



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ETON COLLEGE

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Eton College

Full Name of School	Eton College
DfE Number	868/6016
Registered Charity Number	1139086
Address	Eton College Eton Windsor Berkshire SL4 6DW
Telephone Number	01753 370100
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Email Address	headmaster@etoncollege.org.uk
Head Master	Mr Simon Henderson
Provost	The Lord Waldegrave of North Hill
Age Range	12 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	1320
Gender of Pupils	Boys
Numbers by Age	12-18: 1320
Number of Boarders	Total: 1320 Full: 1320
Inspection Dates	15 Mar 2016 to 18 Mar 2016

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. 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 November 2013 and the previous ISI standard inspection was in April 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

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 Provost, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. 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 Stephen Cole	Reporting Inspector
Mr Marcus Cliff Hodges	Team Inspector (Deputy Warden, HMC school)
Mr Kevin Fear	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Shaun Fenton	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school))
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Dr John Guntrip	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Sean Hamill	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Andrew Ireson	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Dr David Lamper	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr John Pearson	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Pugh	Team Inspector (Senior Deputy Headmaster, HMC school)
Dr Michael Ransome	Team Inspector (Assistant Head, HMC school)
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Mr Michael Brewer	Team Inspector for Boarding (Director of Compliance, HMC school)
Mr Paul Johnstone	Team Inspector for Boarding (Chaplain and Housemaster, maintained boarding school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor, customarily referred to as Eton College, was founded by King Henry VI in 1440 and is a boarding school for boys from the ages of 12 to 18. Its buildings and fields occupy most of the town. The school room called Lower School has been in continuous use since the 1440s, as has the chapel since its completion in 1482. The school's governing body comprises the Provost, the Vice-Provost and 10 Fellows. The Provost is resident at Eton and acts as the chair of governors. The Vice-Provost is also resident.
- 1.2 The school's aims are to promote the best habits of independent thought and learning in the pursuit of excellence; to provide a broadly based education designed to enable all boys to discover their strengths; to enable boys to make the most of their talents within the school and beyond; to engender respect for individuality, difference, the importance of teamwork and the contribution that each boy makes to the life of the school and the community; to support pastoral care that nurtures physical health, emotional maturity and spiritual richness; and to foster self-confidence, enthusiasm, perseverance, tolerance and integrity.
- 1.3 Since the previous boarding inspection the current head master, and a clerk and legal advisor to the governing body have been appointed. A centre for innovation and research in learning (CIRL) has been opened. A modern foreign languages (MFL), economics and divinity building has been constructed which also includes a 280-seat auditorium and museum gallery.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection the school had 1320 pupils on roll. All board in either College or 1 of 24 other boarding houses sited throughout the town. Some pupils eat all meals in their own houses, whilst others dine centrally. Most pupils are British; there are 38 other nationalities with those from the United States forming the next largest group.
- 1.5 The ability profile of the school is well above the national average and above the national average for pupils in sixth form education. English is spoken as an additional language by 80 pupils but none require specific support. The school has identified 95 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). No pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or statement of special educational needs, but 88 receive additional support for their learning from the school.
- 1.6 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 NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
F Block	9
E Block	10
D Block	11
C Block	12
B Block	13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school very successfully fulfils its aims of achieving excellence, encouraging innovation, and supporting partnership within and outside the school community. The achievement of pupils is exceptional. Progress and abilities of all pupils are at a high level. Pupils are highly successful in public examinations, and the record of entrance to universities with demanding entry requirements in the United Kingdom and overseas is strong. Pupils have exceptionally developed attitudes to learning. They relish the increased opportunities for independent work provided following the recommendation of the previous inspection. Pupils are committed to the many prize essays and intellectual challenges which the school provides. Their strong skills in public speaking and logical thought are reflected in the long-standing record of success in debating, and pupils have a sophisticated working vocabulary. In response to a recommendation from the previous inspection, pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) beneficially in their learning. The achievement of pupils in art, drama, music and sport mirrors their academic success. The exceptional achievement of pupils is supported by excellent teaching and a curriculum that fully meets their needs. Teachers' subject knowledge is outstanding and they convey a passionate enthusiasm for their subject. They are unafraid to challenge the most able pupils intellectually. Support for those with SEND is excellent, but recommended strategies to benefit them are included inconsistently in curriculum and lesson planning.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development matches their achievement. Pupils are self-assured but without arrogance. They are poised, empathetic and have well-informed moral and social views. The pupils' views are securely based on the respect and tolerance that permeate the community. Pupils support each other, and the house system reinforces the collaboration across different ages. The quality of pastoral care and the contribution of boarding are excellent. Housemasters and other staff have an incisive knowledge of the needs of each pupil which strongly supports their academic and personal development. The personal health and social education programme (PSHE) is thorough, but it is inconsistently delivered across tutor groups. Pupils' health, safety and well-being are afforded a high priority, and the school is actively involved in addressing the changing needs of adolescents in the area of mental health. The quality of the food, although plentiful and nutritious, can vary between and in houses.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is excellent. All recommendations and the requirement of previous inspections have been met. Safeguarding arrangements are strong including those regarding safer recruitment, and receive proper attention by the leadership and management of the school. Senior leaders and governors provide strong support to the achievement of high-quality academic education and pastoral care. Governors have invested significantly in the school. They and senior leaders provide clear strategic direction but the autonomous nature of the school, whilst allowing independence and innovation, can lead to unevenness in some areas.

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) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
 - 1. Reinforce monitoring structures to improve consistency in the academic and pastoral provision.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is exceptional.
- 3.2 The school fulfils its aim to promote the best habits of independent thought and learning in the pursuit of excellence. Pupils demonstrate outstanding application of knowledge, understanding and skills in an extremely broad array of both curricular and extra-curricular activities. In English and MFL lessons the working vocabulary and fluency of expression used by the pupils is exceptional. Pupils analyse arguments carefully and are incisive in their questioning. Written work is well researched and presented, with the best examples preserved in the archives to inspire others. Pupils display excellent knowledge and application of mathematical skills across a range of subjects. They use technology with confidence. In design lessons, pupils used software to demonstrate inventive application of core knowledge. The quality of product design is exceptional. In response to a recommendation from the previous inspection, pupils use ICT beneficially in many subjects.
- 3.3 The quality of musical performance is outstanding at all ages. Both the school orchestra and the chapel choir have undertaken recent overseas tours and the jazz musicians recently performed at a high-profile London jazz club. The excellent quality of artwork within the school reflects the breadth of the pupils' creative talent. Over 500 pupils a year appear in school or house drama productions. The best productions have been performed in London theatres, and the school has a strong record in national playwriting competitions. Pupils' sophisticated skills in public speaking and logical thought are reflected in the long-standing record of success in debating. The school team regularly wins national tournaments. Pupils' organisation and independence are evident in the number of activities that they initiate; they raise very large sums for charity. The extent of sporting success is notable. In recent years, pupil rowers have won national regattas and many have been selected for national rowing teams. Pupils have been international representatives at rugby and football, and national individual champions in sports ranging from tennis to fencing and from golf to rackets.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national and international data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent years for which comparative statistics are available. Results at both GCSE and A level are exceptional when compared with results for boys in maintained schools and above the national average for boys in maintained selective schools at GCSE, and well above the national average for this group at A level. Results in 2015 maintain this level of attainment. Dependent on subject, pupils are entered in either Pre-U or A level examinations. No national comparisons are available, but the proportion of the highest grades achieved indicates that success in Pre-U examinations at least matches and possibly exceeds that at A level.
- 3.5 These levels of attainment, confirmed by standardised measures that are available and inspection evidence, indicate that pupils' progress including that of the most able is high in relation to those of similar abilities. An overwhelming majority of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaire responses indicated that they are pleased with the progress that pupils make. Analysis of the data indicates that pupils identified as having SEND perform in line with other pupils in public examinations and in their progress throughout the school. The excellent progress

made by all pupils was mirrored in the inspection's scrutiny of work, lesson observations and numerous interviews with pupils. In their questionnaire responses almost all pupils expressed that they are making good progress with their work.

- 3.6 Almost all pupils leaving the school progress to selective universities. Over the last three years around a third have achieved places at universities with highly demanding entry requirements, including several who have won organ and choral scholarships. A significant number of pupils secure places at universities or colleges overseas, in particular in the United States.
- 3.7 Pupils of all abilities have exceptionally developed attitudes to learning. The mutual intellectual respect between pupils and their teachers, and between pupils and their peers promotes rapid learning. Pupils display both a thirst and a skill for independent thought and study, and demonstrate initiative in their studies. They have an appetite for the many essay competitions and academic prizes available at all ages. Pupils' submissions reflect their sophistication and knowledge. They undertake ambitious independent work from an early age and show strong perseverance. Pupils are enthusiastic in the classroom, collaborate eagerly, and display enjoyment in the myriad of activities to which they have access.

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 well-planned curriculum is suitably challenging for the pupils' ages and ability. It successfully meets the school's aim to enable all boys to discover their strengths, and to make the most of their talents. The curriculum covers all required areas and is regularly reviewed. The needs of the most able pupils are stimulated by the width of the curriculum and in the planning of approaches in examination courses. Pupils with SEND receive specialist bespoke support although their individual needs are not recognised in the planning of all schemes of work and lessons.
- 3.10 During their first year, pupils study a core of subjects that includes two MFL and optional Greek. Most pupils study ten GCSE subjects from an extensive range of options. In the sixth form, pupils choose from twenty-five subjects in a mixture of A level and Pre-U courses. Almost all A level courses prepare for a final examination to suit the pupils' high levels of ability and application. The sixth form academic curriculum is further enhanced by varied one-term courses which contrast and complement pupils' examination subjects. The recommendation of the previous inspection to continue to promote the best habits of independent thought and learning has been met by the opening of the CIRL which enhances the curriculum through, for example, enabling the exploration of a blend of online learning and one-to-one tuition.
- 3.11 Tutor groups are used to discuss some elements of PSHE. The programme is enhanced by a series of lectures, often from leaders in the relevant field. In interview, pupils spoke positively about the programmes but revealed inconsistencies in the content covered by different tutor groups. The school has further improved its careers education since the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 9 and 10 profile their interests. Work experience, psychometric profiling, and careers advice and lectures are offered from Year 11 onwards.
- 3.12 The curriculum is enriched by the outstanding environment in which pupils are taught. Lessons routinely take place in the chapel, archives, college library and in the school's natural history museum. The educational experience of pupils is further

widened by the opportunity to attend an enormous range of societies that widen their perspective. Debating is a considerable strength and the pupils enjoy a wide variety of opportunities to listen to and challenge prominent visitors to the school. Many debates are organised by the pupils, and they and the staff strive to ensure a balanced presentation of opposing views in political issues.

- 3.13 The interests and passions of pupils are provided for with an exceptional range of concerts, sports activities, drama and meetings. In their questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of pupils indicated that they can join in a good range of activities. House competitions are the basis of sporting participation, including the keenly contested 'Field Game', where many matches are refereed by the pupils themselves, with appropriate supervision. The school has an extensive programme of community service, and numerous outward bound activities. The school enables pupils to balance the pressure of their eagerness to work hard with making the most of the opportunities offered.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching is highly effective in promoting pupils' progress, clearly fulfilling the school's aim to promote the best habits of independent thought and learning in the pursuit of excellence.
- 3.16 Throughout the school, teachers are highly committed and have exceptional knowledge of and passion for their subject. Almost all teaching is rigorously brisk. Teachers have high expectations, and the planning and style of lessons display awareness of the needs of the most able to be engaged and stretched intellectually. For example, in an English lesson the decision to challenge pupils to analyse a subtle and complex poem about The Holocaust enabled them to display exceptional intellectual agility and maturity in their responses. In their questionnaire responses the vast majority of pupils indicated that they are encouraged to work independently.
- 3.17 Teachers expect pupils of all ages to take responsibility for their own learning and to be independent thinkers. In a drama lesson, pupils were brought together to collaborate in devising their own interpretations of a short scene from *Antony and Cleopatra*. They confidently considered every aspect of language and presentation for themselves, resulting in excellent learning.
- 3.18 Marking is generally detailed, and it offers helpful advice for further improvement. Informative oral feedback frequently accompanies work when it is returned. Some marking lacks constructive comment, and sometimes comments that are made are not followed up to ensure that progress is made.
- 3.19 Since the previous inspection there has been a significant re-structuring of ICT provision and management. Software has been introduced that enables pupils to share their work electronically. Excellent use of ICT in lessons enables pupils to make rapid progress; in MFL, pupils typed in Japanese; in art, stop-frame technology was used to create an animated film; and in music, high-quality resources enabled pupils to manipulate sounds creatively. The use of ICT to enhance teaching is still inconsistent across the school, although the newly opened CIRL has heightened awareness of the teaching opportunities offered by digital technology. The school's excellent teaching resources are exemplified by the high specification of new classrooms, the debating hall and the extensive technical support available in science.

- 3.20 The excellent specialist one-to-one lessons for pupils with SEND support them to achieve in line with other pupils. In class, teaching approaches are not routinely adjusted to cater for individuals' special needs in accordance with information supplied by the learning support department.
- 3.21 In the treatment of political issues, teaching is non-partisan and all lessons promote tolerance and respect for others. Topics such as radical feminism are introduced to pupils with balance and academic rigour.

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 The extremely well-developed personalities of the pupils match their exceptional achievement. The school's aim to engender respect for individuality, difference and the contribution that each boy makes to the life of the school and the community is met. Pupils show pride in the school and their boarding house.
- 4.3 Pupils successfully develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. Many develop strong spiritual awareness from attendance in chapel, and from living and learning in the school's historical surroundings. All feel included in the life of the school whatever their faith or views. Many pupils gain spiritual strength from a range of faith groups, including one for all faiths and none. The pupils' development demonstrates the respect and tolerance which permeate the community. Pupils spoke of the calmness that they find in the library and their use of the gardens for quiet reflection. Others enjoy opportunities for external retreats organised by the school.
- 4.4 Pupils display a strong sense of right and wrong through their consideration for each other. This is demonstrated routinely by their conduct in lessons and around the school and town. They understand the need for and respect the rule of law at all levels, showing an understanding of the civil and criminal law of England. Pupils are quick to accept responsibility for their actions. They speak informally and intelligently about moral and political challenges, and are highly empathetic to circumstances of other young people beyond their community.
- 4.5 Pupils possess an extremely well-developed social awareness. They are knowledgeable about current affairs, and the school promotes pupils' development of a broad general knowledge of the public institutions and services of England. A discussion on Britain's position in the European Union reflected a deep and balanced awareness of the issues. Pupils listen to each other's thoughts, consider alternative stances and then question their own views. They are aware of the need to combat discrimination on grounds of gender, sexuality or ethnicity, and combat strongly any discriminatory views that they discover. Pupils display compassion towards each other during their daily routines as well as in times of difficulty. Large sums are raised for charitable causes. Older pupils have the opportunity to assume positions of responsibility and they fulfil their duties with a sense of purpose. Younger pupils in Year 10 support new pupils as mentors. Pupils take the initiative to establish and run many activities that the school offers. They enjoy participation in community service, for example by helping out at local junior schools and working in charity shops. Some houses have strongly developed links with schools and charity projects in Asia and South America.
- 4.6 Pupils develop a strong cultural awareness by participating in or attending the many and varied opportunities in art, drama and music. Academic societies, debates and lectures all contribute significantly to their experience. Pupils visited Zambia to gain insight into the contrast of life between rural Africa and the western world. Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of the range of fundamental British values through PSHE lessons, visits and lectures from eminent speakers in the political, economic and legal fields. They respect the process of democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty as an essential part of British cultural tradition. Pupils are

tolerant of different cultural traditions and are acquiring appreciation of, and a respect for, their own and other cultures.

- 4.7 Pupils become self-confident, with a high level of self-esteem devoid of arrogance. They are articulate and interesting in conversation. By the time they leave the school, pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their life.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 The high quality of pastoral care is the foundation on which the pupils develop excellent personal qualities. Boarding houses both provide and promote a strong sense of identity and security, and enable pupils to form friendships across year groups. Housemasters very effectively oversee and monitor the pastoral care of pupils. Other house staff have well-defined roles and all work very closely and co-operatively to further enhance care and guidance for individual pupils. Pupils find staff caring and they know whom to approach for guidance on particular issues. Chaplains of all faiths support the pupils' spiritual development.
- 4.10 Relationships between pupils are supportive and collaborative. The school is very effective in promoting high standards of behaviour, and the anti-bullying policy is rigorous and well understood by pupils. Pupils report that very few instances of bullying or cyberbullying occur, and this is supported by documentation. In the few incidents that do arise, pupils say that effective measures are put in place very quickly. In their responses to the questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils said that teachers are fair in the way they issue rewards. A very small minority said that they thought teachers are not fair in the awarding of sanctions, inspection evidence gained from discussions with pupils and scrutiny of records does not support this view.
- 4.11 The school promotes good physical and mental health. Pupils' mental health is supported by a team of professionals, and their physical well-being by plentiful healthy food and extensive opportunities for physical exercise.
- 4.12 In their questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils indicated that they do not feel the school listens to their concerns. Pupils acknowledge the presence of numerous informal and formal channels of communications such as the head master's regular open-door sessions and year-group forums, but they are not always clear of the school's response to their concerns.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND which is reviewed and evaluated regularly.

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 affords very high priority to the safeguarding of pupils of all ages. Leadership of the arrangements is strong and co-ordinated well. The school has a close relationship with local agencies and procedures are in line with official guidance. All staff training is up to date and at an appropriate level, including for those with specific responsibilities. The strong lines of communication in the school ensure that all potential safeguarding issues are reported quickly. Teaching and pastoral staff have a sharp awareness of pupils at risk of harm or in need. The recruitment of mental-health professionals reflects the school's enlightened awareness of the academic and social pressures on adolescent boys.
- 4.16 Safer recruitment procedures are methodically carried out and recorded in the single central register of appointments. Visiting speakers are checked to ensure that they do not promote extreme views. The school regularly reviews its filtering software to prevent access to inappropriate websites. In response to the recommendation of the previous inspection, the discussion of the governors' annual review of safeguarding is now recorded in greater detail.
- 4.17 Scrupulous health and safety procedures are followed and monitored in every aspect of school life. Extensive security precautions limit the risk to pupils in a school whose thoroughfares are accessible to the public. Emergency procedures are practised regularly. All necessary actions are taken to reduce risk from fire and other dangers. Fire testing and evacuation drills are held regularly and procedures reviewed. Records are comprehensive and reflect the school's sharp focus on further reducing risk. Accident reports are detailed and trends are monitored by senior leaders.
- 4.18 The provision for sick pupils including those with SEND is excellent. The health centre is well staffed by qualified nurses and doctors, and a large proportion of staff are first-aid trained. The first-aid policy is clear and medicines are securely stored.
- 4.19 Admission registers are efficiently completed and archived. Pupils are registered appropriately and any unexplained absence is immediately followed up.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarding makes a very strong contribution to the pupils' personal development. Pupils are confident, caring individuals who engage as easily and thoughtfully with adults as they do with each other. They develop confidence and self-reliance through the wide range of activities open to them in boarding. Pupils' poise, resilience and manner are further enhanced through their interaction with ambitious, articulate and like-minded peers.
- 4.22 Pupils make a positive contribution to the running of houses and societies. They report they have numerous channels of communication through which to effect changes within their houses, and they stress the ease with which they can report concerns. Pupils regard housemasters and other house staff as approachable, and as sources of wisdom, advice and encouragement. Prefects have specific duties and receive specific training for their roles in supporting staff in ensuring the smooth running of the house. Relationships among pupils of all ages and backgrounds, and

between pupils and staff are excellent. These values are reinforced in the breadth of house events in which pupils are involved. The behaviour of pupils is excellent. Pupils enjoy physical activity and lead healthy lives. They report that the ready availability of staff and resources throughout the week and at weekends enables them to further their interests in all areas of school life. In their questionnaire responses, the very large majority of pupils said that they enjoyed boarding.

- 4.23 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. Needs of individual pupils are met at all stages. The relationship between the boarding house and home develops prior to a pupil joining the school, through regular contact and visits. Communication between home and school is excellent. Pupils can contact home as they wish, and parents say that it is easy to contact the school. Parents frequently attend houses to meet the staff and to support events such as house plays or concerts. Pupils receive contact details for the independent listener and outside agencies.
- 4.24 All houses have well-equipped medical rooms, where the dame may see patients and provide appropriate treatment and care. More serious matters are referred to the health centre which can provide overnight care. This excellent facility provides comfortable accommodation at all hours for pupils who are unwell. Pupils' confidentiality and rights are respected. The school has clear, effective and meticulously applied policies regarding medical care of pupils including the administration, recording and storage of medicines. An excellent system of communication between houses and the health centre ensures that all relevant staff are kept informed. The pupils speak very highly of the care that they receive.
- 4.25 The 25 houses provide a consistently high standard of accommodation. They are well maintained, clean, brightly lit and comfortable. All have a kitchen and generous recreation space for each year group. Pupils' rooms are private and can be personalised. Entrance to houses is secure. Washing facilities are of a good quality, afford suitable privacy and are more than sufficient in number. The central laundry is run by a highly efficient team who ensure the prompt return of thousands of items of clothing to the appropriate pupils each day. Pupils can easily buy personal items in the town, and have the opportunity for lockable storage. In their questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils indicated dissatisfaction with the food. The inspection found the food to be plentiful and nutritious, but inconsistent in the quality across the houses. The caterers are fully aware of any special dietary requirements. Pupils are pleased with the ample snacks provided.
- 4.26 Each house has a risk assessment written with guidance from the school's health and safety department. The health and safety policy is implemented effectively to ensure that pupils are kept safe. The school has addressed the regulatory failing of the previous boarding inspection; fire precautions and procedures are suitably followed with regular and recorded drills carried out in all houses.
- 4.27 Pupils derive great benefit from the school's extensive extra-curricular programme. They enjoy a wide range of sporting, cultural and creative activities on every day of the week, but report that they also have sufficient self-directed time.
- 4.28 The effectiveness of arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety is excellent. The school's safeguarding policy is rigorously followed. The single central register is well-maintained, with robust safer recruitment procedures in operation. All adults living in boarding accommodation are appropriately checked. Visitors are closely supervised. Staff are carefully inducted and receive ongoing training in safeguarding

issues. Supervision arrangements are appropriate for pupils who have access to a large site. Pupils' attendance is registered at appropriate intervals throughout the day. Routines for signing in and out, and for contacting pupils in an emergency are well established.

- 4.29 The atmosphere in each house promotes healthy relationships amongst pupils, who are highly supportive of one another. Pupils report that bullying is very rare. They are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and their own actions. The issuing of rewards and sanctions is fair and has a positive impact. High standards of behaviour were evident in all houses.
- 4.30 The leadership and management of boarding are excellent. Governors and senior leaders actively promote pupils' well-being and have initiated a plan to further improve the quality of accommodation. Compliance with the boarding welfare regulations is closely monitored. The related school policies are comprehensive, regularly reviewed and effectively implemented. All boarding staff have job descriptions that reflect their duties, receive detailed induction training and undertake regular reviews of their practice. Housemasters and dames are zealous in their support of pupils, whom with their parents receive a high standard of attention. The relationship between housemaster and parent is personal but professional. The excellent level of pastoral care is sustained by school investment in boarding appointments and professional development of staff.
- 4.31 The overall excellence of the boarding provision is reflected in questionnaire responses; almost all parents expressed confidence in boarding and indicated that their children enjoyed boarding life. In interview, pupils said that they enjoy the school's extensive academic, sporting, cultural and recreational resources. They report easy access to senior staff, and feel able to express their opinions in boarding houses.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is extremely effective in continuing to support the school's aim of maintaining its record of excellence, innovation and partnership. Governors have an exceptional knowledge of the school. Regular presentations on all areas of school life are made by staff before governors' meetings. The Provost and Vice-Provost are an integral part of school life, providing daily support in strategic areas. Governors are regularly briefed between meetings. They include specialists with a wide range of skills. Governors have supported many initiatives to enhance pupils' learning in the pursuit of excellence, such as the CIRL and by funding increased pastoral care to support those with mental-health issues. They have strong oversight of the school's finances which has enabled the school to invest heavily in excellent facilities such as the debating hall, and to establish a bursary programme.
- 5.3 The governing body provides excellent support and appropriate challenge to the head master. It has a well-informed understanding of the key strategic challenges facing the school, and a standing committee has started to review the strategic plan. Governors have excellent oversight of the school's compliance with regulation and regularly review school policies. They undertake a robust annual review of safeguarding as well as health and safety. The recommendation from the previous inspection advising that governors record in greater detail the actions taken in reviewing the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding policy and its implementation has been met. Discussions focus on further improving this already strong aspect of school life. The governors fully understand their legal responsibilities to monitor, and have undertaken an external audit of child-protection procedures. All governors have appropriate child-protection training.

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

- 5.4 The leadership and management of the school, including links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent.
- 5.5 Leadership is further developing the enduring success of the school from a position of considerable strength. The senior leadership team very effectively oversees the routine administration of the school. Leadership at all levels sets the tone in promoting the development of confident, independently minded pupils in a stimulating and supportive atmosphere where they are able to build a clear sense of moral, social, cultural and spiritual responsibility. The management of pastoral staff and of boarding is excellent. Pupils benefit from an approach that encourages high levels of supported independence. They are enabled to thrive, have an admirable work ethic, and demonstrate a full range of fine personal qualities and exemplary learning characteristics. Respect for others and for democracy is promoted by the leadership and clearly evident in the ethos of the school.
- 5.6 Leadership and management are informed, assured and effective. Recently introduced approaches to self-evaluation and development planning are helping the school further fulfil its ambitious aims to promote more effectively a clear and compelling vision of a balance between excellence, innovation and partnership. The

autonomy enjoyed by teaching and pastoral staff engenders innovation. The result is a highly committed staff body who feel motivated, valued and willing to improve. The school is aware that autonomy can lead to inconsistency of approach, and of the need to monitor some areas of school life more consistently. In this way it seeks to underpin its success in providing a distinctive high quality education. Pupils benefit from excellent teaching, outstanding pastoral care and exceptional extra-curricular opportunities. The consequent personal development of pupils creates a school community of modest self-effacing confidence.

- 5.7 The previous inspection recommended a review of staff appraisal. An extensive yearly review of the performance of teaching and pastoral staff has been introduced, to the benefit of the pupils' achievement and personal development. The school has very effective procedures regarding the recruitment and induction of new staff and governors, and for ensuring their suitability. All staff are appropriately trained in their roles in safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety before appointment. Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, which are monitored effectively and work well.
- 5.8 The school has a clear sense of direction. A strong consensus around values and priorities shapes the agenda for a series of committees and development plans covering areas such as education, finances, and pastoral care. Within the context of exceptional achievement, the school recognises some variation in management approaches and the importance of strengthening lines of accountability and developing processes for self-evaluation to support the implementation of strategic priorities, for example in the use of data to inform in-class strategies to support pupils with SEND.
- 5.9 Leadership is committed to promoting further academic excellence by placing an emphasis on developing teaching that is based on research and innovation. The benefits to pupils in the school are also shared with external partners and a diverse outreach programme locally, nationally and internationally. This provides the pupils with excellent opportunities for cultural and social personal development, such as in the leadership of choirs in partner schools.
- 5.10 The school maintains an excellent relationship with parents, reflecting the school's aim to respect the individuality of every pupil. A strong framework for regular and bespoke parental communication is promoted through the houses. Parents receive informative termly newsletters, and many houses use digital social media to present a more regular insight into house life. Senior staff have recently surveyed the views of parents to inform strategic planning.
- 5.11 Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about every aspect of the quality of the education and support provided for their children. The school provides the required information along with a range of detailed documentation for parents of prospective and current pupils. Following the recent parent survey, the school is enhancing its website in order to facilitate access to information and to provide a more dynamic source of news about the school.
- 5.12 The school's complaints policy is appropriate, clear and effective, and the school deals with any concerns promptly and sensitively in accordance with this.
- 5.13 Parents are encouraged by the school to be actively involved in their children's education and development, and enjoy regular visits to a range of sporting, musical and drama activities at both school and house level.

- 5.14 Suitably frequent reports to parents include opportunities for pupils' self-evaluation in dialogue with their teachers. Personalised letters from housemasters and tutors display a strong understanding of individual pupils. Parents value the clarity and care of reporting, and in response to a recent survey indicated that they would prefer greater frequency of issue. Throughout the pupil's life at the school, parents are invited to a range of information and consultation events.

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