



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
FRAMLINGHAM COLLEGE**

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Framlingham College

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

Full Name of School	Framlingham College		
DfE Number	935/6046		
Registered Charity Number	1114383		
Address	Framlingham College College Road Framlingham Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 9EY		
Telephone Number	01728 723789		
Fax Number	01728 724546		
Email Address	headmaster@framcollege.co.uk		
Head	Mr Paul B Taylor		
Chair of Governors	Mr Andrew W M Fane		
Age Range	13 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	409		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (237 boys; 172 girls)		
Numbers by Age	11-18:	409	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	197	
Number of Boarders	Total:	212	
	Full:	92	Weekly: 120
Inspection Dates	28 Apr 2015 to 01 May 2015		

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 February 2010.

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 2015. 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.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare.

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

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

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

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

Mrs Cathy Williamson	Reporting Inspector
Dr Stephen Coyne	Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC school)
Miss Barbara Habayeb	Team Inspector (Vice Principal, SOH school)
Mr Keith Metcalfe	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Louise North	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Joanne Stone-Williams	Team Inspector (Former Assistant Head, GSA school)
Mrs Linda Smallwood	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Andrew Williams	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Framlingham College is a co-educational day and boarding school situated on a spacious site overlooking the town of Framlingham in Suffolk. It was founded by Royal Charter in 1864 as a memorial to Prince Albert, initially as 'The Albert Middle Class College in Suffolk'. In 1948, younger pupils moved a few miles away to form Brandeston Hall preparatory school. The preparatory and senior schools share a common governing body and have been fully co-educational since 1987. The school is committed to providing a first class holistic, high quality, forward-looking education accessible to boys and girls with a broad range of abilities. It seeks to encourage pupils to aim high in their academic studies and co-curricular activities; to provide strong pastoral care within a secure community where pupils feel valued; and as a result, enable pupils to reach their full academic and personal potential.
- 1.2 The school accepts pupils from age 13. It currently educates 237 boys and 172 girls of whom 212 are boarders, 120 as weekly boarders. Of the 197 day pupils, almost half board for either three or four nights each week. Most pupils are White British, from professional, creative, rural, and business backgrounds within East Anglia. Around 50 pupils come from a wide range of countries overseas. Around two-fifths of entrants into Year 9 come from Brandeston Hall, and around a third of Year 12 pupils are new to the school. Each of the seven boarding houses, three for girls and four for boys, caters for day and boarding pupils from Years 9 to 13; tutor groups are house based. Since the previous inspection the school has developed its information and communication technology (ICT), library, music, drama and sports facilities; the medical centre and some boarding houses have been refurbished. It has recently opened a specialised sixth-form resource centre providing extra classrooms and study spaces, and a café for whole-school use.
- 1.3 The school has identified 39 pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties (SEND) and of these, 38 receive additional specialist learning support. No pupil has an education, health and care plan. There are 42 pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and of these, 20 currently receive language support.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the school is above the national average. Most pupils are of above average ability but the spread of abilities varies between cohorts. The ability profile of the sixth form is in line with the national average for pupils in sixth-form education with some variation between cohorts.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings.

- 2.1 The school successfully fulfils its aims to provide a holistic, high quality education, with strong pastoral care, that encourages pupils to aim high in their academic studies and co-curricular activities. The pupils' overall achievement is excellent. In public examinations the attainment of pupils is good. The pupils' progress at all ages is good with SEND and EAL pupils making progress that is at least as good as their peers. The pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. Achievements in co-curricular activities are excellent. Pupils excel in creative activities, team and individual sports. The school offers an excellent curriculum, individually tailored to pupils' needs and abilities; more able pupils have opportunities for advanced work including research projects, and SEND and EAL pupils have designated lessons. Teaching is excellent; teachers know their pupils well and adapt work to suit them. Relationships between pupils and teachers are of the highest quality helping pupils to gain confidence and to learn in a positive and relaxed atmosphere.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils respect each other's beliefs and cultures and are sensitive to the place of religion in society. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and a respect and care for those less fortunate than themselves. They enjoy the cultural diversity within their school community and have a good understanding of the wider world. Their standard of personal development is exceptionally high, they are open and friendly to all, creating an excellent atmosphere within the school and a caring community in the boarding houses. Pastoral care is excellent and the tutorial system has been improved in response to the recommendation of the previous inspection. The positive ethos of the school and the strong relationships between pupils and staff promote excellent behaviour. The contribution of welfare, health and safety is good. Some policies and procedures required updating during the inspection process. The school accords a high priority to the arrangements for the safeguarding of its pupils and policies now reflect the latest guidance and the school's good practice. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents said their child is happy and safe at school. The quality of boarding education is good. Boarders are well cared for and proud of their houses. There is some variability in the standard of accommodation; a rolling programme of refurbishment is well underway in response to the recommendations of the previous inspection. Risk assessments are not currently tailored to individual houses.
- 2.3 The quality of governance is good. Governors are highly committed to the school and invest strategically in staff and resources to help achieve its aims. They have taken appropriate steps in boarding which meet the recommendation of the previous report and they fulfil their responsibilities for safeguarding. Their oversight of regulatory policy requirements is adequate but limited in scope. The quality of leadership and management is good. The senior leadership team is strong and effective in making certain that the school fulfils its aims by ensuring that teaching and learning and pastoral care are accorded the highest priority. At the start of the inspection policy development did not fully reflect changes to statutory guidance; this has now been remedied. Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent; parents have many opportunities to be involved with the school and are fully informed about their child's welfare and academic progress.

2.(b) Action points.

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure that governors and leaders regularly review and update all policies, including those for safeguarding and health and safety.
 2. Involve house staff in the process of risk assessment for their individual houses.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are educated to a high standard thus meeting the school's aims successfully.
- 3.3 Pupils demonstrate high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. Their written work is clear and accurate and pupils of all abilities can explain how their understanding has developed. Responses to tasks and questions reveal secure knowledge, and able pupils demonstrate high levels of understanding. Excellent subject skills are evident in the pupils' work, for instance in the high quality of artwork, and in subjects such as music technology. Pupils with SEND and EAL achieve highly in relation to their abilities; GCSE pupils with particular needs produced a well written analysis of characters from a classic novel in English.
- 3.4 The pupils' speaking skills are highly developed and pupils articulate their ideas clearly, fluently and engagingly in public. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and are able to write accurately and at length. Pupils think logically whether answering a problem in mechanics or planning an essay in psychology. They are highly creative: pupils used their mutual rapport to produce an excellent piece for a GCSE drama assessment. Mathematical skills are strong and applied confidently in other subjects. Pupils demonstrate their physical competence in a wide range of activities for example in the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and on one of the school's 'Journeys of Self-Discovery', cycling through China.
- 3.5 Pupils achieve successes in many co-curricular areas. There is a strong tradition of gaining engineering scholarships and the school reaches high standards in the national mathematics challenges. Historians enjoy success in national competitions and drama pupils take performances to the Edinburgh Fringe festival. Pupils achieve highly in a range of sports and activities from rugby to rifle shooting. Boys' and girls' hockey is excellent with successes at county and national level. More than a quarter of pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) scheme with around a fifth of these achieving gold. Pupils have represented the school at the Model United Nations (MUN) and the Students' League of Nations (SLN).
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are available. The pupils' attainment in public examinations is good. Results in GCSE are above the national average for maintained schools. Results in IGCSE have been above worldwide norms with some higher than UK norms. A-level results have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to those of maintained selective schools. Three-quarters of sixth-form leavers go on to university with most achieving their first choice and nearly half going to universities with demanding entry requirements. The level of attainment at GCSE and standardised measures of progress, indicate that pupils make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities with some decline from 2012. The level of attainment at A level and standardised measures of progress indicate that pupils in the sixth form make progress that is appropriate and sometimes good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The school now tracks pupils to encourage progress and inspectors judged an excellent level of attainment in current teaching and learning which is better than that indicated by data from previous cohorts.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They settle to work immediately and maintain a lively interest throughout lessons. They co-operate very positively with their teachers and with each other, expecting to learn and develop their understanding in every lesson. They seek help when needed but are equally prepared to work and research independently.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum supports the school's aims well. It provides excellent coverage of all areas of learning and the co-curricular provision includes an extensive range of activities and trips for all ages which are integral to the school's holistic approach.
- 3.10 Pupils in Years 9 to 11 benefit from a curriculum that is constantly under review and tailored to their needs: one example is the introduction of computer studies at GCSE, which was requested by pupils and parents. In Year 9, an enrichment carousel operates which features critical thinking, philosophy, business enterprise, and computer programming; a junior extended project is completed at the end of the year. Most pupils study a full range of subjects to GCSE. High-achieving mathematicians sit GCSE early and may then follow a pre- A-level examination course. Cross-curricular days are held once per term in Years 9 and 10. These have included arts days, film production and 'newspaper in a day'. In Years 12 and 13, 22 subjects are offered at AS and A level with plans to extend the provision further. The sixth-form curriculum is enhanced by subject-specific lectures, field studies and cultural trips, and pupils develop their research skills through the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The increased use of ICT supports the development of excellent learning skills for pupils of all ages.
- 3.11 Careers provision throughout the school is excellent, it is effectively planned and includes visiting speakers from business and industry, various professions and universities. Year 13 students speak highly of the help and guidance they receive, of the careers fairs and of other careers events such as 'career speed dating'.
- 3.12 Pupils with SEND or EAL benefit from an excellent learning support programme teaching humanities, study and key skills. In some lessons, teaching assistants are deployed; they provide highly effective support. More able pupils are identified and follow a weekly extension programme which includes politics, current affairs, economics, and debating; all interested pupils are encouraged to attend.
- 3.13 The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is well integrated within the curriculum and pastoral system and delivered by form tutors and specialist staff. In Years 9 to 11, it features a carousel covering topics such as health education and personal safety, ethics, human rights, government and law. The sixth-form tutor programme is wide ranging and includes a number of outside speakers. All pupils are well prepared for life in British society; money management and economic issues are taught at appropriate stages and fundamental British values are promoted through studies of the political system and discussions such as 'What makes Britain British?'
- 3.14 Co-curricular activity enriches the pupils' lives. It is extensive and diverse and includes a wide range of sporting activities, the CCF and DofE activities. The quality, planning and monitoring of the programme is highly effective. A co-curricular prefect and pupil questionnaire ensure the pupils' views are taken into account. Staff involvement is high and staff are encouraged to contribute with their own

interests and passions, from recycling to discovering the school's history through archiving.

- 3.15 The school has strong links with the local community and this contributes significantly to the pupils' learning. They are involved in volunteering in local care homes and schools, tending the community garden and litter patrol in the town. Links are strengthened further by the FramSoc programme which is community-based and organises a range of cultural activities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.16 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching supports the pupils' learning and fulfils the school's commitment to provide high quality, forward-looking education.
- 3.18 The most successful teaching is well planned, captures the pupils' interests and encourages them to think independently and seek ways in which to extend their own learning. Overall, the expectation of the pupils is high. In a very small minority of teaching, insufficient pace, poor structure or insufficiently high expectations of the pupils, results in lower levels of achievement. The most successful teaching is based on excellent subject knowledge and careful planning which takes account of the differing needs and abilities of individual pupils. Pupils of all abilities studying GCSE chemistry made significant progress in response to challenging tasks, well supported by clear explanations and stimulating video clips. An overwhelming majority of pupils say that their teachers help them to learn and that they are making good progress. Inspectors agree.
- 3.19 Pupils with SEND are well supported with the development of their key skills and guidance on learning techniques, which improves their achievement. A strong learning support department provides teachers with a clear understanding of the needs of pupils and adjustments which can be made in the classroom to support them. Pupils are very appreciative of the generosity of teachers who are available outside lesson times for additional support. The most able pupils are well known to staff and the most successful teaching encourages their higher order thinking and reasoning skills through extension work. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of parents and pupils said that more able pupils receive insufficient challenge in lessons. Inspection evidence shows that this rarely occurs.
- 3.20 Teaching combines challenging questioning with frequent use of praise, encouragement and constructive feedback. These strategies promote independent thinking and the pupils' strong and confident attitudes towards learning, which enable their high levels of achievement. Teachers know their pupils well and have an excellent working relationship with them which stimulates progress. Teaching at all levels makes good use of the school's resources, including ICT, which is seamlessly integrated into everyday teaching and learning. Effective and well planned use of ICT in French enabled younger pupils to develop their vocabulary and extend their knowledge to a high level.
- 3.21 The pupils' work is assessed regularly and the quality of written and oral feedback is effective in helping pupils to develop their work and to improve and build on their achievements. Assessment data is collected half termly and centrally collated. Both pupils and parents are well informed of progress and of any strategies required to improve it. Pupils' progress is often tracked through analysis of assessment data against external benchmarks, together with discussion of their progress. Where

appropriate progress is not being made, this enables successful intervention. The school is currently implementing measures to extend this practice across all teaching.

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 spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. They are mature, articulate and aware of life beyond school. They readily take the opportunities offered by the school to develop their talents and abilities and so grow in confidence, self-assurance and self-awareness. Pupils respect one another's beliefs, cultures and faiths. Chapel services focus on a range of religious, ethical and moral themes with a celebration of the school's Christian foundation at festivals such as Advent and Easter. Pupils appreciate the non-material aspects of life; they are sensitive to the religious tensions in the wider world, which they examine and discuss thoughtfully in PSHE and religious studies lessons.
- 4.3 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. Tolerance and respect for individual liberty and those with different needs or lifestyles are evident in the pupils' conversations and through their consideration for one another; for example in their attitude towards disability. Pupils are tolerant of different perspectives and lessons reinforce this: they discussed homophobia in sport in French, and the possible motivations for terrorist attacks in religious studies, in a balanced and measured way. The pupils show a clear sense of right and wrong as they discuss topics such as law, discrimination and human rights in PSHE. Pupils understand criminal and civil law in England, for example with regard to drugs and alcohol.
- 4.4 The social development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils take good care of others, for example through the peer mentoring programme and in the way in which they welcome visitors and new pupils. They welcome opportunities for responsibility, taking on roles such as prefects and academic mentors. They demonstrate initiative in their fundraising and support for charities. The community service programme enables pupils to help in local residential homes, and with recycling and litter initiatives. Pupils have a good awareness of current affairs and discuss them with their tutors; news is streamed on monitors in the library and central courtyard. The pupils develop their political and economic awareness through PSHE and in geography and religious studies. They take part in the MUN and the SLN, as well as in the politics club, where opposing views on political issues are debated. Some younger pupils were engaged in a mock general election during the inspection.
- 4.5 The cultural development of the pupils is excellent. Pupils embrace the diversity within the school. Similarities and differences are celebrated through events such as Chinese New Year, German Day and Remembrance Sunday where all nationalities are commemorated. Pupils from different countries compared family life in their respective countries in a language lesson. Fundamental British values are intrinsic to the school's ethos and the sixth-form talks such as 'Public Schools in the Great War' and 'King John and the Magna Carta' ensure that the pupils are aware of British history.
- 4.6 The pupils' personal development reaches a high level by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.7 The quality of the school's arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The school's aim to provide strong pastoral care within a secure community is implemented with great success. Responses to the pupils' and parents' pre-inspection questionnaires show an extremely high level of satisfaction with the pastoral care provided.
- 4.9 Pastoral structures ensure that teachers and tutors build strong relationships with their pupils and provide excellent levels of individual care and academic monitoring. Tutors are fully aware of their roles and there are clear lines of communication and accountability through heads of year to senior management. This meets the recommendations of the previous inspection. Relationships between pupils are very positive, aided by welcoming induction programmes, and regular house and school social activities. Sixth-form pupils, who undergo training as peer mentors and prefects, monitor and resolve pastoral issues.
- 4.10 The school actively encourages healthy lifestyles in PSHE and by providing healthy, nutritious food. The school has excellent sporting and exercise facilities: exercise and activity are promoted within the school curriculum and culture.
- 4.11 The strong community ethos within the school promotes excellent behaviour. The school has suitable policies to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying. A small minority of pupils commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they do not feel rewards and sanctions are awarded fairly. Inspection evidence shows that pupils understand and appreciate the system of 'positives and negatives', which effectively regulates and monitors behaviour; concerns are picked up and dealt with before they become more serious. Bullying is considered to be of limited occurrence by pupils, and they consider that any issues are quickly investigated and dealt with constructively. Inspection evidence confirms this view. Detailed records concerning behaviour incidents show that appropriate action is taken and suitably logged.
- 4.12 The school has a suitable plan to improve accessibility within the constraints of its historic buildings.
- 4.13 Although a small minority of pupils were critical of the opportunities provided by the school to express their views and receive a response, inspection evidence shows that the school listens and responds to them in various ways. Houses have termly forums and the school uses questionnaires to ascertain the pupils' views; results are reported back through the house system. Pupils say that they have opportunities to discuss issues within tutor periods and with teachers who are extremely approachable.

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

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.15 The school's arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are thorough and are conscientiously implemented by staff. Staff with designated roles receive appropriate training. They meet regularly with the safeguarding governor to review cases, policy and regulatory guidance. Governors meetings always have safeguarding on the agenda and the full governing body fulfils its regulatory obligation to review the safeguarding policy and practices annually, although this is not wholly effective. At the start of the inspection process, the safeguarding policy

was insufficiently detailed. The school has reviewed and revised the policy successfully to follow the latest statutory guidance and to better reflect the school's careful practice. The school has strong links with external agencies and all staff have received safeguarding training within the last year.

- 4.16 Health and safety practices are excellent, for example arrangements for the external use of sports and theatre facilities have a high regard for the safety of pupils; pedestrian access and traffic management are extremely well thought out. An electronic key system ensures only appropriate access to buildings. Most buildings are maintained to a very high standard. Centralised risk assessment policies have led to a lack of detailed assessments for some individual houses.
- 4.17 Fire policies, practices and procedures are excellent. Risks are carefully considered and preventive measures put in place. Alarms are tested weekly and fire practices held termly. Departments such as science and design technology produce detailed risk assessments and senior managers maintain appropriate oversight. The school's provision did not include an overall risk assessment policy at the start of the inspection; this has now been remedied.
- 4.18 The school makes excellent provision for sick and injured pupils and those with particular health needs. The medical centre is staffed by nurses who have first aid training. The building is well ordered with treatment and recovery areas and en suite bedrooms. Pupils can easily summon help at night. First aid is given promptly and efficiently.
- 4.19 The school has a secure system for registering pupils. Unexplained absence is followed up promptly. Electronic admission and attendance registers are correctly maintained, backed up daily and stored for a minimum of three years.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.20 The overall quality of boarding is good.
- 4.21 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. The boarding environment promotes the boarders' personal development clearly and consistently. The key qualities of independence, tolerance, confidence and respect are evident throughout the community. Boarders have excellent standards of behaviour. They are eager to take on positions of responsibility, such as prefect or peer mentor, to contribute to the well-being of others and to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. Boarders have excellent relationships amongst themselves and with staff. Boarders are accepting of their peers, appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses and understand the role individuals play within a close and supportive community. Boarders articulate their views with confidence and those with EAL mix readily with the wider community enabling them to develop excellent language skills. Overseas boarders say they were made to feel very welcome immediately and are quickly assimilated into the way of life. Younger boarders speak positively about their relationships with older pupils. All boarders have a strongly ingrained sense of house loyalty.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. Boarders feel that they are well looked after and readily confirm that they have a choice of adults with whom they can discuss personal matters. Boarders are encouraged to contribute to the running of the house. Contact numbers for helplines and the school's Independent Listener are available.

- 4.23 The majority of the boarding houses provide appropriate accommodation with communal areas, bedrooms and bathrooms, and space to study and relax. Most of the social areas are of a good size and are equipped with games, televisions, books and DVDs. There is suitable personal privacy. The standard of the accommodation is variable, the newest and the most recently refurbished houses being to a high standard. A rolling refurbishment programme is in place for the other houses. The recommendation of the previous ISI inspection to review the boarding accommodation to ensure greater parity of facilities between houses is being addressed effectively.
- 4.24 Phone booths with landlines are provided to enable contact with home but increasing access and use of mobile phones throughout the school ensures ease of communication with parents and families. The school maintains effective contact with parents and guardians. Boarders benefit from the daily wide-ranging extra-curricular provision and the weekend programme of trips and activities. The school facilities, including the sports centre, are also available to them at appropriate times. A small minority of pupils said in the questionnaire that they were dissatisfied with the balance of activities offered. Inspectors found the provision to be extensive and in interviews boarders confirmed this view.
- 4.25 The catering provision is excellent. Experienced and knowledgeable staff plan exciting menus taking into account, and often making special arrangements for, individual dietary and eating needs. Kitchen, storage and dining areas are efficiently and well managed. The varied meals are of high quality and much appreciated by all. A minority of pupils, in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, felt that there are not enough snacks, or water is not freely available. Inspection evidence does not support this; numerous water fountains and a centrally-located cafe are available to pupils during the school day and in houses drinks and snacks are freely available in the evenings. However, inspection evidence shows that the size of the kitchen areas in some houses limits the opportunities for making evening snacks.
- 4.26 Medical provision is overseen by experienced and well-qualified staff. The storage and administration of medication is careful and appropriate; privacy and confidentiality are respected. Serious allergies and chronic conditions are managed appropriately. Pupils are assessed, briefed and monitored as to their ability to self-medicate where appropriate. Record keeping is thorough and careful and increasingly electronic. There are regular surgeries held by doctors and access to optometric and emergency dental services. Houses and rooms are kept secure and every boarder has a lockable cupboard. An efficient laundry service is provided.
- 4.27 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. Robust procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of the boarders. All staff receive relevant safeguarding training and understand the school's procedures. Boarders are confident that they will be listened to and their concerns addressed. The school has recently appointed a counsellor to help manage emotional problems if they arise. Good behaviour is recognised in house and rewards are given for individual and team success and for promoting house spirit. Boarders agree that sanctions are appropriate and fairly given, and that the behaviour management policy is applied consistently across the houses. The school's database and virtual learning environment (VLE) are used effectively for record keeping. Boarders say that there is hardly any bullying and they feel safe in their houses. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals. An adequate risk assessment is compiled for boarding houses but its generic nature means that it is not specific to individual houses and lacks the input of the staff living in and managing each house. This has led to some

inconsistencies in practice. Health and safety and fire prevention policies are suitable and are effectively implemented.

- 4.28 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is good. The high quality of the assessment and management of the needs of individual boarders is reflected in the excellent relationships and personal development of the boarders. All boarding staff have job descriptions, and receive induction and ongoing mentoring and support. An effective, biennial appraisal system provides for a full evaluation which alternates with an informal review. Training and continuing professional development are tailored to the needs of individual staff. As a result of review during the inspection, compliant policies have been developed; the school also recognises the need to improve self-evaluation at middle management level. The vast majority of parents of boarders are very positive in their appreciation of and support for the school.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors strongly support the school's aims. In particular, they have strategically and successfully recruited senior managers to strengthen and develop teaching and learning. The annual strategy day with the school leadership team is highly effective in setting appropriate priorities for the school.
- 5.3 Since the previous inspection, the composition of the governing body has been renewed and re-organised. Governors now have a wide range of experience and expertise in finance, education, law, business, health, safety and child protection, and all are highly committed to the school. Financial planning is astute and governors invest methodically in staff, resources and accommodation. Steering groups for finance and general purposes, education, health and safety and child protection enable governors to engage with senior leaders in particular areas of school life providing good oversight, support and challenge.
- 5.4 Child protection is given a high priority: it is on the agenda at every meeting of the finance and general purposes group and the full board. All governors have had basic training in child protection from the school. Governors delegate recruitment to senior leaders and ensure that every recruitment panel includes someone trained in safer recruitment procedures. An appropriately trained safeguarding governor maintains close links with designated staff and reviews policies and practices through regular meetings with staff and visits to houses. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibility for the annual review of the safeguarding policy and practices. However, while their oversight of the policies in safeguarding and health and safety is adequate it is limited in scope, and policies have not always kept up with changes in requirements.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management including links with parents, carers and guardians is good.
- 5.6 At all levels of responsibility, leadership and management is well focused on the school's aim to enable pupils to develop their potential and excel in their studies and extra-curricular activities. Senior managers plan carefully, are effective in self-evaluation and follow up on suggestions and ideas from staff.
- 5.7 Since the previous full inspection, the school has clarified tutors' responsibilities and accountability to ensure more consistent interpretation and implementation of their roles. This meets the recommendation of that inspection. Middle managers are now empowered to manage their areas and monitor the efficacy of their staff.
- 5.8 The excellent senior team provides strong educational direction for a supportive group of middle managers. The latter ensure the excellent achievement of pupils by supporting and monitoring teaching. Senior leaders develop effective policies but these had not been kept up-to-date in areas of boarding, safeguarding and health and safety at the start of the inspection; a matter that has now been rectified. The

sharing of good practice in teaching has become more common recently, helping pupils to progress. This is monitored through tracking systems by senior staff; analysis of attainment and progress data occurs in individual subjects, but not across all subject areas.

- 5.9 Leadership in pastoral care is excellent. Heads of year are responsible for teams of tutors and report to a member of the senior management team responsible for pastoral care and boarding. Values which encourage respect for others and democracy are evident in the everyday running of the school. Communication at and between all levels and between academic, pastoral and boarding leaders is effective, and record keeping is of a high quality. The effectiveness of leadership and management of the boarding provision is good although at middle management level, the implementation of boarding policy is not always effectively tailored to specific house needs.
- 5.10 The school follows safer recruitment procedures and all checks are appropriately completed. Staff induction includes appropriate training in safeguarding and regular update training. These updates have been made more effective with use of the school's intranet. They include suitable training for staff in their roles in welfare, health and safety, ensuring that they have a secure understanding of their role in keeping children safe.
- 5.11 The school attracts and retains high quality staff and is fully committed to their support and development. The programme of staff appraisal is well embedded and appropriate targets are set. The school has a clearly articulated set of strategic plans which are informed by discussions with staff, resulting in changes such as to library staffing. Progress towards the plans' aims is reviewed and evaluated regularly by senior staff and governors.
- 5.12 Links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent. In the pre-inspection questionnaire most parents said the school encourages them to be involved; many take up the offer and there is an active parents and teacher association whose interest and enthusiasm is welcomed by the leadership. This also involves the local community in the school and is a much wider organisation than this title ordinarily suggests. Parents can be involved in a variety of ways, from social events to direct involvement by contributing their expertise for the benefit of pupils.
- 5.13 Parents receive two full written reports a year outlining their child's progress and targets. They are detailed and constructive and valued by both the pupils and their parents. An annual parents' evening and half-termly assessments ensure that parents are kept well informed about progress. The pre-inspection questionnaires indicate that the overwhelming majority of parents feel that they can easily contact the staff and that the school is well managed. Overseas parents and guardians, as well as former pupils, are kept in touch through email, blogs and effective use of social media.
- 5.14 All the required policies are provided to parents of current and prospective pupils. Senior managers develop excellent relationships with parents, to whom a suitable complaints policy is available; most feel that the school handles their concerns well. There have been no formal complaints received during the last twelve months.

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