



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

ST EDWARD'S SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

St Edward's School

Full Name of School	St Edward's School
DfE Number	931/6066
Registered Charity Number	309681
Address	St Edward's School Woodstock Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX2 7NN
Telephone Number	01865 319323
Fax Number	01865 319242
Email Address	warden@stedwardsoxford.org
Warden	Mr Stephen Jones
Chairman of Governors	Mr Mike Stanfield
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	685
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (416 boys; 269 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 131
Number of Boarders	Total: 554 Full: 554 Weekly: 0
Inspection Dates	21 Jan 2014 to 24 Jan 2014

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 March 2012.

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. 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 chairman 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

Mr Paul Spillane	Reporting Inspector
Mr David Bell	Team Inspector (Former Head, ISA school)
Mr Philip Capes	Team Inspector (Former Head, HMC school)
Mrs Susan Court	Team Inspector (Former Head of Professional Development, Society of Heads school)
Miss Karen Hollingdale	Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA school)
Mr Christopher Holmes	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Anton Kok	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr John Parsonage	Team Inspector (Former Head of Department, HMC school)
Mrs Jan Scarrow	Team Inspector (Former Head, GSA school)
Dr Sarah Welch	Team Inspector (Principal, ISA school)
Mrs Susan Meek	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mr Darrell Farrant	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Head, HMC school)
Mrs Jean Gray	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Senior Teacher, HMC school)
Mr Paul Johnstone	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Head of Department, HMC school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL	3
(a) Main findings	3
(b) Action points	4
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	4
(ii) Recommendation for further improvement	4
3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS	5
(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	5
(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	6
(c) The contribution of teaching	7
4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	9
(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	9
(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	10
(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d) The quality of boarding	11
5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
(a) The quality of governance	14
(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	14

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Edward's School is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from thirteen to eighteen. Established as a Christian foundation in 1863, it moved to its present site in north Oxford ten years later. Since then, the original buildings have been modified, additional land acquired and many new buildings completed. The sports facilities and some boarding houses are situated on the opposite side of a main road. The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. The warden (headmaster) took up his appointment in September 2011.
- 1.2 There are 685 pupils (416 boys and 269 girls) in the school. Of these, 554 are boarders and 131 are day pupils. Most pupils come from homes within a two-hour radius of the school, mainly from professional and business families. About a seventh of the pupils come from abroad, with over thirty nationalities represented.
- 1.3 Entry to the school is by Common Entrance or scholarship examination and interviews. There are 107 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) and of these 15 receive additional support. Of the 194 pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 24 receive specialist learning support in the school. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The ability profile of Years 9 to 11 is above the national average, with most pupils having ability that is at least above average, and some having ability that is well above average. The ability profile of the sixth form is slightly above the national average, with a much wider spread of abilities than in Years 9 to 11.
- 1.4 Pupils are allocated to one of twelve boarding houses, run by a housemaster or housemistress who is supported by a staff team. The sub-warden has overall responsibility for boarding. Each house includes day pupils, who remain until 9.00 pm each weekday evening.
- 1.5 The school aims to encourage an unremitting focus on learning, believing that each pupil can strive for excellence and has the potential to enjoy academic success at the highest level. It seeks to offer a rich extra-curricular provision, giving opportunities for every pupil to find his or her niche and experience success. The school sets out to be inspirational for its pupils and to nurture each individual as a member of the community. It seeks to promote a warm, happy atmosphere where there is a generosity of spirit and a willingness to be engaged. In addition, the school aims to develop in its pupils: intelligence and curiosity; creativity and innovation; integrity and honesty; resilience and enthusiastic participation; moral courage; a sense of compassion and service; and an understanding of, and respect for, other people and the human condition.
- 1.6 Since the previous inspection, a new life sciences building and a fifth girls' boarding house have been built, further sports facilities have been added and the physical science laboratories have been fully refurbished.

- 1.7 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
Shell	Year 9
Fourth Form	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is notably successful in meeting its stated aims. Striving for excellence is realised in practice; pupils' positive approach to their studies, exemplary classroom behaviour and high quality teaching are reflected in their substantial academic achievement and progress at all levels. Pupils also achieve high levels of success across a wide range of extra-curricular pursuits, in many cases performing with distinction and achieving representative sports honours at county level or above. Such enthusiastic participation enriches their educational experience and enables pupils to develop their talents and aptitudes enjoyably and fruitfully. In response to the questionnaire, parents affirmed that they are very pleased with their children's academic progress. Throughout the school, pupils display secure knowledge, skills and understanding of the material covered in their syllabuses. They reach high standards of personal fulfilment.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent, reflecting the school's highly effective emphasis on the welfare and well-being of each individual pupil. The excellent standard of pastoral care is a strength of the school, and the sympathetic and supportive example set by the staff is mirrored in the way pupils behave towards one another. Pupils grow strongly in self-awareness, self-esteem and emotional maturity. Relationships are excellent throughout the school, which is a happy environment; the pupils are very proud of it and feel a strong sense of belonging. Excellent ambassadors, they are courteous and friendly towards visitors. Pupils in positions of leadership and service take their responsibilities seriously. Parents commended the high standards of behaviour, and evidence gathered during the inspection fully supports this judgement. Pupils much enjoy boarding and appreciate the high level of pastoral care provided by the houses. Parents are extremely pleased with all aspects of the boarding provision.
- 2.3 The successful fulfilment of the school's aims reflects the good quality of governance and to the dedicated and energetic leadership and clear direction from senior management. Following the example set by the leadership, all staff ensure that the best interests of the pupils are central to their work, the leadership and management of pastoral care and boarding being particular strengths. Highly efficient and well-developed management systems ensure that the school runs smoothly. However, while required recruitment checks have been undertaken for all employees of the school, not all of these checks were carried out before appointment. With the exception of the marking of pupils' work, the school has implemented, or is actively responding to, the recommendations from the previous inspections. The school's extremely good relations with parents are reflected in their overwhelmingly positive responses to the questionnaire, in which they expressed great satisfaction with the education that their children are receiving and the way in which the school is run.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- ensure that all required checks are made before the appointment of a member of staff [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, and Part 4, paragraph 19.(3), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and for the same reason National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection and National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, as described above.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Bring the marking of all pupils' work up to the standard of the best.

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 excellent.
- 3.2 This reflects the school's aim that pupils should strive for excellence in their learning. Standards of literacy are high. Pupils are very articulate, as exemplified in discussions of poetry. They demonstrate curiosity, for example in science lessons. They can also apply mathematical concepts with confidence, enabling them to interpret data, as they do in mathematics and physics. Pupils are generally proficient in information and communication technology (ICT). They show excellent subject knowledge and understanding. Independent thinking and reasoning skills are well developed, as shown, for example, in religious studies and classics lessons. Pupils demonstrate imagination in art and design and technology, in both of which exhibits display very high levels of creativity and practical skills. Highly accomplished singing by the chamber choir was observed during the inspection. Excellence is achieved across a range of skills in dance. Speech and drama awards demonstrate an exceptionally high level of attainment. Pupils of all nationalities, including those with EAL, are highly articulate in written and spoken English. Pupils with SEND achieve consistently at levels commensurate with those of their peers. Able, gifted and talented pupils extend their skills through participation in regular meetings of junior and senior pupils respectively for advanced study, named 'OX2' and the 'Woodstock' group.
- 3.3 Pupils attain exceptional standards at team and individual level in a wide range of sports, with over ten per cent of pupils competing at county level or higher. Pupils are successful in music examinations, and many perform in national ensembles. A high number attain success in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE are above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. The International GCSE (IGCSE) results are largely higher than worldwide norms. A-level results are above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Overall, girls perform slightly better than boys at GCSE and A level. International Baccalaureate (IB) results are well above the average for schools worldwide, and above the average for schools in the UK.
- 3.5 In the IGCSE and GCSE examinations of 2013, the grades achieved were broadly in line with those of the previous three years. At A level in 2013, half the grades were A or A*; similarly, half the IB grades were 6 or 7: these results represent continuing improvement in recent years.
- 3.6 The level of attainment at GCSE indicates that pupils overall make progress that is at least good and sometimes high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. The available data demonstrates that the level of attainment in the sixth form represents good progress at A level and a good, and in some cases, high rate of progress at IB, in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. In recent years, almost all pupils in Year 13 have proceeded to degree courses, the large majority to universities with very demanding entry requirements.

- 3.7 Pupils' attitude to learning and extra-curricular participation in all years are excellent, and this plays a significant role in their successes and personal development. They are focused, distinctly motivated and enthusiastic. Keen to succeed, pupils are highly committed to their studies and activities.

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 broad academic curriculum thoroughly covers all the requisite areas of learning and contributes significantly to the pupils' intellectual, creative, physical and personal achievements. It is also appropriately flexible to accommodate the needs of pupils of different abilities. In combination with the extra-curricular programme, it fulfils the school's aim to prepare pupils for a lifetime of service and achievement.
- 3.10 In Year 9, pupils follow a new curriculum consisting of a wide core of 17 subjects, which provides an effective basis for the choice of optional subjects in Years 10 and 11. Whether they are taking subjects at IGCSE or GCSE level, pupils continue to enjoy access to a broad curriculum. The three sciences can be studied singly, while four modern foreign languages are available, as are Latin, Greek and classical studies. All pupils also take non-examined core courses in ICT, religious studies and ethics, which provide further breadth and academic challenge. Pupils' subject choices are carefully guided at all stages. In the sixth form, pupils choose either A levels or the International Baccalaureate. In addition, all pupils undertake either the school's bespoke taught skills course, for those taking A levels, or the extended essay, for those following the IB course, both of which enhance their intellectual development.
- 3.11 The learning support department provides good specialist help for pupils identified with SEND or EAL. Detailed information about these pupils' needs and advice about responding to them are disseminated appropriately.
- 3.12 In keeping with the school's aim to develop intelligence and curiosity, scholars and other gifted pupils take advantage of the challenging OX2 and Woodstock programmes. Academic activities such as 'Medsoc' and an award for poetry in translation provide further opportunities for intellectual challenge. Pupils' personal development is well supported by a comprehensive and carefully planned programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE), which all pupils follow throughout their time at the school. Pupils particularly appreciate the talks given by outside speakers. The school organises a large number of educational visits, both in the UK and beyond: these greatly enhance pupils' educational experience and widen their understanding, particularly the visit to Auschwitz at the time of the inspection.
- 3.13 From Year 9 onwards, pupils receive thorough and helpful careers advice. In the sixth form, it is an intrinsic element in the tutorial system and includes comprehensive guidance for the university application process.
- 3.14 The academic curriculum is supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, in accordance with the school's stated aims. The extensive programme of sport provides choice for everyone, from those who perform at international level to sixth formers who greatly appreciate the imaginative health and fitness programme. Similar opportunities exist for pupils of all ages and abilities in music, drama, dance and art.

- 3.15 Both the Combined Cadet Force and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme are extremely popular, with large numbers of pupils taking part. Most departments run societies, and activities such as Year 9 ceramics and the poetry club established by a sixth-form pupil are just two of the many opportunities that enable pupils to find an individual niche.
- 3.16 Regular sports tours abroad always include some element of charitable activity, such as coaching local schoolchildren and donating sports kit. Pupils give an annual concert at a local care home for people with dementia, help in classes at a facility for children excluded from maintained schools and organise a Christmas party for adults with learning difficulties. The North Wall Arts Centre provides an inspiring shared space with the local community, which stimulates the imagination of pupils.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.17 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.18 The majority of teaching observed throughout the school was of a high quality, and of the rest most was at least good. Teaching makes a central contribution to the pupils' progress and attainment, and to the fulfilment of the school's aims to encourage an unremitting focus on learning and to develop pupils' intelligence and curiosity.
- 3.19 The majority of the lessons are expertly planned, taken at a brisk pace and convey the teachers' excellent subject knowledge and commitment to the pupils' needs. The best teaching is stimulating, dynamic and enthusiastic. In almost all lessons, the subject matter fully engages the attention of the pupils. Teachers enjoy an excellent rapport with their pupils, who readily share their ideas and contribute extensively to their learning. In their questionnaire responses, the vast majority of pupils acknowledged that their teachers help them to learn, and that they are encouraged to think for themselves and to work independently: evidence from the inspection confirmed this. Departmental clinics offer additional opportunities for pupils to develop their subject understanding and skills. Pupils appreciate the willingness of teachers to help them outside the timetabled lessons.
- 3.20 Teachers make use of a range of suitable resources, with modern technology contributing effectively to some lessons. Provision for ICT is good and it is used as required by departments. Pupils' learning is well supported by the attractive library, which contains a wide range of resources, both printed and virtual. Teaching makes excellent use of question-and-answer sessions and discussion to develop pupils' thinking. Clear instructions and frequent praise promote the progress of pupils requiring additional support in their learning, including those with EAL. In many lessons, teaching is thus carefully adapted to pupils' varying needs. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that very able pupils receive appropriate support.
- 3.21 All pupils undergo baseline assessment and screening on arrival, and teachers are made aware of each pupil's needs. Data on ability is used effectively to set appropriate targets and new methods of tracking have recently been introduced. At its best, the marking of books and files is thorough, detailed and constructive, informing pupils of ways to make progress and encouraging self-assessment. However, the systematic monitoring of pupils' progress remains under development since the marking of books and files is variable in quality within and across departments, and some is perfunctory, with details of spelling, punctuation and

grammar not consistently addressed. Thus, in spite of the progress made, marking remains an area for improvement, as noted at the time of previous inspection.

- 3.22 Grade cards issued every three weeks inform pupils of their attainment in relation to academic targets. Termly reports provide commentary from subject teachers to complement assigned grades, set targets and give pupils guidance to help them make progress.

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 Pupils display assured self-awareness and self-esteem, and they develop a high level of emotional maturity. Many pupils' spiritual life is greatly enhanced by the chapel place at the heart of this Christian foundation. A deep commitment is shown by the large number of pupils who play an active part in the chaplaincy: 50 sacristans support the worship and over 10 per cent of the pupils present themselves for confirmation every year. The sacristans have recently established a still place and time for reflection and meditation. Pupils worship calmly and are attentive in chapel. Non-Christian pupils express their faith within local community faith groups. Pupils develop a strong aesthetic appreciation through the high quality of their work in the creative and performing arts. They acquire a deeper sense of their own potential through challenging, adventurous activities such as those in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate an acute sense of right and wrong, understanding reasons for rules in the school and in the wider community. During PSHE and religious studies lessons, pupils discuss moral choices and understand the consequences of these. They recognise importance in taking responsibility for one another, as manifested in drama and sporting activities.
- 4.4 Taking the initiative, pupils support a wide variety of charities, in accordance with the school's aim of developing a sense of compassion and service. Pupils show a high level of commitment to service: for example, they are keen to serve as peer listeners and to be representatives on house and year councils, where they take these responsibilities seriously. Pupils value the opportunity to take part in democratic processes as they elect various school officers. Sixth formers clearly enjoy the service element of the IB, as seen in their support for the Year 9 activities programmes. Pupils bring a keen sense of sportsmanship to competitive contests. In class, with their peers and with adults, pupils are confident, articulate and universally courteous, presenting themselves as friendly and considerate.
- 4.5 Pupils from other countries are integrated extremely well into every aspect of school life; pupils live and study harmoniously together. They are sympathetic to others' beliefs and respectful of different cultures. They enjoy opportunities to learn about others through the varied productions and exhibitions at the North Wall and also through studying literature that reflects cultural variety. Demonstrating excellent civic awareness, pupils have a thorough understanding of British public institutions and services through the comprehensive work covered in PSHE lessons.
- 4.6 Pupils have attained an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 This high standard has been maintained since the previous inspection. The staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims to nurture each individual as a member of its community and promote a warm, happy atmosphere marked by a generosity of spirit. Senior management exercises outstanding oversight of the school's pastoral arrangements.
- 4.9 The house system forms the foundation of the school's pastoral care. Staff know the pupils extremely well and are conscientious, caring and compassionate in providing appropriate support and guidance. There are excellent relationships between pupils and staff and amongst the pupils themselves. The multi-agency pastoral care group meets every week to discuss individuals and issues faced by teenagers. The overseas pupils' co-ordinator plays an increasingly significant role in the culturally diverse school community, providing for the needs of pupils from abroad, and functions such as celebrations for Chinese New Year and American Thanksgiving reflect this.
- 4.10 Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and there is a wide selection of nutritious food on offer, including hot, cold and vegetarian meals. Every pupil pursues some form of sport every week, benefiting from the extensive opportunities for physical exercise.
- 4.11 A minority of pupil respondents to the questionnaire stated that the school does not listen to their opinions. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Inspectors found that the pupil voice is clearly heard through house and year councils, the school council and pupil surveys.
- 4.12 The school is effective in promoting good behaviour, employing, where necessary, an appropriate range of sanctions in response to unacceptable conduct. Pupils behave courteously and considerately around the school. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that any incident would be resolved promptly, fairly and successfully.
- 4.13 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.

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 All staff at the school at the time of the inspection had undergone statutory recruitment checks, but in some cases certain checks had not been carried out before their appointment, as required. In other respects, the school has very thorough arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Staff receive careful and regular child protection training and the school liaises closely with other agencies when necessary. Comprehensive documentation on safeguarding and child protection is available to parents and all members of the school community. The child protection officer works closely with a designated governor, and the governing body largely fulfils its obligations regarding reviewing and monitoring the school's safeguarding procedures.
- 4.16 The school makes much good provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Designated governors have specific oversight of safeguarding and health and safety. Frequent discussion and review of care and welfare practices take place, and of

individual pupils, both informally and at timetabled meetings. School staff and external consultants carry out regular tests of fire prevention and fire-fighting equipment, and fire practices are held regularly. House staff are trained as fire marshals. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out for activities in and out of school. Pupils are well educated in e-safety, including cyber-bullying and social media, and acceptable use of the internet.

- 4.17 Excellent arrangements involving pastoral and medical staff, as well as external professionals and the valued counselling service, ensure that pupils with more serious conditions are particularly well looked after. Pupils who are ill or injured benefit from excellent care, both in their houses and in the well-equipped and welcoming medical centre, which is staffed by qualified nurses. Records of accidents, treatment and medication are accurately maintained and the frequency and nature of accidents closely monitored. The system of allocating a named nurse to each house ensures close communication between the health centre and the houses. A sufficient number of staff are trained first aiders, of whom many are qualified at the higher level.
- 4.18 The admission and attendance registers are accurately completed and kept for the required period. Attendance is closely monitored, with a system of immediate response to a pupil's absence.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.20 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are confident, self-reliant, courteous and tolerant, behaving with integrity and demonstrating high standards of conduct. They greatly enjoy their boarding experience and speak proudly of their loyalty to their houses. Pupils from overseas are well integrated, individuality is respected and different cultures are celebrated. Those with SEND are extremely well supported. Boarders enjoy highly constructive relationships with staff and peers, having many people to whom they feel able to turn for help when necessary. Junior boarders are highly appreciative of the care and friendship shown to them by the senior pupils, who are excellent role models.
- 4.21 Opportunities exist for all boarders to take positions of responsibility on house, school or food councils, and to express their views through questionnaires and house meetings, thus contributing to the smooth running and further improvement of the school community. Most Year 13 pupils have responsibilities for younger year groups, and as trained peer listeners make valuable contributions to the overall pastoral care, as well as helping to organise house activities and inter-house competitions. Senior pupils acknowledge the comprehensive encouragement and advice they receive to support their university applications and feel well equipped and prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. A team of highly committed house staff provides excellent pastoral care for boarders, who are known and supported extremely well. Staffing levels are good, with at least two members of boarding staff on duty daily and overnight. The health centre is extremely well run. Nursing care is available 24 hours a day and house matrons liaise highly effectively with a local doctors' surgery and local agencies. Medicines, policies and care plans are carefully administered and school counsellors attend regularly to provide specialist support.

- 4.23 The catering staff provide an extensive choice of nutritious hot and cold food at mealtimes. Special occasions are celebrated, and dietary requirements for cultural or medical reasons are always met. The excellent quality of the food is greatly appreciated by boarders. In houses, each year group has a well-equipped kitchen for preparation of snacks and drinks after school and at weekends. Boarders have the option to launder clothing themselves, if they wish. Personal possessions can be secured in bedrooms in safes and lockable drawers or cupboards, and personal items can be obtained from the school shop or in nearby Summertown.
- 4.24 Boarders have outstanding opportunities to develop culturally and creatively through the excellent programme of music, drama and dance, and to keep physically fit through the very wide range of sports on offer. They thoroughly enjoy activities on Saturday evenings and appreciate time to relax and pursue their own leisure activities after chapel on Sundays.
- 4.25 Boarding accommodation is of a consistently high standard across the 12 houses. Bedrooms and common rooms are bright, comfortable and well furnished, and some boarders choose to personalise their space with family photographs and memorabilia from home. Each house has its own unique character, which is greatly valued and celebrated by boarders.
- 4.26 Boarders can contact home regularly using mobile telephones or the school landlines, or by email and through the internet. Excellent communication is also maintained between school and parents, who may use a dedicated portal on the school's intranet for information. Pupils have easy access to news and current events from newspapers provided in the houses and from the internet.
- 4.27 The arrangements for welfare and safeguarding are good. At the time of the inspection, all house staff had satisfied the required safeguarding checks, although in a few cases not all of these had been completed at the time of appointment. A committee established by the board of governors monitors compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding School, and there is also governor representation on the health and safety committee. All boarding staff receive regular training in safeguarding and are confident of responding in accordance with procedures should a child protection issue arise. All Year 12 pupils also receive training in safeguarding and child protection. Access to houses is carefully controlled by key code entry. A stringent programme ensures safe internet use. Checks of electrical and fire equipment are completed regularly, and termly unannounced fire drills are standard practice.
- 4.28 Boarders' behaviour is exemplary. Rules are clear and well understood. Pupils are praised for good work and conduct, and sanctions are seen as fair and reasonable. Boarders are taught to be responsible, resourceful and self-regulating, and to keep themselves healthy and free from harm. Arrangements for tracking the whereabouts of boarders at any time are outstanding. Incidents of bullying are rare, and, should they arise, are dealt with quickly and effectively. Detailed advice is also given to counteract cyber-bullying.
- 4.29 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is excellent. The school is highly successful in its aim to provide a full boarding experience, offering a wide range of stimulating and challenging opportunities for each individual to develop fully, to gain confidence and a sense of self-esteem, and to respect others. The school is committed to boarding, with constant review and improvement of its provision and practice. Governors and senior leaders have a clear vision for the

future development of boarding, as part of the school's overarching strategic plan, thus successfully addressing a recommendation of the previous inspection.

- 4.30 Boarding houses are extremely well led by committed teams and the boarding provision is meticulously overseen by senior management. Staffing in the boarding houses is generously resourced to ensure consistent and effective care and support for boarders. Boarding staff are appraised and regularly trained in specific skills to ensure high standards in boarding care practice. There is a seamless link between boarding and the academic life of the school, and day pupils are successfully integrated. Scrupulous tracking of boarders' progress and development academically, socially and emotionally is a key contributor to their overall happiness, well-being and success.
- 4.31 Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress and achievements, and are encouraged to attend school events and matches. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents were extremely satisfied with the boarding provision. A small number of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with some aspects of boarding life. These included concerns about incidents of bullying, about insufficient provision of activities on Sundays, that their views are not sought or heeded and that their belongings are not safe. However, in discussions with boarders and staff held during the inspection, inspectors found little evidence to support these concerns, although the school is actively responding to them.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The board of governors exercises effective oversight and is wholly committed to the improvement of the school and the raising of academic standards. Drawing on a wide range of experience and expertise, the governors conscientiously discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial monitoring and planning, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources.
- 5.3 The strategic development plan communicates a clear and ambitious vision for the future of the school, and the governors work closely with senior leadership to seek the realisation of this vision. The plan incorporates the development of boarding, in accordance with the recommendation of the previous ISI boarding inspection. Very good relations and open communication between governors and senior leadership ensure that the challenge provided by the governors is given and received in a spirit of mutual trust.
- 5.4 The governors' thorough knowledge and understanding of the school derive in part from full reports from senior staff, regular departmental presentations and the experience of many as former pupils or as parents of current or former pupils. Furthermore, governors spend a considerable amount of time in the school, and there is close liaison with staff.
- 5.5 New structures have recently been developed to ensure that governors are fully responsive to their tasks and responsibilities. The remit of the compliance and safeguarding committee includes spot checks of key documents, but the board has not ensured that every statutory check has been completed before the appointment of a member of staff. Individual governors have particular oversight of health and safety and child protection, and the board receives the results of external audits of key aspects of the school's provision. It also annually receives and reviews the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties are discharged.

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

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.7 The school is very well led and managed by highly committed and efficient teams who work collaboratively to support and fulfil its aims. Leadership is strong, strategic and caring, and is highly respected throughout the school community.
- 5.8 The senior leadership team addresses whole-school strategic issues through carefully planned meetings. It works effectively with middle managers to ensure a well-organised and cohesive environment in which pupils enjoy a broad and challenging curriculum, a wide range of extra-curricular activities and excellent personal development.

- 5.9 Middle managers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and are highly valued by other staff, pupils and parents. Staff appreciate the regular and frequent communication regarding pupils' welfare and progress. In weekly meetings between the representatives of sport and music provision and senior managers, activities are prioritised and timetabled to avoid any over-commitment by pupils.
- 5.10 At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management of the school are mostly effective, in accordance with the aims of the school and in discharging their delegated responsibilities. Management has been successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating high quality staff, who are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all pupils, in matters of safeguarding, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.11 Since the previous inspection, the system for staff appraisal has progressed to focus on ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is more effectively monitored. Staff are well supported in their continuing professional development. The comprehensive range of policies is effectively implemented and regularly reviewed, but the single central register of appointments does not meet all of the regulatory requirements. A previous inspection recommendation for the marking of pupils' work to be of a consistently high standard has not been fully met.
- 5.12 The school has excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of education, care and support for their children and with communication with the school. They strongly approve of the choices of subjects offered and with the extensive range of extra-curricular activities available. They appreciate the boarding care provided and would recommend the school to other parents. A very small minority felt that their concerns had not been fully addressed. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Inspectors found that the school has a suitable complaints procedure. Records of the few matters of concern that have been raised show that they were resolved promptly and fairly.
- 5.13 The school website contains all required information and policies for the parents of current and prospective pupils, and up-to-date news, including access to 'Teddis TV'. Parents regularly receive information from the houses, including handbooks and newsletters, and invitations to house social events. The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents. They receive information by email, including a weekly letter, and can access further information about their children from the website through the parent portal.
- 5.14 The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress. In addition to progress reports every three weeks, parents receive clear and informative termly reports on pupils' progress and how to improve their work. Tutors read and discuss reports and targets with pupils before the end of each term. Parents are encouraged to contact staff with any concerns. At least one formal meeting takes place annually for each year group, and the school arranges individual consultation with staff at other times if required.
- 5.15 Parents are invited to the many sports fixtures, plays, concerts and exhibitions, and to other school events. The leadership holds an 'open house' at the beginning of each term and invites the parents of new pupils to dinner during their first year at the school. Parents have many opportunities to visit the boarding houses and are easily able to contact house staff. The parents' association organises well-attended social functions, including regular coffee mornings and a popular annual quiz night.

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