been well above the national average for maintained schools. Nearly four-fifths of grades were at A\* or A standard in two of the last three years. International GCSE (IGCSE) results have been above the worldwide average in almost all subjects, with most IGCSE results being broadly in line with the UK average where the benchmark is higher. In 2010 and 2011, A-level results were well above the national average for maintained schools, and in 2009, above the national average. In the most recent two years, over four-fifths of grades were A\*, A or B. This level of attainment and evidence from lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations, along with the analysis of standardised progress data, indicate that pupils make good progress relative to the average for pupils of similar ability. Pupils with EAL make progress in academic subjects which is at least as good as those of other pupils, based on analysis of baseline data. Given the challenge of the acquisition of English language by these pupils this reflects considerable individual achievement. Pupils with SEND, as identified by the school and who are in receipt of extra support, also make progress which is at least as good as those of other pupils and in linguistic subjects they make better progress than their peers.

Classroom observation of their full participation, as well as school progress data, supports this judgement.

- 3.6 Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Pupils work productively on individual tasks and also co-operatively in pair and group tasks, mutually supporting each other's progress. They respond well to the guidance of teachers and take responsibility for their own learning. They are confident in their approach to study, positive in outlook, enthusiastic when describing their work, and very well motivated.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The school provides a challenging and highly effective contribution to the pupils' linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative development. This provision strongly supports the school's aim to provide a balanced, progressive and innovative curriculum, to challenge all pupils by fostering intellectual curiosity through academic enrichment, independent learning and a complementary curriculum, and to provide a broad range of sporting activities which promote health, confidence and involvement.
- 3.9 The school has responded incisively to the recommendation of the previous full inspection report to promote intellectual curiosity. It has done so by enlarging the number of academic societies which invite keynote speakers to give seminars and lectures. It has also established the Head Master's Essay Society, a focus group that gives sixth formers the opportunity to prepare and deliver academic papers. All of these stimulate intellectual curiosity and widen pupils' horizons.
- 3.10 At all ages the breadth, balance and match to need is strongly evident. In Year 8, for example, the flexibility of the curriculum allows pupils to study one, two or three languages depending on ability. Pupils who find English or mathematics challenging are well catered for by the provision of very small groups where they receive targeted instruction. The creative and expressive curriculum is broad with art, music, DT, drama and dance delivered in Years 9 to 11. Team practices take place in one or more of the games lessons each week, which gives all the pupils the opportunity to participate in the extra-curricular sporting activities. The policy with regard to playing in matches in Years 7 to 9 is inclusive: those selected for the school teams play against other schools whilst those who are not selected play internal matches. This approach serves the needs of all the pupils. For those pupils in Years 10 and upwards not wishing to play in the school teams, alternative activities are on offer.
- 3.11 The school offers a comprehensive and relevant PSHE programme. An outdoor education programme is offered in Year 9 which provides an excellent opportunity for participation in a range of activities such as mountain biking, falconry, indoor climbing, navigation and orienteering.
- 3.12 GCSE pupils take the core subjects of the National Curriculum and are able to select their other subjects from a very wide range. Great care is taken to ensure that the pupils' option choices can be met by structuring the timetable after the choices are made.
- 3.13 The provision by the learning development and EAL departments for those with SEND or EAL is excellent. The support for SEND, largely pupils with dyslexia and

dyspraxia, is highly structured. Pupils with EAL receive individual support or work in groups following an appropriate level of language instruction.

- 3.14 For those in the sixth form there is a good range of subjects and once again a free choice of options is available to the pupils. There is an extensive enrichment course that includes general studies, where pupils have the opportunity to study subjects such as psychology, media studies, money management, Mandarin and Russian.
- 3.15 The range of extra-curricular activities on offer is excellent, with particular emphasis on music, dance, drama and sport. There are over eighty clubs and activities that cater for a particularly wide range of interests and abilities. Many, such as fly fishing, have been introduced as a direct result of pupils' requests. Numerous opportunities exist for pupils to participate in trips at home and abroad. These include trips to Germany, France and Spain where pupils experience different cultures and practise the language, as well as biology and geography field trips, Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme expeditions, and many others.

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

- 3.16 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching makes a principal contribution to the pupils' progress, in support of the school's ethos and its aim to challenge pupils of all abilities. Half of all lessons observed were of the highest quality.
- 3.18 Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it to give clear explanations and to foster enthusiasm for their subjects. Lessons are well paced and make use of appropriate resources including ICT, and these features also engage pupils. For example in a Year 13 physics lesson pupils effortlessly deployed their existing knowledge of mathematics and ICT to analyse motion in the earth's gravitational field. A striking feature of the lessons observed was how much pupils enjoyed them. Behaviour in lessons is very good.
- 3.19 The teaching is well-planned and largely based on a clear understanding of pupils' needs. In the best cases, care is taken to make it accessible to everyone, as in a Year 13 economics lesson on exchange rates, where less able pupils were given more closely structured questions to enable them to understand a complex topic. However, this awareness of need is not universally translated into active support by classroom teachers of pupils with SEND and EAL. In the best cases observed, teachers took pains to ensure that these pupils could successfully benefit from the lessons, and it was rare for all the needs of these pupils to be overlooked. The quality of teaching of such pupils in the learning support unit is very high. In these lessons, pupils receive good support which is closely tailored to their particular needs, whether they are being taught individually or in small groups.
- 3.20 Most teaching includes plenty of well-directed support and encouragement, as in a lower school rugby practice for less able players, where the teacher's enthusiastic encouragement secured the participation of everyone.
- 3.21 An aim of the school is the encouragement of independent thinking and, where this was promoted in lessons it was seen to be excellent, for instance in Year 12 artwork and some GCSE work in DT, where one pupil was designing a genuinely original idea for a boot rack. However this is not a feature of all lessons.

- 3.22 The best teaching is also characterised by careful assessment of pupils' responses, enabling teachers to ensure a high level of understanding, as in a Year 11 biology lesson on the menstrual cycle where excellent use of questions and answers enabled the pupils to gain a good understanding of the topic. Improvement of written work assessment was a recommendation in the 2009 interim report. While it is often good, with encouraging comments and guidance on improvement, this is not consistently true across the curriculum and marking is sometimes perfunctory.
- 3.23 The work of the learning development and EAL departments in using standardised measures of progress to analyse examination performance and to monitor progress makes good use of this data but the information is used less consistently elsewhere. The responsibility for maintaining grades of pupils and examination results rests with house tutors. The school intends for each pupil to have a personal development plan which is completed by the pupil and tracked by tutors, however not all tutors are fully implementing this tracking process.

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

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

- 4.1 The overall quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' development fully meets the school's aim of providing a range of opportunities for pupils to become flexible thinkers as well as confident, articulate and tolerant people, and to develop a sense of responsibility and high personal standards preparing them to take their place in the modern world.
- 4.3 Pupils have excellent social skills. They were courteous and keen to help in meetings with inspectors. They voice their feelings and opinions and justify them. They show respect for themselves and others: they listen to each other and work co-operatively in lessons, whether in pairs or in larger groups. Most notably in the upper school debating society, but also on a daily basis in lessons, pupils learn to live respectfully with any disagreements they may have with others.
- 4.4 Pupils undertake tasks which benefit the community through a wide variety of charity events, notably those which support disadvantaged children. They enjoy many opportunities to help run the school, for example, through the prefect system, the school council and student listeners. Pupils benefit from the help and support of older pupils. Year 7 pupils commented very positively about the involvement of older pupils to help them settle in to the school.
- 4.5 Pupils' moral development is excellent. Anti-social behaviour was not evident: by contrast, pupils are helpful, happy and sympathetic to others. Pupils become aware of what it is like to live in a world less materialistic than theirs. Some have done this through a visit to an orphanage in Romania and others through staying with the Berber tribe in Morocco. The school capitalises on the experience of some of its overseas pupils, who share stories of their upbringing in settings very different from England in organised discussions. Pupils become aware of the rights of others and of the hidden problems they may have through work in PSHE classes.
- 4.6 The pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, which is reflected in their general behaviour. They conduct themselves well in the corporate activities of the school, as, for example, when year groups or the whole school come together at services or assemblies. A good example of this was the remarkable whole school hymn practice, in which pupils participated fully. The parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that the school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- 4.7 Pupils learn to comprehend the spiritual and more ephemeral dimensions of existence, being supported in this by the chaplain and other members of staff. The chapel services provide serious and solemn occasions in which pupils respond to moments of reflection. At a different level, pupils understand and recognise the Christian heritage of Britain through various visits. Year 8 pupils, for example, had visited Glastonbury Abbey where they had interviewed a monk to learn about vocation and considered the relevance of such a lifestyle today.
- 4.8 Pupils interact positively with the pupils from different cultures. They embrace attitudes and lifestyles that differ from their own by seeking and discussing views on global issues and by attending assemblies which celebrate festivals of other cultures.

- 4.9 Pupils' responses to questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive. A small minority of pupils raised issues about the lack of pupil voice and of activities, both at the weekend and after school. When pursued in interviews with the pupils, these concerns were not corroborated. Pupils have a voice, which is heard by the school.

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

- 4.10 The quality of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 Pupils and staff are given clear and thorough induction on arrival, a process which enhances the well-established ethos of friendship and care. Relationships between pupils and staff and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent, being carefully monitored by the staff.
- 4.12 Small tutor groups and a well-structured house system underpin the provision of pastoral care which includes the mentoring of younger pupils by elder ones, a pupil run listening service, strong leadership from house masters and house mistresses and clear channels of communication with parents. Regular meetings of key staff ensure that pastoral issues are dealt with promptly and that agreed strategies are put in place. Meetings are well minuted, with minutes and actions circulated to all relevant staff. Such meetings include the chaplain, sanatorium staff and school counsellors, who play a significant part in dealing with referrals when pupils need particular attention. The counsellors are housed in a well-equipped and welcoming sanatorium, which is easily accessible to pupils and where confidentiality can be ensured. The policies regarding good behaviour and the avoidance of bullying are well known by staff and pupils alike and any form of bullying, including cyber bullying, is dealt with swiftly and effectively. An excellent questionnaire regarding bullying, which pupils can answer anonymously, ensures that any undetected bullying can be brought to light. This is one example of several methods used to secure pupils' views. Others include the food committee and school councils.
- 4.13 The excellent PSHE programme covers a multitude of pastoral subjects and issues, including encouraging pupils to develop healthy eating habits and to take regular exercise; these issues are treated with sensitivity.
- 4.14 The school has recently updated its three-year plan on accessibility in order to continue to meet the requirements of the Equality Act. The school has a high degree of accessibility for potential pupils using wheelchairs through past investment in ramps, lifts, stairchairs and disabled toilets.

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

- 4.15 The school's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.16 Regular reviews of policies and procedures ensure that all the necessary aspects of welfare, health and safety are in good order.
- 4.17 Appropriate arrangements secure the health and safety of pupils and thorough attention is paid to child protection. Both the head master and other staff have had recent training in the safeguarding of pupils. The school has strong links with the local authority, which ensures that it is able to give very high priority to the protection of children. The school has responded systematically to the requirements of the previous interim inspection touching the shortcomings identified in the central register and the records of non-academic staff. These are now in good order.

- 4.18 Fire drills take place regularly and suitable audits have been undertaken. Effective measures are taken regarding pupils' safety in organising the evacuation of the school in case of fire or other hazards. Appropriate risk assessments are prepared for tours, visits and trips. The bursar's department maintains a constant review of the site and has systematic programmes for checking features such as the water supplies, fire safety, electrical safety and the portable equipment used by pupils.
- 4.19 Admission and attendance records are properly maintained and stored.
- 4.20 The facilities for pupils who are sick or injured are excellent. Thorough, systematic records of accidents and of the dispensing of medicines are kept. The first-aid policy is comprehensive and the school has an appropriate number of staff with first-aid qualifications.

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

- 4.21 The overall quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.22 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are articulate and confident, and demonstrate very positive attitudes to school life. Their views and opinions influence the running of the houses. Fundraising for local charities is an important element in boarding which encourages pupils to look beyond their own needs. Boarders are cared for as individuals with different needs, with the consequence that each pupil 'feels significant'. Relationships are excellent: warmth and sincerity between staff and boarders is strongly evident. Boarders take advantage of the many and varied opportunities to accept responsibility. They may help to keep the house kitchen tidy or fulfil the role of prefect or trained listener. Boarders acknowledge that their boarding experience is rich and exciting. Through it they are well prepared for independent life, including, for those in the sixth form, university. Behaviour in the houses is exemplary. Boarders celebrate any cultural differences. Boarders help each other, with older ones assisting younger ones with prep and during social events. Boarders take an active part in the smooth running of their houses; they show remarkable loyalty and pride when speaking about their 'home from home'. They are encouraged to be fit and healthy and take advantage of the excellent facilities available to them.
- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Houses are equipped to a very high standard and are warm, comfortable and well maintained. There is appropriate separation of boys and girls. Each house has a well-stocked kitchen, common room areas which provide for recreational activities and quiet meditation, laundry facilities and spacious study bedrooms. Boarders have a lockable space for their valuables. Many rooms are ensuite in design and there are plenty of bathrooms, showers and toilets. Each house has a television, daily newspapers and periodicals. Some houses have musical equipment. Boarders have a suitable range of activities in the evenings and weekends. Excursions are regularly organised to local towns, the cinema and the theatre. Various facilities for sport and recreation are frequently available on site. The school's excellent facilities, to which boarders have access, include the swimming pool where there is a qualified member of staff on duty during the week and a trained lifeguard at weekends.
- 4.24 The house staff is experienced, committed and dedicated. Boarders feel very safe and secure. New boarders are welcomed into their houses and take part in an introductory weekend of activities and team games.



- 4.25 Boarders are aware they have a wide range of adults to whom they can turn for help and guidance. Each boarder has a personal academic tutor and there are two school counsellors and a chaplain. All houses display comprehensive information and contact details for various outside agencies such as Childline, the Children's Rights Director and the Samaritans. House staff are readily available overnight should the need arise. Mobile numbers are exchanged so that boarders can call staff for assistance or advice when they are out. Younger boarders go out in threes and they are aware that this is for their own safety. Appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and boarders are encouraged to take responsibility to minimise danger to themselves.
- 4.26 Parents can contact their children easily and email is used frequently for the house staff to communicate with parents and vice versa. Boarders are able to contact parents easily.
- 4.27 The new servery in the dining hall helps to create a pleasant environment in which to eat. The salad bar is extremely popular and complements the wide choice of main meals available to boarders. Food is plentiful, nutritious and well-cooked, and those with special dietary requirements are well catered for. A number of themed menus enhance the dining experience and promotes cultural appreciation.
- 4.28 The comprehensively furnished sanatorium is open 24 hours a day. Qualified nursing staff are employed and pupils can attend at any time. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming. A doctor visits twice a week; there are excellent facilities for visiting practitioners such as physiotherapists and chiropodists. A paramedic and the sanatorium nurse attend sports fixtures to assist in the case of accident or injury. There is a room where pupils can consult the school counsellors confidentially. All medication is correctly and appropriately stored and dispensed with parental consent in place. The arrangements for self-medication are effective and the confidentiality and rights of boarders are respected. Records are properly kept.
- 4.29 There are regular fire drills with all zones and extinguishers checked weekly. Fire logs are up to date and correctly stored. House kitchens are well equipped and the arrangements for boarders' laundry are efficient. The school shop sells uniform, stationery and personal items and staff in the sewing room ensure all boarders' clothes are properly labelled and kept in good repair.
- 4.30 Care for boarders' welfare, health and safety is excellent. All the National Minimum Standards with regard to safeguarding are met. The clear and comprehensive policy encompasses all new pupils, staff, visitors and contract workers alike. The excellent anti-bullying policy promotes an open and trusting atmosphere in the houses. Any incidents of bullying are reported quickly and robust interventions are used to resolve issues. The clear system of rewards and sanctions is understood by all boarders and effectively promotes excellent behaviour. Boarders know when and how to report any concerns. They are extremely confident with regard to speaking with house staff and feel secure in the knowledge that any concern is dealt with promptly.
- 4.31 Excellent systems are in place for signing in and out and house staff are aware of boarders' whereabouts at all times. The safety and welfare of boarders is ensured through the robust and effective communication between house staff and parents, with all appropriate parental permissions obtained. The missing child policy is clear and well understood.

- 4.32 The leadership and management of boarding are excellent. They are reflected in the high quality relationships and the personal development of boarders. Systems and policies are effective. The boarding aims are clearly set out and achieved without exception. The boarding team meets regularly to review and debate provision. The team ensures change and development impacts positively on the boarders. Strong house loyalties, friendly and positive relationships and atmosphere are fostered by dedicated staff, whose holistic care of the whole child is exemplary. The management ensures that its policies are robust, properly implemented, and that they have clear priorities for development. Boarders' views are sought and influence practice.
- 4.33 Parents who responded to the boarding questions of the parental questionnaire are extremely satisfied with the provision and the care their children receive. The boarders themselves echo this sentiment.
- 4.34 The school has responded positively to the recommendations of the 2011 Ofsted boarding report and fully meets all the National Minimum Standards for boarding.

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

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

- 5.1 The governance of the school is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is outstandingly well led. It provides the school with a forward-looking sense of strategic direction and it exercises its role generously, supportively and carefully. It has a very good insight into the school.
- 5.3 The arrangements for governance and the structure of the governing body are appropriate. The governors bring a wide range of experience to their work, including financial and pastoral expertise, that of property and employment law, and experience of higher education. Governors are well informed about the school through regular briefings by the head master and other senior staff and by periodic parental surveys. Many of the more local governors come into school not just for major events, but also to be involved in the classroom activities of the school.
- 5.4 The governors have a suitable and well-established system of sub-committees covering finance, estates, human resources, future planning and marketing. Through these committees there is effective oversight of the school in line with its aims, and the responsibilities for standards, financial planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and learning resources are discharged at a high level. The board lacks a formal structure for regularly reviewing the teaching and the curriculum but is currently considering how best to move forward on this. The governors understand clearly their legal obligations with regard to the independent schools' regulations and to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding. They make use of an external consultant to advise on the wording of policies. There is a particular governor with a responsibility for pupil safeguarding who takes an annual report to the board for their consideration.
- 5.5 All new governors are invited to attend sessions at the school to be familiarised with the teaching and learning environment and the bursarial systems. All governors are routinely provided with details of professionally organised training events and a list of attendance is maintained.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 Leadership is, at virtually all of levels of the school, excellent and enables the school to fulfil its educational aims in terms of maintaining a strong academic profile and preparing the pupils to take their place in the modern world through a broad curriculum. The excellent leadership and management of pastoral care ensures that all pupils, both boarding and day, can develop and grow in a diverse and mutually supportive community where each pupil can develop his or her interest without fear of prejudice or isolation.
- 5.8 The senior managers form a very effective and dynamic team, which has worked closely with the governors to evaluate the school's development in recent years and to establish a set of well-defined priorities for the future in order to meet a diverse set

of aims. Future plans are currently under review following the arrival of the new head master.

- 5.9 The leadership and management responded to the action points of the previous full inspection by conducting an effective review of work-life balance with the teaching staff, which has resulted in additional support staff being appointed, thus enabling teachers to focus more exclusively on teaching and learning, both inside and outside the classroom. The staff appraisal scheme has also been reviewed and now sits alongside an annual academic and pastoral review for all middle management, and individual teachers. However these two schemes are not efficiently dovetailed. The school does not yet have an established culture of sharing good practice between academic departments, including opportunities for mutual lesson observation.
- 5.10 The senior management teams have increased significantly the monitoring of middle management through annual academic and pastoral review. However, this process is not yet sufficiently robust to ensure marking is of consistently high quality.
- 5.11 Effective communication between different levels of management enables informed decisions to be made which enhance the quality of education experienced by the pupils. Teaching staff are well supported in their different roles across the school by both middle and senior managers. Middle managers recognise the overriding importance of monitoring, supporting and developing their staff.
- 5.12 The senior management team, working closely with appropriate middle managers, has been very successful in recruiting, supporting, developing and motivating high quality staff. The school responded to the action points of the previous interim inspection by reviewing the central register and making the checks carried out on non-academic staff more robust. Great importance is paid to ensuring that staff are appropriately trained in welfare, health and safety needs. Staff who are new to the school take part in an extensive and well-planned induction programme, which enables them to carry out their roles effectively from a very early stage. The use of staff mentors is particularly valued by staff who are relatively new to the school.
- 5.13 Parents are very satisfied with the education and support provided by the school, as shown in the very positive comments in the parental questionnaire, and the views of the sample of parents interviewed by the inspection team. Parents praised the broad academic curriculum, the wide range of opportunities and the ways in which the school creates a genuine co-educational ethos. The school maintains very constructive relationships with parents with concerns relating to both academic progress and pastoral matters being addressed rapidly, effectively and sensitively. The school is described as being very willing to listen and take appropriate action. Parents are involved fully in the work of the school through annual parents' evenings and being invited to attend social events, concerts, matches and plays. Parents appreciated the way in which meetings can be arranged when required, and often at short notice, to discuss academic matters or learning support issues with appropriate staff.
- 5.14 New parents are provided with a full range of information about the school, including all that is required, and induction events are provided for both parents and pupils. The way in which Year 7 pupils were made welcome and helped to enjoy their first few days was especially appreciated. Parents receive regular, detailed reports covering pupils' progress and attainment and these, together with a wealth of other information, can be accessed effectively over the intranet and the recently introduced parent portal. Parents were very keen to commend the school on the

ways in which it encourages all pupils to participate and achieve, and how well it makes them feel valued as individuals.

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