



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION  
PANGBOURNE COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Pangbourne College

Full Name of School	<b>Pangbourne College</b>		
DfE Number	<b>869/6005</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>309096</b>		
Address	<b>Pangbourne College Pangbourne Reading Berkshire RG8 8LA</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01189 842101</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01189 845443</b>		
Email Address	<b>susie.belcher@pangcoll.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Thomas J C Garnier</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Rear Admiral Roger Lane-Nott CB</b>		
Age Range	<b>11 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>381</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (268 boys; 113 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	11–16	<b>249</b>	
	16–18	<b>132</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>180</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>201</b>	
	Full:	<b>103</b>	Weekly: <b>98</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>18 Mar 2014 to 21 Mar 2014</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 April 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited 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 Joe Tierney	Reporting Inspector
Ms Alana Davidson	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Kathryn Benson-Dugdale	Team Inspector (Senior Tutor, HMC school)
Mr Robert Carlisle	Team Inspector (Head, GSA school)
Dr Francis Clough	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Magnus Cowie	Team Inspector (Acting Head, HMC school)
Mr Andrew Gist	Team Inspector (Senior Teacher, HMC school)
Mr Ian Robertson	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mr Jonathan Shaw	Team Inspector for Boarding

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Pangbourne College is a boarding and day school for boys and girls, situated in extensive grounds of 230 acres just outside the village of Pangbourne, which is six miles to the west of Reading.
- 1.2 It was founded in 1917 by the Devitt and Moore shipping company as The Nautical College, Pangbourne, with the purpose of educating young men to serve as officers in the Royal and Merchant Navies. Its formal association with the sea was severed in 1969 when it became Pangbourne College, but the school still retains naval traditions in that pupils wear Royal Naval uniform and a strong ceremonial tradition has been maintained. Girls were first admitted in 1990; there are twice as many boys as girls. In 2000 the school became the home for the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, the national memorial to the Falklands war. Since the previous inspection, the facilities for art, the library and science have been extended and extra teaching accommodation for music and information and communication technology (ICT) provided.
- 1.3 The school is registered as a charity and its work is overseen by a board of governors. The main board has four sub-committees: finance and general purposes; property; marketing, and education, which also covers pastoral matters.
- 1.4 In line with its traditions, the school aims to emphasise teamwork, leadership, self-discipline and service. It aims to help pupils enjoy and succeed at learning, and has identified 'flag values' of kindness, selflessness, moral courage, industry, initiative, resilience and integrity which it seeks to promote. As a school with a Christian ethos, it aims to present a sensitive and relevant framework of values and opportunities for pupils and to prepare them for 'a life that has meaning within a world that makes sense'.
- 1.5 Pupils are a mix of locally, nationally and internationally based boys and girls. Almost all are white British, but a small number come from Europe, China, Russia and Africa. At the time of the inspection there were 381 pupils on the roll, including 132 in the sixth form. There were 268 boys and 113 girls, with 201 boarders. Boarders in Years 7 and 8 are placed in a junior house; thereafter they are accommodated in one of four boys' houses or two girls' houses.
- 1.6 There are 122 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 40 receive some support from the school. One pupil has a statement of educational need. Of 31 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), 15 have lessons to improve their language skills.
- 1.7 Pupils may enter the school at ages 11, 13 or 16. The ability profile of those entering at 11 or 13 is slightly above the national average, with most pupils having ability that is above or in line with the national average. The ability of pupils in the sixth form is in line with the national average for those in sixth-form education, with a spread similar to the national distribution.

- 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 Pangbourne College has a well-developed sense of purpose and a strong ethos which successfully reflect its principal aims. The result is that its pupils are well-rounded individuals who are caring and confident and demonstrate excellent personal development. They benefit from excellent pastoral care, with the boarders enjoying living in a comfortable and friendly family atmosphere, although responses to the pupils' views are not always given clearly. Pupils are offered an excellent, broad curriculum which enables them to progress academically and contributes to their overall personal development by encouraging them to succeed in sport, music, drama and various other pursuits, both at an academic level and through their leisure activities.
- 2.2 Pupils achieve well, particularly in activities. Attainment in public examinations, both at GCSE and A level, is in line with pupils' abilities and showed improvement in 2013. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good, with some outstanding teaching evident. This means that pupils are making good progress in their learning. This is helped by their good attitudes to learning and the strong relationships between pupils and staff. Although teaching is strong, the planning of mainstream lessons does not always cater for pupils of all abilities, or include imaginative use of ICT. The specific provision for pupils with SEND or with EAL is very effective and so these pupils make good progress. The planning for pupils who are able, gifted or talented is in its infancy.
- 2.3 Leadership and management at all levels are good. The senior staff are good role models for pupils and reinforce the school's ethos through their attitude and work. Policies and practices are well established. The welfare, health and safety of pupils is very secure, as are the arrangements for their safeguarding. The recent changes in the structure of management are beginning to bear fruit. Middle management is supported well and the monitoring of their work is raising standards, although practice is not yet fully consistent, including in boarding. Excellent governance ensures that the school continues to make progress. Governors provide good oversight of areas where they have legal responsibilities. They have overseen a continual improvement in staffing, accommodation and resources.
- 2.4 Good progress has been made since the previous inspection, including in meeting the recommendations of that inspection. Of particular note is the improvement in the environment for learning and better teaching. The specific provision for pupils with SEND and EAL has also improved, as have the curricular opportunities for all pupils. The recommendation of the previous inspection to use ICT more imaginatively remains valid.

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

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

- 2.5 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.6 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

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

- 2.7 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Improve teaching through more imaginative use of ICT, and by ensuring the needs of pupils of all abilities are met in classes.
  2. Define more clearly the management of boarding and ensure that monitoring leads to consistent practice.
  3. Ensure that the pupils' opinions are effectively responded to, where appropriate.

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

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning are good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. In both their academic and extra-curricular work they show a good level of subject skills and understanding in line with their age and ability.
- 3.3 Pupils are articulate and confident speakers; they respect each others' views, write well, and enjoy opportunities for creative writing. In particular, sixth formers write at length and produce well-organised files. Their good reading skills are supported by the comprehensive reading scheme offered to younger pupils by the English department. The pupils' skills in numeracy are appropriate to their age and sixth formers are particularly adept at applying their mathematical skills, for example in science. However, some low ability pupils are weak at mental arithmetic and this restricts their progress in mathematics. Pupils have been successful in winning a range of medals in prestigious mathematic challenges and benefit from their attendance at mathematics clubs. In modern foreign languages, pupils showed a clear understanding of the purpose of their work. Pupils are able to conduct practical work in science, although their experience of this varies from class to class. Their skills in ICT enable them to carry out research from reliable sources and use it to present their project work.
- 3.4 In the period from 2010 to 2012, the most recent for which national comparisons can be made, results at GCSE were above the average for maintained schools. The GCSE results for 2013 were the best achieved by the school, when one in three grades were at A\*/A level. In this year, girls attained significantly higher results than boys at A\*/A level. In the International GCSE (IGCSE), results in English Language, mathematics, and business studies are higher than worldwide norms, with business studies and mathematics also being similar to UK norms. English literature results are similar to worldwide norms, and results in sciences are lower than worldwide norms. At A level, results were similar to those of maintained schools over the period from 2010 to 2012; in 2013 nearly half of grades awarded were at A\* to B. These levels of attainment show that pupils make progress in line with expectations.
- 3.5 Pupils with SEND and EAL make good progress. Many excel, particularly in subjects requiring creativity, or sporting prowess, whilst others are to be found within the school's scholarship groups. Their reading, spelling and comprehension ages rise at a good rate as they progress towards their public examinations. Those pupils with EAL show increasing levels of competency and fluency in their work. Systems in place to track the progress made by pupils identified as able, gifted and talented show they make good progress in their education.
- 3.6 Pupils achieve high standards in creative disciplines, such as art, technology, drama and music. Some have achieved notable academic distinction, including Arkwright scholarships, as well as winning various university scholarships. Pupils are generally successful in gaining places at their first choice of university. Many pupils achieve well in drama productions and in speech, drama and music examinations. High standards are achieved in the congregational singing events held in the school chapel.

- 3.7 Many pupils participate successfully in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme (DofE) and give willingly of their time and energy to successfully work for charitable causes. The large Combined Cadet Force (CCF) unit, which all pupils join for at least a year in Year 10, has achieved distinction by winning an award from the Royal Marines for its strong leadership and team-work skills, as well as a prestigious individual award for the top cadet.
- 3.8 The extensive provision for sport and other physical activities means that pupils are physically fit and enjoy fully the wealth of health-related fitness activities. A good number gain places on national and regional sports teams, including in rugby, rowing, hockey, polo and cricket.
- 3.9 Pupils have good attitudes in lessons; they take a pride in their work, enjoy learning and are keen to succeed. They behave well, are good listeners, and work well together, settling down at the start of lessons. They enjoy working independently when such opportunities arise. Pupils are innately curious and keen to participate in discussions as a way to further their understanding. Those with SEND and those with EAL have very positive attitudes towards their work and their involvement in the life of the school. They feel that their needs are understood and supported.

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

- 3.10 The contribution of the curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.11 The curriculum supports the school's aim to produce a rounded and balanced educational experience for pupils of all abilities. It contributes very effectively to the pupils' development in all requisite areas of learning. In Years 7 to 9 a wide range of subjects provides pupils with a broad and balanced knowledge and skill base, with an increased element of choice introduced later.
- 3.12 In Years 10 to 11, pupils follow a compulsory core curriculum in mathematics, science, English language and literature. Up to five further options are added from a broad range of subjects with pupils strongly encouraged to select at least one from history or geography and one modern foreign language. More able pupils follow a short course GCSE in religious studies. These courses, with a non-examined programme including games and the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), effectively promote the aims of the school.
- 3.13 Sixth-form pupils typically follow four AS courses, reducing to three A2 courses, with a wide variety of combinations offered. The Extended Project Qualification has been recently introduced to offer stimulus to independent research. The general studies programme gives pupils access to a good range of speakers and visits.
- 3.14 The school provides well for pupils with SEND and EAL. Where relevant, pupils follow a curriculum tailored to their needs; flexible, targeted support includes withdrawal from lessons to receive specialist tuition if required. Pupils with EAL are encouraged to take public examinations in their home languages. Teachers are made aware of pupils with particular learning needs although this information is not always reflected in planning.
- 3.15 Effective careers education and guidance includes support for the pupils' choices at GCSE and A level, and for entry to higher education. Pupils benefit from an annual careers fair and exposure to a range of specialist speakers, including parents and former pupils.

- 3.16 The curriculum is well managed through regular review of provision. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection: longer lessons and a two-week timetable have had a beneficial effect on the school day and the quality of teaching and learning.
- 3.17 Extra-curricular provision is excellent and supports the development of the whole individual. The commitment and enthusiasm of a broad range of experienced staff promotes variety and supports an inclusive ethos. Team games are central in the life of the school and are highly valued by pupils. The CCF and DofE are prominent activities and provide pupils with outstanding opportunities for leadership and personal development.
- 3.18 A wide array of activities, clubs and societies, including a number offered by academic departments, appeal to all ages and aptitudes and ensure that there is something to interest and challenge everyone. Trips, tours and expeditions are frequent and co-ordinated well. Pupils with SEND and EAL participate fully in the extra-curricular life of the school including, where appropriate, membership of the various academic societies. The school awards a large number of scholarships and exhibitions to academically gifted pupils, as well as to those with talent in sport, creative and the expressive arts. This recognises their significant achievements and encourages high aspirations.
- 3.19 The co-curricular committee organises an integrated approach to extra-curricular activities, giving access to all pupils. Protected time for the performing arts is a recent innovation; both drama and music make a significant contribution during the 'central hour' of the day when pupils may join choirs, bands and ensembles. Links with the community are wide-ranging and the principle of community service aligns with the school's aspirations for its pupils.

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

- 3.20 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.21 The quality of teaching fulfils the school's aims to help pupils enjoy and succeed at learning, and to promote the 'flag values' of tolerance, responsibility and integrity. Most teaching is good or better; some is excellent, but in a few lessons it is unsatisfactory because methods used hinder the pupils' progress. This represents significant progress since the previous inspection and reflects the range of measures introduced to raise the standard of teaching. In the most successful teaching, excellent subject knowledge and enthusiasm enable pupils of all abilities to work through challenging tasks with confidence. This was seen in a Year 13 lesson where expert questioning promoted higher-order thinking among pupils.
- 3.22 Lessons are carefully planned. Teachers know their pupils well; they establish a friendly and respectful atmosphere in class and frequently offer supportive advice to enhance the pupils' progress. Pupils appreciate the oral feedback they receive in classes and the marking of their written work is frequent, but it does not consistently include clear, helpful advice for improvement. National standardised assessment data, alongside the school's internal effort and attainment grades, is available on the school's intranet and is beginning to be used to inform teaching and to provide staff with a comprehensive overview of all pupils' academic progress. The school's development plan recognises the need to continue to use this data and make its use more widespread across the school.

- 3.23 In most lessons, management of the class is confident and effective. However, the pace of some lessons is not always sufficiently brisk and time is sometimes lost. Teachers use a variety of resources and there is some imaginative use of ICT, such as in sixth-form teaching and through the English department's use of the ICT suites. However, the potential for technology to enhance teaching is not yet fully exploited across all subjects.
- 3.24 Teaching generally fosters interest and pupils enjoy their lessons. This is particularly so when they are enabled to work creatively or independently; less engaging lessons are often largely teacher-directed, or involved the passive taking of notes which inhibits the pupils' development as independent learners.
- 3.25 Pupils with SEND and those with EAL receive good teaching and support, which fosters their interest and offers them challenge. During the present academic year, two whole-school initiatives have been introduced to develop literacy skills in all subjects and to raise teachers' awareness of needs of pupils with SEND. The effectiveness of these initiatives has yet to be evaluated but, in mainstream teaching, there is little evidence of specific provision to support SEND and EAL pupils, or to stimulate and stretch the most able. Good provision is made for those with a statement of special educational needs.
- 3.26 The school library is a pleasant and welcoming place for pupils to work. It is used by the English department to encourage reading, but many other departments do not exploit its resources for teaching and learning. The quality of the book stock is generally good, although the number of books in subject areas is quite variable. For example, the provision for science and mathematics is limited, but that for history and English literature is strong.

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

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

- 4.1 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 The pupils' outstanding personal development meets the school's aim to develop the character of all pupils. The school succeeds in instilling in them the 'flag values' and pupils develop as well-rounded individuals, suitably equipped to face the challenges that lie ahead of them.
- 4.3 Pupils display excellent spiritual awareness. They benefit from opportunities for reflection, such as weekly chapel services, confirmation classes, and groups where they explore ideas of Christianity and faith, as well as the new inter-faith initiative which allows them to develop their understanding of religions other than their own. The presence of the Falklands Memorial Chapel is a central and important feature in the spiritual life of the school. The Lenten Addresses and participation in the annual service for families of those who died in the Falklands mean that pupils reflect and consider the potential ultimate cost of service. Pupils develop values and beliefs in religious studies and in the PSHCE programme. Younger pupils brought alive the spiritual celebration of communion through role-play, gaining a real sense of the significance of religious practices. All these opportunities enable pupils to develop a strong sense of self-knowledge and self-esteem. They are confident without being arrogant.
- 4.4 The moral development of pupils is exceptional. They have a very strong moral awareness and commitment to service which comes both from the school's naval heritage and the importance attached to the 'flag values'. Pupils take a keen interest in debating moral issues and speak confidently about sensitive and controversial moral themes covered in the excellent PSHCE programme. Younger pupils showed great maturity in discussing of relationships and, in another lesson, homelessness; in a history class they examined the morality of working conditions in 19<sup>th</sup> century factories. In these discussions pupils were courageous in speaking their minds and remained faithful to their beliefs, so developing their personal integrity. The pupils' extensive involvement in raising funds for charities helps them to understand and respond to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. For example, they have raised money for a school in Uganda, with which they have developed close links.
- 4.5 The pupils' social development is outstanding. They show respect, compassion and empathy for one another and this ensures a harmonious community experience for both day pupils and boarders. They show a profound sense of loyalty to the school as well as a genuine sense of belonging. The 'Team Pangbourne' mantra promoted by the school is clearly evident in pupils' approach. Through their active involvement in the DofE and CCF, pupils demonstrate excellent personal qualities. They undertake a wide variety of leadership roles successfully and many aspire to become peer mentors and senior scholars, providing a support structure for younger pupils. Strong leadership by senior pupils was seen during the parade practice, where all pupils demonstrated outstanding self-control and discipline. Pupils develop a good knowledge of public institutions and services in England through the study of the citizenship module of the PSHCE programme. They discuss the national government, British citizenship and look at migration and the influence of ethnic minorities on British culture.

4.6 The pupils' cultural development is excellent. Concert and theatre visits help to broaden their experience of the arts. They widen their knowledge and understanding of other cultures and traditions by participating in trips abroad, and as part of both their academic studies and co-curricular activities. They appreciate cultural diversity through mixing with those from other countries within the school community, including in boarding. In addition, pupils broaden their cultural experience through high-quality drama productions, as well as performing in an extensive schedule of concerts and recitals reflecting a wide variety of musical styles.

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

4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

4.8 The school delivers an education for the whole person that is true to its aims and flag values. The pastoral system, founded on strong houses, or divisions, is extremely effective in supporting both day pupils and boarders. Pupils learn how to manage their own lives, how to cope with their workload and support others. They are well known by the staff and live and work in a warm, friendly atmosphere. There is stringent monitoring of the pupils' welfare by the pastoral team, for example through the 'traffic light' system which alerts staff to those who may need care, and weekly staff meetings dedicated to supporting pupils. Hence, concerns about individuals and groups are followed up and dealt with swiftly and sensitively.

4.9 The strong relationships between pupils of different ages, between boys and girls and between staff and pupils are characterised by trust and mutual respect. Pupils know who to go to if they have a problem, from a range of figures. Trained peer mentors are also able to support pupils in need. Tutor groups are small and this enables individual care and attention to be given. The parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive with regard to the school's pastoral care.

4.10 The school provides pupils with a wide variety of healthy pursuits and activities. Regular exercise is a prominent feature of school life and this is valued by the pupils. The food provides the pupils with the required nourishment to help them through their busy school day. The school rewards positive and considerate attitudes, good relations and good manners. Measures to counteract bullying are effective and are supported by clear policies and procedures. Pupils are satisfied with the manner in which school deals with any bullying. There is a behaviour policy which clearly outlines the expected code of conduct, the involvement of pupils, staff and parents, together with the consequences for any misconduct. Some pupils in the questionnaire said that teachers are not fair in giving rewards and sanctions. Inspection evidence does not support this view and pupils spoken to were satisfied with this aspect of school life.

4.11 The school has a policy to improve educational access for pupils with SEND and this works effectively.

4.12 The responses to the pupils' questionnaire indicated that a minority feel they are not listened to. Pupils are able to put forward their views but feel they do not always receive a clear response. The school is in the process of addressing this, and there was evidence of clear progress being made. Pupils also reported dissatisfaction with the food provided. The food committee now represents their views more effectively, and this has led to some improvements in the catering provision.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.14 The school takes issues of health and safety seriously and discharges its responsibilities effectively through the work of an appropriate committee. There exists a comprehensive range of health and safety policies and the practices related to these are systematically monitored. Any recommendations made by outside agencies are swiftly addressed.
- 4.15 Arrangements for safeguarding are secure. Fully trained designated senior figures work very well with governors. Records confirm appropriate staff training and the governors receive reports on safeguarding and review its effectiveness.
- 4.16 All regulations with regard to fire safety and prevention are met. Staff have relevant training and fire inspections are carried out regularly on a rolling programme, with the recommendations made implemented. Records show that regular fire practices are held and recorded and that equipment is checked.
- 4.17 The school's excellent medical centre, with trained staff, provides full-time care for pupils. Arrangements for the storage and administration of prescription medicines are extremely robust. Pupils are able to see a counsellor and can also avail themselves of the services of a physiotherapist or a sports masseur. Every aspect of pupils' health, welfare and safety is thoughtfully established and monitored.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are kept and stored appropriately.

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

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are confident, articulate and considerate and their boarding experience contributes to their excellent personal development. Boarders have access to the world outside the school via mobile devices and the internet, as well as television and daily newspapers. They value highly being part of a caring community, and enjoy the familial atmosphere of their houses, which are run by a committed, enthusiastic and suitably trained team of staff. Many acknowledge the opportunity that boarding gives them to develop their social skills and to form friendships that they truly value. Parents state that the school encourages self-discipline, independence and organisation in a safe and supportive environment. This is borne out by inspection evidence. Boarders, including those from ethnic minorities, say that they feel welcomed and comfortable and that others embrace their cultures with enthusiasm. The school welcomes all faiths and celebrates their customs. The boarders' behaviour is very good and they show respect both for each other and for adults. The boarders expressed appreciation of the help given during prep by sixth formers, house staff or visiting tutors. Senior boarders play an important role in the houses, for which they are suitably trained. Before moving up to the more senior houses Years 7 and 8 boarders visit their new houses and follow a carefully guided induction programme in which the peer mentors play a large part.
- 4.21 The provision and care for boarders is excellent. Almost all boarders who responded to questionnaires said they enjoy boarding; they feel safe and get on well with their peers. There is an effective and established pastoral system to oversee the care of the boarders. The school's 'traffic light' system is used effectively to

monitor the boarders' welfare; there are weekly meetings to review the care for individuals and, consequently, support for boarders is secure. Housemasters, housemistresses, assistants, matrons and older pupils all play distinct roles in ensuring a high standard of pastoral care. The contribution of the matrons, for whom the boarders show genuine affection, is a significant strength. The peer mentoring system, introduced since the previous inspection, is valued by boarders.

- 4.22 Boarders have access to excellent medical provision, with medical staff caring effectively for pupils who are ill, or have a specific medical need. When necessary, the pupils can be cared for overnight in the medical centre. Well-established lines of communication between the medical centre and boarding house staff ensure that there is cohesive support for boarders with medical issues.
- 4.23 Boarders benefit from good facilities and have recreational space within each boarding house. The school has met the recommendation of the previous inspection by improving the programme of weekend and evening activities available. Pupils particularly appreciate the access to the gym and such opportunities as judo and yoga. A variety of weekend trips is available throughout the term and the opportunity to go to the cinema on a Saturday evening is popular. The Sunday trips vary from a trip to a theme park to activities such as mountain-biking and ceramic painting. Whilst pupils appreciate these trips they also like to organise their own free time on Sundays. Boarders' responses to questionnaires indicate that the majority do not think the food is good. Systems are now in place to ensure that pupils have a conduit by which to express their opinions. The standard of breakfast and lunch has improved but the pupils feel that supper is inconsistent in quality.
- 4.24 Most of the boarding accommodation is excellent and the school is addressing the areas in need of improvement through a systematic plan. The new girls' boarding house is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Bedrooms, common rooms and washing facilities meet requirements. Boarders have access to areas for study in their houses or use other spaces, such as the library. Parents report that the school enables easy contact via email or telephone. Boarders are able to contact their parents regularly; they are encouraged to keep in regular contact through newsletters or blogs.
- 4.25 The school's procedures for ensuring the welfare and safeguarding of boarders are excellent. Good care is taken in checking the suitability of staff during the recruitment process. Systems are in place to ensure security of the boarders and ensure their health and safety; staff complete appropriate risk assessments where necessary. All boarders spoken with indicated that there is at least one adult to whom they can turn if they have a worry or problem. The system for sanctions and rewards is clear and understood by pupils who feel it is administered fairly within the boarding houses. Record keeping in this area is consistent and informative. Boarders say that bullying is very rare and where it exists it is often settled effectively by the peer mentors under the tutelage of the house staff. The school excels in monitoring individual welfare plans. Sensitive and constructive support for boarders was of note.
- 4.26 The effectiveness of the leadership of boarding is good. Responsibility for boarding provision across the seven houses is led and managed well by suitably experienced, energetic and dedicated house staff, and monitored by senior figures. Staff meet on a weekly basis and there is a short-term boarding development plan. The school's effective internal communication system ensures that house staff are informed fully of boarders' progress. Boarding houses are well managed but there is some

inconsistency of practice. For example, while boarders were involved in the recent appointment of house staff and new life has been breathed into the house councils, feedback to the boarders is inconsistent. The boarding staff ensure that houses are friendly and welcoming for the boarders and that the school 'flag values' such as kindness, pride and warmth are intrinsic to their work.

## **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 run with vision and ambition, a contributing factor in the continual development and improvement of the school. The core 'flag values' of the school are at the heart of this vision.
- 5.3 There is a good structure for governance. The main board is served by an appropriate variety of sub-committees which meet regularly. The work of governors is aided by detailed financial information and reports from bursarial staff. Governors have a good range of expertise, although they are currently seeking to extend this through further recruitment. Some governors undertake training, and that for safeguarding is undertaken annually. Governors familiarise themselves with the work of the school through an open day when they visit classes, or houses, and also have further opportunities for training. In addition, they are kept informed by presentations from members of staff on aspects of school life. A day is also devoted to longer-term strategic planning. Governors work well with members of the senior management team. Good communication and mutual respect characterise the relationship between the chair and the head. As a result, the governors know the school well.
- 5.4 The governors ensure that regulatory requirements are fully met. There is a particular strength in the safeguarding of pupils and their welfare, health and safety. Close liaison between a governor and the school's child protection officer is central to this work and in facilitating the annual review of safeguarding by all governors.
- 5.5 Prudent financial management has allowed governors to improve the facilities and the fabric of the buildings in recent years. For example, boarding houses have been refurbished and two new ones built, along with other refurbishment. However, governors are aware of the need to continue this programme of works to bring all the accommodation up to standard. They support the recruitment of good quality staff. Resources in the school enable a wide-ranging curriculum to be taught effectively.

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

- 5.6 The leadership and management of the school are good.
- 5.7 Very effective leadership from the head ensures that practices are managed in line with the strong ethos of the school and reflect the 'flag values'. These permeate much of school life and are important in the school achieving high standards in pastoral care, welfare health and safety, and in creating a pleasant working environment for both staff and pupils which enables the pupils' good academic achievement.
- 5.8 There is a good structure for management. The senior management team is wide-ranging and covers pastoral care, the co-curricular provision and academic matters. Bursarial duties include health and safety, as well as financial matters. All these senior roles are carried out effectively and in line with the school ethos. This ensures the safeguarding and welfare of pupils.

- 5.9 The school is very effective in recruiting high-quality staff, a significant factor in the improvement in teaching. Teachers new to the school are given a thorough period of induction and good support, and existing staff have very good opportunities to continue their professional development. This is a real strength. All staff receive appropriate training in the safeguarding of pupils, their welfare, health and safety; safer recruitment measures are in place.
- 5.10 There is a clear view for the future direction of the school which is articulated in the school development plan. Members of the academic management team meet regularly with their assigned heads of departments, so channels of communication are open and effective. These meetings are used, amongst other things, to implement the recently introduced system for the monitoring of departments. The management of subjects is good overall, although variable. Planning at departmental level is somewhat variable and, although there are examples of very good practice, some subject plans lack ambition. Further monitoring occurs through an annual review of examination results and the strong links established also provide helpful evidence for the appraisal of staff. The present system is helping to raise the quality of middle management, although expectations are not yet sufficiently high to improve standards uniformly and establish greater consistency in the implementation of policies. Teachers are encouraged to see each other teach, so establishing a culture of openness. An enhanced programme of professional development, increased lesson observation, a revised appraisal system for heads of department, as well as strong communication from the academic management team, have all helped to raise standards.
- 5.11 Effective management ensures high standards of pastoral care and a rewarding boarding experience for pupils. At present there is some lack of clarity in monitoring the boarding provision which leads to some inconsistency of practice. Good management of the co-curriculum has meant an improvement in the activities available to pupils and work continues on monitoring their individual programmes and responses.
- 5.12 Parents are very satisfied with the school. Their responses to the questionnaire were positive in all areas. They are particularly pleased that their child is happy, safe and that they can easily contact staff. Almost all parents believe that the school encourages them to be involved in events and other aspects of its work and inspection evidence confirms this. They are very satisfied with the information they are given on their child's progress. They receive regular and helpful reports which grade the pupils' behaviour, effort, organisation and attainment, together with extensive and detailed comments from teachers. Parents report that information about the school and its policies is readily available. All required information is provided to parents of current and prospective pupils. The school recognises the weaknesses in the current website and is taking steps to make information clearer and to celebrate the school's achievements.
- 5.13 The school receives few complaints. Those that are received are considered with fairness and dealt with in detail and thoroughly. Formal complaints are considered in line with the school's appropriate policy.

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