



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

KINGHAM HILL SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Kingham Hill School

Full Name of School	Kingham Hill School
DfE Number	931/6004
Registered Charity Number	310031
Address	Kingham Hill School Kingham Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 6TH United Kingdom
Telephone Number	01608 658999
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Email Address	secretary@kingham-hill.oxon.sch.uk
Headmaster	Mr Nick Seward
Chair of Governors	Mr John Richardson
Age Range	11 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	288
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (180 boys; 108 girls)
Numbers by Age	11-19: 288
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 108
Number of Boarders	Total: 180
	Full: 141 Weekly: 38
	Flexi: 1
Inspection Dates	02 Dec 2014 to 05 Dec 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 November 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) (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 chair of governors and the safeguarding governor, 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 Elizabeth Coley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Marcus Cliff Hodges	Team Inspector (Deputy Warden, HMC school)
Mr David Elstone	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Lynne Renwick	Team Inspector (Headmistress, GSA school)
Mr Bill Rogers	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Flora Bean	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Miss Margaret Connell	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Principal, GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Kingham Hill School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the ages of 11 to 19. It was founded in 1886 and was originally known as 'Kingham Homes for Boys'. It was purpose-built by the Christian philanthropist Charles Edward Baring Young and established as a place where children with a boarding need could be educated and prepared for life. Its Christian foundation is still reflected in the school's ethos and life, although the school welcomes pupils regardless of background or belief.
- 1.2 The school is situated close to the village of Kingham, about four miles from Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire. It comprises 96 acres and includes historic buildings, a leisure complex, playing fields and woodlands. Part of the original school was a farm, and horses and other animals still share the site. It is currently unique in being a traditional British school which is also US-accredited through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).
- 1.3 The school is run as a charitable trust, The Kingham Hill Trust, which also has responsibility for a theological college in North London, and is administered by a board of governors, some of whom are also trustees. Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed, and the school has embarked on the first major redevelopment project since its foundation: a new mathematics and science building is due to be opened next month, January 2015.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 288 pupils on the roll, 180 boys and 108 girls, of whom 209 were in Years 7 to 11, and 79 were in Years 12 and 13. One hundred and eighty pupils board at the school in seven boarding houses: Plymouth and Greenwich are for junior boys and girls respectively in Years 7 to 9; Bradford, Norwich and Sheffield are for the senior boys in Years 10 to 13, and Severn and Durham are for the senior girls in Years 10 to 13. Day pupils belong to one of three houses: Clyde for junior boys, Havelock for senior boys and Latimer for the girls. Sixty-five pupils come from overseas, mainly from China, Germany, Hong Kong, Russia and Spain. Pupils come from families with diverse social, cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds. The school has identified 94 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom two have a statement of special educational needs. The school has a dyslexia unit recognised by the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties. Thirty-six pupils are learning English as an additional language (EAL). The results of standardised tests indicate that the ability profile of the senior school, including Years 12 and 13, is in line with the national average, but throughout the school a fairly wide spread of abilities is represented.
- 1.5 The school aims to provide an excellent all-round education within a distinctively Christian context. It welcomes pupils from a wide range of circumstances and of all faith backgrounds or none. It seeks to produce young people of vision, faith, and character, who are well-qualified and equipped to flourish in their adult lives. It strives to provide a tolerant and welcoming community that allows young people the freedom to wrestle with ultimate questions and come to their own conclusions, to promote and instil strong moral values, to encourage personal responsibility and to develop confident characters who have a concern for the needs of others. The school seeks to uphold the charitable vision of its founder, and his insistence on the importance of feeding both body and soul in all that it does, developing rounded young people who know what it means to love both God and their neighbour.

- 1.6 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by Years 12 and 13 and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Senior School

School	NC name
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning, broadly fulfilling the school's aims. They succeed in their academic work because their attitudes towards their learning and their behaviour are excellent. Pupils also enjoy extremely good relationships with each other and with staff, and they benefit from good teaching overall, although its quality is wide ranging and the style of teaching can sometimes limit progress. The teachers' strong subject knowledge and their effective use of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), enable pupils to make good progress. However, the opportunities for pupils to use ICT in lessons are less frequent, representing little progress since the previous inspection. The stock of books available in the library has been increased since that time. The provision for those pupils with SEND is excellent, and that for pupils with EAL is effective, particularly in the sixth form where a number of international pupils follow the wide range of A-level options or undertake American studies. A broad curriculum, supported by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, enables pupils to gain a broad base of knowledge and skills.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent; within this Christian community, pupils demonstrate qualities of exceptionally good manners, courtesy, tolerance and respect in all their relationships. Many of the pupils reflect carefully on faith issues and have strong moral values. They have a keen sense of responsibility for others less fortunate than themselves, and this is demonstrated by their fund-raising for local, national and global charities. Their cultural awareness is well developed. The high quality care provided by all the staff, teaching and non-teaching, supports the pupils' personal development. The arrangements for safeguarding, welfare, health and safety are sound overall, but two health and safety issues were brought to the school's attention during the inspection. The quality of boarding makes a positive contribution to the personal development of the boarders; however, the lack of external training for boarding staff has an impact on the consistency of the approach between boarding houses. The two recommendations of the previous boarding inspection, concerning the showering facilities for senior female boarders and the internal emergency contact number for the use of senior male boarders at night, have been implemented.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are sound. Governors give effective support to the school and evidence of prudent financial management is seen in the provision of the new mathematics and science building. The governors and senior leadership demonstrate a clear vision. All management procedures are carried out, and appraisal is linked to the school's current annual objective; however, the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sufficiently rigorous to have a strong impact on raising achievement since the previous inspection. The governors' monitoring of compliance with regulatory requirements has not been fully successful. Recent recruitment checks on some staff, including those employed by contractors, and written agreements with other adults who live at the school have not been meticulously carried out before staff began work, although all checks have now been completed. The school promotes excellent links with parents, who are extremely positive about all areas of school life.

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 the required recruitment checks, concerning medical fitness, references and prohibition orders, are carried out on all staff before they begin work at the school, and ensure that the school receives from any contractors confirmation that all required recruitment checks have been carried out on their employees before they begin work at the school [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(3) and 20.(2)(a), under Suitability of staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7 and 8, under Welfare, health and safety, National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults, and National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection];
- improve the security arrangements and the external lighting to ensure that all in the school community can safely move round the school site [Part 5, paragraphs 23C. and 23E(b), under Premises and accommodation; and, for the same reason, National Minimum Standard 6.2, under Safety of boarders].

2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, and therefore it must, in addition to the above:

- ensure that written agreements are promptly drawn up between the school and any person over 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as boarders [National Minimum Standard 14.3, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Further develop the monitoring of teaching and learning by carrying out lesson observations more rigorously.
2. Widen the range of teaching styles by sharing the most effective practice already within the school, in order to raise achievement further.
3. Promote the use of ICT by pupils in lessons.
4. Develop a more rigorous system for the governors to monitor and evaluate the school's compliance with regulatory requirements.
5. Prioritise external training opportunities for boarding staff to give a consistency of approach across boarding.

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 good.
- 3.2 It supports the school's aims to produce young people of vision, faith, and character, who are well-qualified and equipped to flourish in their adult lives. Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, display good knowledge and understanding in their lessons. They are articulate and have good levels of literacy and numeracy. More able pupils take part in the school's 'Octagon' programme which offers them the opportunity to undertake extended projects involving independent thought and research. Such independent approaches were less evident in other lessons. Pupils have well-developed reading and writing skills; they are creative, they reason effectively and most are confident about applying their literacy and numeracy skills. They have fewer opportunities to develop their skills in ICT effectively in lessons. Sixth-form pupils show more initiative in their learning; most have highly developed communication skills and use these effectively in order to work collaboratively and with enjoyment.
- 3.3 The excellent extra-curricular programme allows pupils to develop their skills to high standards and makes a very strong contribution to their personal development. Pupils enter for the UK mathematics challenge and gain gold, silver and bronze awards. USA high school diplomas are awarded to American and international pupils completing USA educational requirements. Pupils succeed in several sports, particularly rugby, where some go on to regional representation. Pupils also achieve well in instrumental music and speech and drama examinations, with many pupils gaining merits or distinctions. Others have gained leadership awards through the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and a number have achieved the bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). On average over the last three years, approximately two-thirds of Year 11 pupils stayed on at Kingham Hill for their sixth-form education, with those leaving moving to sixth-form colleges or maintained schools, or choosing to be nearer home. At the end of Year 13, almost three-quarters of pupils in 2014 applied for university places with a large majority gaining places at their first-choice institution, and a significant proportion continued their education at American universities. Other pupils moved into apprenticeships, further vocational training, or employment.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been similar to the national average for maintained schools. In 2012 and 2013, girls' results were above the national average for girls in maintained schools. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make appropriate progress in the senior school in relation to pupils of similar abilities. A-level results have been similar to the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In 2013 results overall were good in relation to the national average for maintained schools, and throughout girls' results have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools. This level of attainment at A level indicates that pupils make progress in the sixth form that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. During the inspection, as assessed in lesson observation, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews with them, progress was judged to be good overall.

- 3.5 The progress of pupils with SEND is strong because they are often given tasks which are matched effectively to their needs or they are given individual support by subject teachers within lessons. Specialist teachers also give additional support either on a one-to-one or group basis, focusing on the particular needs of each pupil which makes an extremely good contribution to their overall progress. The progress of those with EAL is also good because all staff are aware of their needs and ensure that they understand what is required of them. Progress for all pupils is more rapid where they are encouraged to think for themselves and when they are challenged.
- 3.6 Pupils enjoy learning. The good presentation of their work is indicative of considerable effort. However in some lessons in Years 7 to 11, they do not cover as much work as they could because the pace of the lesson is slow. They work well with one another and also value the support given to them by their teachers. They are particularly enthusiastic about their development through extra-curricular activities; for example within the creative writing club some younger pupils were excited about composing extended stories with the encouragement and advice of their teacher.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.8 The curriculum is broad and covers the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative areas of learning well. It is consistent with the school's aims to provide a rounded education so that pupils are qualified and equipped to flourish in their adult lives and it makes an effective contribution to pupils' achievement. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 follows the National Curriculum. Pupils' linguistic skills are developed well, as they learn either French or Spanish. Once in Year 9, pupils are offered the opportunity to take up Latin, and this is becoming a popular choice. ICT skills are not promoted sufficiently well across the curriculum on a regular basis in lessons. The curriculum does not include an ICT course throughout but, in Year 9 only, all pupils take lessons in digital literacy during activity time.
- 3.9 At GCSE the pupils follow the core subjects of English, mathematics and science with four further subjects from a wide range of options, including triple award science. A flexible approach enables an individual pupil's curriculum to be matched to their needs with pupils studying a reduced number of GCSE subjects if, for example, they require extra support with their learning. Pupils with EAL are offered the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) qualification and are expected to gain a grade six before beginning an A-level course. The A-level curriculum provides pupils in the sixth form with a choice of twenty academic subjects suited to their individual capabilities and interests. American students are especially well catered for as they follow courses that ensure they meet USA educational requirements in American history and politics. The sixth-form curriculum is enhanced by enrichment activities that cover cultural studies and an extensive seminar programme, including lectures on healthy relationships and staying safe online.
- 3.10 The quality of curriculum planning is variable. The best schemes of work are detailed and include information about assessment opportunities and how work will be matched to pupils' needs.

- 3.11 The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) throughout the school is effective and follows a comprehensive scheme of work. A well-devised careers programme means pupils receive formal guidance from Year 9, through option evenings to which their parents are invited. In Year 11 the majority of pupils participate in an external careers guidance programme and benefit from formal one-to-one interviews. In the sixth form, pupils receive substantial guidance on higher education.
- 3.12 The school provides an excellent facility for those pupils with SEND, who are fully included in all aspects of school life. Identification of these pupils is undertaken at the earliest opportunity and parents are involved straightaway. Individual education plans, which meet the needs of the individual pupils and contain a few succinct but relevant targets, are produced and reviewed termly. The annual reviews of those pupils with a statement is undertaken as required. All staff are aware of the needs of these pupils and support them well within the subject classrooms. The teaching provided by specialist staff is of a high quality, and pupils are very appreciative of the support given. The more able pupils are catered for through the 'Octagon' programme as well as being provided with effective support within most subject lessons. Those pupils with EAL are also provided for effectively, whether it is for supporting their English skills ready for entering a British university or enabling them to further their education in the USA when they leave Kingham Hill.
- 3.13 Academic trips are organised throughout the year to support the curriculum within the classroom and to extend extra-curricular activities, but they do not cover all subjects and age groups evenly. The academic curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that include sports, music, DofE, CCF and drama. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to perform in musical concerts and drama productions throughout the year. There are frequent games fixtures and all pupils participate regularly in a variety of sport. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to learn outside the formal curriculum.
- 3.14 Strong community links greatly benefit the pupils. These include involvement with the theatre in Chipping Norton, charity events which are very much valued and enjoyed by the pupils, and participation in 'Helping Hands', a programme that supports local community projects, which pupils say they find fulfilling and rewarding.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.15 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.16 It supports the aims of the school and makes an effective contribution to pupils' achievement. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, make good use of resources and know the pupils well. Small class sizes and excellent relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that pupils make good progress.
- 3.17 Some teaching is excellent; this quality is characterised by careful planning, and incorporates pace, challenge and varied tasks which engage the pupils, particularly the more able, and enable them to think and reason independently. Excellent collaborative working between pupils is also encouraged and observed. Opportunities are taken to extend pupils' thinking, presenting them with tasks and questions that require them to apply their subject knowledge and understanding to solving problems. The teacher's enthusiasm for the subject is evident, and this fosters interest in the pupils. In a number of sixth-form lessons, excellent teaching was seen which enabled rapid progress to be made by pupils. In the less successful

lessons, encouragement of independent learning is limited. In these lessons there are lower expectations, a lack of variety in teaching styles and over-direction by the teacher resulting in little interaction between staff and pupils. Issues with slow pace have an adverse effect both on the volume of work covered by all of the pupils and their consequent progress.

- 3.18 Pupils with SEND receive excellent support from their specialist teachers and effective support in subject lessons overall. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs meets their individual needs and fulfils the requirements of their statements. The support received by students with EAL is effective and results in good achievement. All of these pupils are integrated well in mainstream lessons. The information circulated about them is used to excellent effect in the most successful lessons.
- 3.19 Assessment procedures are thorough. The monitoring of pupils' progress is detailed. A schedule of regular achievement grades set against expected grades keeps pupils, tutors and parents informed of the progress being made. This process includes meetings which allow for the discussion of pupils' successes and concerns among staff, and for the effective implementation of strategies to improve pupils' progress. The marking of pupils' work remains variable. At its best it is thorough and regular, and includes helpful advice and targets to improve. The school has recently introduced a modified marking policy with clear guidance for staff on key aspects of pupils' work which need to be assessed. Regular work scrutiny by senior staff is being used to monitor its effective implementation.
- 3.20 A small minority of pupils in their responses to the questionnaire raised concerns about the amount of homework. On investigation, it was found that pupils are given a suitable amount of homework but staff do not always follow the published timetable which then makes it difficult for pupils to complete the work set when too much is given on any one evening. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its ICT infrastructure, including the provision of interactive whiteboards in classrooms and the installation of a significantly faster internet connection. Staff make effective use of ICT in their teaching. However, they do not give sufficient opportunity for pupils to use ICT in lessons which remains limited, a factor at the time of the previous inspection, although pupils with SEND are regular users of laptops in a variety of subjects. The use of the library has increased since the previous inspection. Additional stock has been acquired and the borrowing rates among pupils have increased significantly.

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 Pupils' personal qualities are very well developed. Their spiritual awareness is extremely good and the Christian ethos of the school permeates all relationships, engendering mutual respect and tolerance for others from all faith backgrounds or none. Pupils quietly reflect on a daily basis in chapel, assemblies and in tutor time and demonstrate a strong sense of self-worth. They are helpful and supportive of one another and consequently develop meaningful relationships. Pupils of all ages display a genuine warmth and concern for each other. They learn to appreciate the non-material aspects of life and, in a range of subjects such as art, they are encouraged to appreciate and explore what it is to be human. As they develop and grow they begin to demonstrate a high level of emotional maturity.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, pupils display an excellent sense of moral awareness and a keen understanding of right and wrong. They appreciate that everyone has the right to feel safe and valued. They are also aware of the importance of speaking out against discrimination. Pupils have a clear understanding of ethical issues such as the genocide in Rwanda. They discuss moral issues such as the Holocaust with sensitivity and maturity. All pupils, including those from overseas, appreciate and acknowledge the sacrifice of previous generations, for example by visiting the battlefields in France and by marking events such as Remembrance Day. Around school, pupils display a deep concern for the welfare of fellow pupils and a strong sense of community spirit is evident.
- 4.4 Pupils' social development is excellent. They are confident, polite and articulate, relationships are extremely good and they collaborate successfully in lessons and activities. In the pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils felt that opportunities for taking up responsibilities were limited, but inspectors found no evidence to support this. On the contrary, good opportunities for leadership present themselves in the house system as house and deputy house captains, and as school prefects and monitors. By holding positions of responsibility, senior pupils act as excellent role models. Other pupils also exercise effective leadership, for example by being elected to the school council, participating on the food committee and leading CCF. Pupils are aware of the needs of the less fortunate. They demonstrate a social conscience through their involvement in charity work, for example locally with a children's hospice, nationally and internationally in support of global charities. Sixth-form pupils in particular have a strong understanding of economic and political awareness through subjects such as economics, government and politics, accountancy and business studies.
- 4.5 Pupils' cultural awareness is strong. They respect and value all the cultures of the different nationalities represented in the school, living in tolerance, respect and harmony. There are frequent opportunities to explore cultural differences, for example in faith-based assemblies and curriculum areas such as music. Sixth-form pupils are linked with an orphanage in Zambia and experience at first hand global inequality. 'Culture Club' presents an excellent opportunity to develop social skills and etiquette. Music and dramatic productions also offer effective outlets for creative talents. Pupils' awareness of what constitutes fundamental British values is good. The school teaches law, liberty and tolerance and educates pupils in 'body, mind and soul' in accordance with its aims to produce law-abiding citizens. In PSHE

and theology, pupils develop a clear understanding of what it means to live in a democracy with respect for law, liberty and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

- 4.6 By the time they leave the school, pupils' level of personal development is of a very high standard and they are ready to pursue their studies or employment as good citizens of the community.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.8 The pastoral support and guidance offered to pupils make an effective contribution to pupils' personal development, exemplifying the school's aim to be a tolerant and welcoming community which appreciates the needs and qualities of each individual. Houses are the hub of each pupil's school life, both for day pupils and for boarders, and are of a size which encourage a family atmosphere. Pupils feel safe at school, and they can readily identify staff and external agencies to whom they can bring any problems, confident that they will be helped. House parents and their deputies, tutors and pastoral assistants know the pupils very well, and weekly meetings with teaching staff ensure that pupils' academic progress and welfare are monitored carefully. Pupils with SEND or EAL are supported sensitively by staff who understand their individual needs.
- 4.9 Relationships between pupils and staff, and between the pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils are mutually supportive, with monitors and prefects acting as good role models.
- 4.10 The school has a clear code of conduct, well understood by the pupils, and records show that any rewards or sanctions given are fair, and are appropriate and proportionate to the offence committed, contrary to the views of a small minority of pupils in their responses to the questionnaire. In interview, the majority of pupils felt that the school's response to bullying, once it has been detected, is decisive and generally effective. Instances of bullying are carefully recorded, as seen in the examination of the school's bullying log and record of serious disciplinary offences, and monitored so that appropriate anti-bullying strategies can be reinforced.
- 4.11 A healthy lifestyle is effectively promoted, with nutritious meals provided. All pupils are given opportunities for regular exercise through an extensive programme of games and activities, including individual and team sports, catering for all tastes and for all levels of physical ability. The school has a clear and suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 When asked whether the school seeks the opinions of pupils and responds to them, a minority of the pupils in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that this was not the case. In interviews, most were aware of the existence of the school council, which meets weekly once its members have been elected in the second half of the autumn term. Recent suggestions brought to the school council have elicited a positive response, such as the construction of speed humps to enhance safety within the school grounds, but there are no clear mechanisms whereby proposals can be brought to the attention of the school council and its deliberations reported back to the pupils. There is also a food committee which meets regularly with the catering department to put forward their views about menus.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements to safeguard and promote pupils' health and safety and welfare are sound.
- 4.14 The school's safeguarding policy is suitable in content, but its implementation has not been sufficiently rigorous in respect of a few recent staff recruitment checks. On a day-to-day basis, safeguarding arrangements are effective. Appropriate training in child protection is provided to all staff, and they are aware of the safeguarding policy, associated guidance and their own responsibilities in this area of welfare. Strong links have been made with the local children's social care services and safeguarding children board. Any child protection issues arising have been dealt with according to local guidelines and referred on to external agencies immediately. Detailed records demonstrate that the school responds effectively to the needs of its pupils, and inter-agency meetings are attended by the designated safeguarding lead. In their responses to pre-inspection questionnaires pupils say they feel safe, a view shared by parents. The school is a welcoming community, in line with its aims, and the school's concern for the welfare of the pupils contributes effectively to their personal development.
- 4.15 The school's measures to guard against risk of fire and other hazards are strong. Fire safety equipment is checked, drills are held regularly and fire safety exits are kept clear and signed appropriately. Pupils and staff understand the evacuation procedures. Risk connected with different sections of the school, subject areas and facilities, and off-site trips is carefully assessed.
- 4.16 The health and safety committee includes members from all appropriate areas of the school as well as a nominated governor. It regularly reviews concerns identified within the school. However, outside lighting in the evening is not sufficient for all in the school community to move around the site safely. The other health and safety issue brought to the notice of the school at the time of the inspection refers to some inadequate security arrangements.
- 4.17 The arrangements for injured or ill pupils are appropriate, with the medical centre providing suitable facilities. Many staff have first-aid qualifications. Details of any accidents are kept efficiently and monitored to enable improvements to be made in procedures when necessary. Pupils with SEND receive strong support for their welfare from all in the school community.
- 4.18 The school maintains accurate admission and attendance registers and these are stored appropriately, as required.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.19 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.20 The outcomes for boarders are good and they have a high standard of personal development. They are courteous, polite and pleasantly confident. They are respectful and appreciative of the international boarding community. Boarders make a conscious effort to develop and sustain positive relationships with one another and excellent relationships exist between boarders and boarding staff. Boarders know that they can approach any member of staff for support and guidance. They are comfortable in boarding and enjoy life in their house, in particular the Tuesday evening 'in-house' event with team games, food and fun together. Boarders contribute well to the smooth running of their house, assuming responsibilities as

house captains, deputies and prefects, taking pride in their contribution. They look after their house and personal areas well, and help with tasks. Excellent provision to help those with SEND or EAL in their academic, social or emotional needs is well established. Those with SEND are comfortable in the company of others, and feel accepted as individuals within an inclusive boarding house community. Those with EAL integrate well and enjoy joining in with other boarders in day-to-day life.

- 4.21 Boarders can express opinions in frequent house meetings but procedures for using formal avenues for pupils to voice their views and be given clear feedback are less well developed than they should be. In keeping with the Christian ethos and aims of the school, boarders play an active part in raising money for charity both here and abroad. They take care to keep safe, fit and healthy and look after each other well. They are well prepared for the next stage of life at school or beyond and look forward to increasing independence and responsibility.
- 4.22 The quality of boarding provision and care is good. The house staff make positive efforts to get to know the boarders well as individuals. New boarders are helped to settle in quickly, having been provided with details about boarding life. Boarders with emotional or social difficulties almost always settle in well. Great care is taken to understand each boarder's social and academic needs and to ensure those needs are well met. Boarders know that members of staff, the independent listener, and external agencies such as the Children's Commissioner are available to them should any problems arise. The house staff show good concern for the health and well-being of the boarders and, together with the medical staff, look after them effectively. Care plans for those with medical needs are well formulated and their implementation is closely followed by the medical centre and house staff. The arrangements and facilities for sick or injured boarders are of a good quality, both during the day and overnight, and medicines are administered and recorded correctly. Other medical provision, such as dental and optometric services, are available should they be needed.
- 4.23 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, negative comments regarding food were made by a majority of pupils. Inspectors agree with boarders who reported during the inspection that there is generally nutritious and varied food with suitable choices at lunchtime, but that the choice is reduced in the evening. Care is taken to accommodate individual dietary needs. Boarders on the food committee say that the catering department respond to their suggestions and menus were seen to be suitable. In their responses to the questionnaire, a minority of boarders were not happy about the availability of snacks and water outside meal times. Inspectors found that plenty of bread, biscuits and milk is available within the houses at appropriate times between meals, and some have fruit. Water is available throughout the school site and pupils can help themselves to this at any time.
- 4.24 A small minority of boarders in their questionnaire responses said that they did not feel there was a good balance between activities and free time. Inspectors found that boarders take excellent advantage of the opportunities available to them in the evenings and at weekends. The range of extra-curricular activities and weekend trips is extensive. However, boarders said that the balance has improved recently and that they have a little more opportunity to relax at weekends now. They have suitable access to daily newspapers and the internet at certain hours during the day and in the evenings. They study within their houses or can use the library as appropriate. House staff celebrate boarders' effort and successes in the houses and any notable individual achievements. Boarding accommodation is secure and comfortable, and includes pleasant common room areas and more than adequate

washroom facilities. Since the previous inspection, facilities have been refurbished for senior girls and the arrangements for contacting staff at night have been improved for senior male boarders, recommendations from the previous inspection. Boarders can personalise an area of their room if they wish. Good provision is made for laundry and they can obtain personal and stationery items when they visit local towns at the weekends. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of boarders said that their possessions were not safe. Boarders are given either lockable cupboards with locks built in using keys, or they are asked to provide a padlock for the cupboards, which are attached to their beds or study units, depending on which house they are in. On visiting the boarding houses, some cupboards with contents inside were found to have been left unlocked by their owners, even though locking facilities were available. Boarders can keep in touch with their families through electronic communication or by using telephones which are available in each house.

- 4.25 The effectiveness of the arrangements for welfare and safeguarding of boarders is sound. Almost all requirements for health and safety are met, and arrangements for fire safety and risk assessment are effectively implemented, with fire practices held each term as required. Safe recruitment procedures were not carried out rigorously before a small number of staff began work but these have now been completed. Written agreements between the school and other adults not employed by the school but living in the boarding houses had not been completed at the correct time. The boarders report that they feel safe in boarding and are well looked after. Boarders are warned of risks and are made aware of the necessary procedures for their safety. The school works effectively concerning child protection at inter-agency level with the Local Safeguarding Children Board if there are boarders who require help.
- 4.26 Boarders have high standards of behaviour and relate well to each other within a diverse cultural community. They are aware of the need to resolve any conflicts in a friendly manner. However, the systems for recording behavioural difficulties are not consistent between houses and sanctions are not always recorded in sufficient detail. The policies for using restraint and searching pupils and their possessions are known by staff and pupils. Staff are sufficient in number for the supervision of boarders at all times and boarders know how to contact staff at night should they need them. The policy for reporting and finding a missing boarder is clear, in the unlikely event that any pupil should go missing.
- 4.27 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of boarding is sound. There is a clear statement of boarding which supports the aims and ethos of the school, and it is implemented effectively in practice. House staff work well together and good liaison with academic staff ensures boarders are well supported in their personal and academic development. Recent changes in the management of boarding have resulted in effective weekly meetings to support boarding staff which those new to the school in particular have found helpful. However, staff do not currently have sufficient training opportunities to develop their knowledge and expertise further for boarding and as a result inconsistency in practice exists in some procedures between the boarding houses. Some policies and procedures have recently been reviewed and all are generally implemented appropriately. All the required records are kept and suitably monitored by senior boarding staff. Effective action has been taken to meet the recommendations identified at the time of the previous inspection. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the parents were extremely supportive of all aspects of the boarding provision.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 The governing body has strengths but also areas for improvement. It administers the school appropriately in line with its aim of offering an all-round education within a distinctly Christian context, and upholding the vision of its founder in developing young people of vision, faith and character. The governors' committee structure and the expertise of individual governors effectively support the educational direction of the school. Strategic and financial planning are strong and governors, together with the senior management team, have a secure vision for the future of the school in the long term, as seen in the provision of the new science and mathematics building which is due to be opened in January 2015. Good provision is made for human and material resources and accommodation, and the board offers an effective level of support and challenge to senior managers when considering the future development of the school. All governors have been given particular oversight of subjects or aspects of the school, including child protection, health and safety, the provision for those pupils with SEND and the house system for boarding and day pupils.
- 5.3 Governors meet with senior managers and staff during the days on which governors' meetings are held, which keeps avenues of communication open and strengthens their oversight and knowledge of the school. The headmaster and bursar prepare reports for the board's meetings which give detailed information about the school's successes and challenges for the future, and which include reports from other areas of school life such as the chaplaincy. Governors' minutes indicate that they debate and suitably respond to issues as they arise. The chair keeps in close contact with the headmaster. All governors attend the school for various special events.
- 5.4 The board endeavours to keep abreast of its responsibilities for welfare, health and safety and safeguarding. However, two health and safety issues were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection. Moreover, whilst it is clear from discussion that the full board has carried out its duty to review annually the safeguarding policy and procedures, and has considered the written report of the designated safeguarding lead, the minutes recording their debate and conclusions are insufficient in rigour and depth. Governors have not monitored the content or implementation of policies in order to comply with regulations as carefully as is needed, with the result that recruitment checks have not always been carried out rigorously.

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

- 5.5 Leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, are sound.
- 5.6 The school successfully fulfils its aims of providing a tolerant and welcoming community, promoting and instilling strong moral values and developing confident characters who have a concern for the needs of others. This is demonstrated in the good quality of the educational experience offered and the excellent personal development of the pupils. The headmaster, senior managers and governors have a strong and clear vision for the longer-term future of the school. The annual whole-

- school objective has a small number of targets for development so that the staff can contribute productively to its fulfilment through their own areas of responsibility.
- 5.7 Senior managers have reflected recently on their leadership by restructuring their roles and responsibilities with the intention that line management will be clearer. They are supported in their leadership by a cohesive and committed group of teaching and non-teaching staff. Together with middle managers, the headmaster and senior managers are involved in lesson observation and work scrutiny, and all teaching staff are encouraged to participate in peer observation, both within and across their departments. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been undertaken with enough rigour since the previous inspection to have sufficient impact on the overall levels of achievement. In addition, the monitoring by senior management of subject departments is insufficiently focused, resulting in an inconsistency of approach in the implementation of some educational policies.
- 5.8 An effective feature of management is the way in which clear links exist between appraisal and the annual whole-school objective. Communication is continuous between staff, both formal and informal, about academic and pastoral matters. Staff and tutors who have various responsibilities within houses are particularly focused on promoting the welfare and integration of all within this diverse school community. All staff have been suitably trained for their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety. Continuing professional development is encouraged and both teaching and support staff take the opportunity to attend in-service training courses, both in-house and externally.
- 5.9 Scrutiny of the evidence prior to the inspection showed that the school has not always been rigorous in ensuring that it keeps up-to-date with the most recent regulatory requirements. By the end of the inspection, the school had taken suitable steps to ensure that identified shortcomings had been dealt with, and all documents now comply with requirements. However, policies and procedures are not always implemented with consistency by all staff. Staff recruitment checks have not been meticulously carried out recently. A few staff have been appointed before all checks, such as those on references, prohibition orders and medical fitness, were completed, and the school had not received written confirmation about the recruitment of staff employed by contractors. No checks are currently outstanding and all staff have received criminal record checks. The single central register accurately records all procedures undertaken. Two health and safety issues were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection. The premises and grounds are used effectively and are well maintained. The care and expertise of all those who work to support the pupils through the administration, catering, and maintenance departments enable the school to run efficiently.
- 5.10 In accordance with its aims the school maintains excellent relationships with parents. Those who responded to the questionnaire overwhelmingly indicated that the school was well led and managed. They were also very positive about the range of subjects provided, the availability of information about the school and the fact that their child is well looked after. There were no concerns raised by a significant number of parents.
- 5.11 The school has an appropriate procedure for handling complaints which is available to parents and which has been reviewed recently. Examination of the complaints' file indicated that records of complaints are detailed and clear and follow the school's procedures. The great majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire confirmed that any concerns had been handled well and that their

enquiries had been answered. The headmaster seeks parents' views through an annual questionnaire and uses their responses to evaluate and improve the school's operation.

- 5.12 Parents have many opportunities to be actively involved in the education of their children including watching them perform in productions and play sport. Local parents appreciate the monthly invitation to enjoy morning coffee in the sixth-form centre and value the school's support in running their active parents' association. Parents may also use the school's leisure centre when it is not needed for the pupils. They stated that they regarded themselves as part of the school's family and were of the view that this in turn strongly benefited their children.
- 5.13 Communications are very well maintained by the school. All the required information about the school and its policies is readily available for parents on the website, and parents of new pupils are given a comprehensive joining pack. All parents receive a weekly and a termly newsletter and those parents who spoke to inspectors were satisfied that the school would advise them promptly of any concerns about their child. Parents are fully advised of their children's progress. There is an annual parents' evening. Reports are detailed, encouraging and give a clear summary of each pupil's progress along with an appreciation of individual pupils' qualities. Reports are supplemented by regular half-termly grade sheets detailing attainment and potential. There is also regular email contact from house parents about boarders' well-being or any concerns.

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