



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**ROEDEAN SCHOOL**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Roedean School

Full Name of School	<b>Roedean School</b>
DfE Number	<b>846/6006</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>307063</b>
Address	<b>Roedean School Roedean Way Brighton East Sussex BN2 5RQ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01273 667500</b>
Fax Number	<b>01273 676722</b>
Email Address	<b>schooloffice@roedean.co.uk</b>
Head	<b>Mr Oliver Blond</b>
Chairman of Council	<b>Mr Simon Rothon</b>
Age Range	<b>11 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>440</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>
Numbers by Age	11-18: <b>440</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>183</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>257</b> Full: <b>223</b> Weekly: <b>26</b> Flexi: <b>8</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>08 Mar 2016 to 11 Mar 2016</b>

## PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI intermediate boarding inspection was in February 2013 with an interim inspection in February 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the Chairman of Council, 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**

Ms Margaret Burnet	Reporting Inspector
Mr Michael Goodwin	Team Inspector (Head, Society of Heads school)
Mr Paul Lunn	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Catherine Sams	Team Inspector (Vice-Principal, GSA school)
Ms Olwen Wright	Team Inspector (Senior Leader, ISA school)
Mrs Flora Bean	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Mrs Christine Rees	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Boarding, Compliance, HMC school)

## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>2</b>
(a)	<b>Main findings</b>	2
(b)	<b>Action points</b>	3
	(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	3
	(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	3
<b>3</b>	<b>THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
(a)	The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning	4
(b)	The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)	5
(c)	The contribution of teaching	6
<b>4</b>	<b>THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
(a)	The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils	8
(b)	The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care	9
(c)	The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety	10
(d)	The quality of boarding	10
<b>5</b>	<b>THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
(a)	The quality of governance	13
(b)	The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians	13

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Roedean School is an independent day and boarding school for girls from the ages of 11 to 18. It is situated in Brighton, at the edge of the Sussex Downs. The school was founded in 1885 to prepare girls for a university education and their future careers. It was constituted under a Royal Charter in 1938 and is administered as a charitable trust by a board of trustees, referred to as Council, who have oversight of the school. The school continues to follow the aims of the founders: to provide a strong academic foundation; to encourage healthy and active living, and an appreciation of sport, culture and the arts; to build skills, confidence and independence of thought and character; and to develop a strong sense of personal and moral values.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection the school has seen a significant change in the staff body and the development of new leadership structures, with a new head appointed in 2013. Four boarding houses have undergone extensive refurbishment.
- 1.3 Of the 440 pupils on the roll at the time of the inspection, 263 pupils are in the Lower School for Years 7 to 11, and 177 pupils comprise the sixth form. The school has 257 boarders and 183 day pupils, and most of the latter live in the immediate vicinity. A small number of day pupils are from minority ethnic families, and most pupils are from professional family backgrounds. The school has 5 boarding houses, with Years 7 to 12 accommodated in 4. The remaining house is for Year 13 boarders only. Boarders come from a wide range of nationalities. The school offers full, weekly and flexible boarding.
- 1.4 The ability profile of the senior school is above the national average, and the ability profile of the sixth form is above the national average for pupils in sixth form education. Of the 39 pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 12 receive specialist learning support. English is spoken as an additional language (EAL) by 181 pupils, 60 of whom receive additional support. The school has 1 pupil with a statement of educational needs and 1 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

### ***Senior School***

<b>School</b>	<b>NC name</b>
U3	Year 7
L4	Year 8
U4	Year 9
L5	Year 10
U5	Year 11
6-1 (sixth form)	Year 12
6-2 (sixth form)	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in achieving its aims. All pupils, including those with SEND or EAL and the more able, achieve excellent results in external examinations. Pupils, including those in the sixth form, make a high rate of progress in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. They have an exemplary attitude towards learning which contributes to their success. Pupils enjoy their lessons, working together well to attain high standards of learning. Teaching is excellent, with effective support and challenge for pupils of all needs and abilities. Pupils benefit from an excellent curriculum and a wide range of subjects to choose from, particularly in the sixth form. They achieve high levels of success in the many extra-curricular activities available.
- 2.2 The school is active in promoting key values that contribute to the pupils' personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Staff and pupils have mutual respect for each other. Pupils are engaging, confident and supportive of each other. They have high levels of self-esteem and understand the importance of contributing to the school community. Pupils' cultural development is excellent and they value the many opportunities provided to share their lives with those from other countries. The strength of their personal development is evident in their participation in the school council, assemblies and notably in links with the local community. Well-organised pastoral care and an extremely caring boarding system ensure that all pupils mature in line with the school's aims. Recently refurbished boarding houses are shared by both day girls and boarders, leading to excellent integration and a strong house spirit. Pupils report that they feel happy and safe at school, which is a result of effective arrangements for safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety. A newly introduced programme of merits and demerits has not been fully explained and is therefore not understood or appreciated by all pupils. By the time they leave the school, all pupils have an excellent standard of personal development.
- 2.3 Excellent governance, leadership and management have supported a period of rapid change and significant progress since the previous inspection, based on a clear vision for the future. Trustees know the school extremely well. Through their combined expertise and experience, they provide the school and its leadership with support and stimulus for its development. Leadership and management provide a strong framework for self-evaluation and effective monitoring of pupils' well-being throughout the school. Pastoral leadership is very strong but not all form tutoring is yet of the highest quality. The recommendations of the previous inspections, concerning monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, integrating pupil targets into the assessment process, and developing a programme of self-evaluation for each boarding house have been fully met.

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

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

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

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

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Extend the current high quality of tutoring throughout the school.
  2. Clarify to the pupils the purpose of the system of rewards and sanctions, and the way in which it is implemented.



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

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Throughout the school, pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims. Pupils, including those with SEND or EAL, display excellent levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in their academic studies and extra-curricular activities. They have very well-developed reading and writing skills. Pupils are articulate in discussions, listening carefully and expressing themselves confidently. They demonstrate significant levels of linguistic ability, including those working in a second language. Pupils confidently apply their excellent mathematical skills. They are logical and demonstrate that they enjoy thinking independently. Pupils have outstanding levels of creativity. They enjoy physical activity, where they demonstrate considerable competence. More able pupils develop their ideas through involvement in pupil-led clubs and by presenting lectures on areas of interest to them. Pupils in the sixth form display maturity and high levels of competence in both their studies and leadership skills.
- 3.3 Pupils achieve at a high level individually and in teams in many extra-curricular activities, which makes a considerable contribution to their personal development. In sports, pupils achieve excellence with local and national honours. Pupils participate in excellent extra-curricular activities with notable success in mathematical and science Olympiads, computer coding, drama, and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE). Over one-third of those taking instrumental music examinations achieve distinction. On leaving school, nearly all pupils gain a place at their first choice of university. A large majority of pupils gain places to universities that have a high standard of entry.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for 2012 to 2014, the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results at GCSE have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and in-line with the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results show improvement from 2012 to 2014. The IGCSE examination results have been higher than worldwide norms and are also similar to those achieved by UK schools that take these examinations. Results at A level have been above the national average for girls in maintained schools and above the national average for girls in maintained selective schools. Results in 2013 were well above the national average for girls in maintained schools.
- 3.5 These levels of attainment at GCSE and at A level together with nationally standardised measures of progress, pupils' work scrutinised, lessons observed and curriculum interviews indicate that all pupils make progress that is high in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. Strong self-motivation which is encouraged by excellent individual support allows pupils with SEND and the more able to make rapid progress. Pupils with EAL make significant progress as a result of the language support they receive, which allows them to work at a high level in their second language. Almost all pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they make good progress in their work.
- 3.6 Pupils have an extremely positive attitude towards learning. In class, they are attentive and work very well both independently and with their peers. Pupils have excellent organisational skills. They speak confidently in lessons and interact

positively with their teachers. Pupils demonstrate extremely good levels of initiative outside of the classroom through their collaborative organisation of house events. They also achieve well through their keenness to be involved in community action work and charity fundraising. In the sixth form, pupils express their ideas with confidence and maturity.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The contribution of the curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities is fully in line with the school's aims and strongly supports pupils' excellent achievements. The broad range of the academic curriculum and many extra-curricular opportunities available are suitable for all pupils in the school regardless of their abilities and needs, including those with an EHC plan. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very large majority of parents were satisfied that their children are offered an appropriate range of subjects, activities and areas of experience.
- 3.9 Pupils in Years 7 to 9 pursue a range of subjects including the sciences, the humanities and expressive arts, covering all the required areas of learning. Modern foreign languages offered include French, Spanish, German, Russian and Chinese. At GCSE, pupils generally choose 10 subjects from a wide range of options which includes English, mathematics and 3 separate sciences or dual award science. Sixth form pupils can select from subjects including those offered at GCSE, and a range of new options which include such subjects as business studies, economics, psychology and classical civilization. They also have opportunities to take part in academic seminars and societies organised by the pupils themselves. The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) curriculum is delivered through assemblies and form tutor time and promotes pupils' understanding of the British way of life and its values.
- 3.10 The careers programme begins in Year 7 and continues into the sixth form. It includes visiting speakers, visits and events which cover a range of professions and future pathways. Preparation for university, in particular for those pupils who are applying for universities with a high standard of entry, is comprehensive. Opposing views in the coverage of political issues are presented in a non-partisan manner, in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. The school provides a range of excellent facilities and resources, which enhances the educational experiences provided by the taught curriculum. These facilities include the well-stocked library, and the theatre and dance studios.
- 3.11 Provision for pupils with SEND is excellent, with individual support based on close liaison between specialist and subject teachers. Pupils receive in-class support and have specialist lessons tailored to their individual learning plans. Appropriate systems identify and support pupils with EAL. They are extremely well provided for through additional EAL lessons and co-ordinated individual support. The Pre-A level programme prepares these pupils for A level study and allows them to interact fully in the school and in the wider community. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a very small minority of parents felt that the more able pupils do not receive appropriate support. Inspection evidence does not support this view. These pupils are catered for effectively by setting in English, mathematics and science, and by participating in an academic mentoring programme which provides specific subject support and individual tutoring.

- 3.12 The curriculum is supplemented by a recently extended wide range of extra-curricular activities which provide excellent opportunities for pupils' personal development. This provision includes sports sessions, the DofE scheme, business enterprise competitions and numerous clubs suited to individual capabilities and interests. Many of the activities are pupil-led, with sixth formers taking responsibility for charitable work. Music and drama provision is a significant strength. In their questionnaire responses, most parents and pupils acknowledged that pupils can participate in a good range of activities provided by the school.
- 3.13 The school has developed strong links with the local community through schemes such as the Community Action Programme and the involvement of sixth formers in collaborative work with their peers in a local community school. It also supports national and international charities. Numerous foreign trips and other visits organised by the school enhance pupils' all-round education and experience.

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

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching is most effective in promoting pupils' progress, and supports the aims of the school. Teachers know their pupils extremely well, providing active support to ensure their overall rapid progress. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, almost all pupils acknowledged that their teachers help them to learn.
- 3.16 Teaching enables pupils of all abilities and needs to make excellent progress. Lessons are well-planned and display a detailed approach to the provision of support for those with SEND or EAL and the more able. Provision for the support of those with an EHC plan or a statement of special educational needs is sensitively managed by the appropriate staff and meets these pupils' individual requirements. Strong liaison between subject teachers, specialist staff and academic mentors leads to successful strategies and achievement for all pupils in the class. The atmosphere in class is one of enthusiasm with a strong collaborative desire to learn. Teaching encourages high standards of behaviour. It promotes tolerance and respect as was observed in the extremely positive relationships between pupils and teachers, and amongst pupils themselves. Teaching is non-partisan in the coverage of political issues. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that homework does not help them to learn and that teachers do not set them the right amount of work. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Appropriate homework is set and provides suitable opportunities for consolidation and extension, according to each pupil's abilities.
- 3.17 Teaching creates challenge and also fosters initiative, and independence of thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers demonstrate excellent up-to-date subject knowledge which enables pupils to be fully engaged and successful in their learning. They regularly share ideas for lessons and materials with their colleagues at departmental and staff meetings. Teachers use a wide range of teaching styles and a variety of physical and electronic resources to provide stimulating approaches to learning. Lessons are well paced and take into account the differing abilities and needs of all pupils. The learning environment is enhanced by the excellent standard of pupils' work on display. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, the school has recently taken steps to monitor the quality of teaching and learning through regular lesson observations, work scrutiny and also by using direct information from pupils. The creation of master teachers, who share best practice

within the school with their colleagues, has had an extremely positive impact on teaching and learning.

- 3.18 The second recommendation of the previous inspection has also been met, with pupils' targets now fully integrated into the assessment process. This has led to the improvement in standards achieved. Regular assessment is now linked to target grades, which themselves are formulated from baseline testing and benefit from careful adjustments by teachers. This provides pupils with a clear sense of their current standard of work and their progress. The pupil tracking sheet, when it is fully utilised by teachers, provides a further good indication of the progress made by the pupil and is referenced in their files. Marking is regular and encouraging, with informative comments and strategies for improvement.

## **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 demonstrate excellent personal development in accordance with the school's aims which are to develop a compassionate, generous and tolerant understanding of others and the wider world.
- 4.3 The spiritual development of pupils is excellent. Pupils of all ages and faiths demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and self-confidence when involved in spiritual reflection. They develop a deep appreciation of non-material aspects of life through the creation of high-quality art and music, which encourages reflection and a spiritual response. Pupils display a well-developed sense of their own identities and spend reflective time considering the identities and cultural heritage of others. They also demonstrate a strong mutual respect and tolerance for one another's different faiths and beliefs.
- 4.4 The moral development of pupils is excellent. Pupils understand the need for rules and observe them well. They know the difference between right and wrong, and respect the civil and criminal law of England through their work in PSHEE. Pupils are encouraged to think through the consequences of their own actions and to develop their own moral awareness. They accept the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others is clearly demonstrated; they display initiative through their active involvement in fundraising and volunteering within the local community, which also allows them to broaden their knowledge of public institutions and services in England.
- 4.5 The social development of pupils is excellent. Pupils behave courteously towards visitors, teachers and each other. They display respect for others and understand the importance of identifying and tackling discrimination. Pupils are very supportive of each other and develop strong bonds of friendship. Day girls and boarders are together in houses, allowing for a sense of shared community. Pupils enjoy working together when collaborating in house events and competitions, and in well-delivered assemblies. They share endeavours very constructively and democratically. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a small minority of pupils reported that they are not provided the chance to take on responsibility. Inspection evidence does not support this view; pupils have many opportunities for leadership throughout the school through contribution to house and charity events.
- 4.6 The cultural development of pupils is excellent. Outstanding integration between pupils of different nationalities and between day and boarding pupils results in mutual tolerance and respect. Pupils welcome diversity amongst their friends. They develop a deep respect for their own and others' cultures through working together, visits, lessons and lectures. Pupils value democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty. They are aware of the benefits and responsibilities of being a citizen in British society. A wide range of exchanges and cultural trips ensures that pupils are continuously furthering their cultural awareness.
- 4.7 Sixth form girls talked with self-knowledge about how well prepared they felt to face the challenges that they will encounter when they go to university, and they displayed a well-developed self-reliance when anticipating those challenges. All

pupils including those with SEND or EAL have an excellent standard of personal development by the time they leave school.

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

- 4.8 The contribution of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.9 Excellent communication between staff ensures that support and guidance are offered to pupils in accordance with the school's aims, and the arrangements for pastoral care make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Regular meetings of the pastoral team ensure high standards of care. Information about pupils is constantly shared and concerns are responded to quickly, with ready lines of communication with the leadership team. A new system of form tutoring has recently been introduced but not all tutoring is yet of the highest quality. Staff and pupils have mutual respect for each other, with staff expressing pride in their pupils. Relationships between pupils are excellent. They feel part of the school community, whether they are boarders or day pupils. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy eating choices through the provision of high-quality food and nutrition advice. They take full advantage of the many opportunities for exercise.
- 4.10 The school is very effective in promoting excellent behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to be considerate and caring. Policies and procedures to counter bullying are thorough and appropriate. Records examined and discussions with staff and pupils demonstrated that any instances of bullying were dealt with effectively and in accordance with school policy, taking into account any related difficulty or disability. Measures to counter cyberbullying are effective, as a result of constant scrutiny by the safeguarding team. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that the school deals well with any cases of bullying and that their children are well looked after at the school. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils indicated that the school deals with bullying when it occurs. A small minority of pupils felt that teachers are not fair in the way they issue rewards or sanctions. The inspection concluded that the newly introduced programme of merits and, in particular, demerits had not been fully explained and is therefore not yet understood or appreciated by all pupils.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.12 In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a minority of pupils said that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The school council and annual pupil surveys provide pupils an opportunity to express their views and opinions. Changes made as a result of pupil input include the installation of water fountains and the relaxation of signing in and out times for older pupils.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.14 The school ensures that the pupils are looked after in an extremely caring, safe environment in keeping with the school's aims, and the arrangements make a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development. The safeguarding policy and procedures have clear regard to official guidance. A team of designated senior staff has developed excellent relationships with local agencies, and has appropriate high-level and updated training. Detailed child-protection records are maintained. Documents examined indicate that any concerns about pupil safety are taken very seriously, with effective monitoring of those pupils identified to be at potential risk of harm. Appointment procedures are followed meticulously and are accurately recorded in the single central register of appointments. All staff receive regular training in child protection. Staff and pupils have all received thorough training to raise awareness of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and secure procedures vet and supervise visiting outside speakers.
- 4.15 Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are rigorous. Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards. Evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and fire drills are meticulously and regularly carried out. Accidents and incidents are carefully recorded and patterns are analysed to ensure that safety standards are maintained. Potentially hazardous substances are safely stored and risk assessments are carried out on all activities both on and off site.
- 4.16 Comfortable facilities are available for pupils who are ill or injured, with suitable and sensitive provision for those with SEND. The first-aid policy is appropriate, and sufficient staff are fully qualified to provide first aid. Medicines are securely stored. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and kept.

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

- 4.17 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.18 The outcomes for boarders are excellent. Boarders are polite and courteous towards each other and adults, and demonstrate high standards of behaviour. They have highly positive and constructive relationships with one another and with all boarding staff. Boarders are relaxed and at ease in boarding, and enjoy life in their house and the excellent facilities provided. They accept each other gracefully; they are tolerant and understanding of each other and display a positive interest in others' cultural traditions and experiences, which contributes well in creating a happy and convivial atmosphere in boarding houses. A wide range of inter-house competitions and events in drama, music and sports, enable girls to identify well with their house and build a strongly competitive house spirit. Boarders are self-reliant and confident. Those who arrive with any emotional or social difficulties adapt well to community life. Pupils with SEND are comfortable in the company of others and are fully understood and supported. Those with EAL integrate within the boarding community, where diversity is accepted and celebrated. All boarders feel valued by their peers; they celebrate both the house and individual successes of each other.
- 4.19 The unique opportunity for day girls to be a member of a boarding house ensures seamless integration between boarding and day girls. This is a significant strength of the school and is evident in and around the school community, where boarders and day girls are friends and mix easily with one other. In interview and in their

questionnaire responses the vast majority of boarders report that they enjoy boarding, feel safe in their house and that boarders get on well together. Boarders contribute willingly to the life of their house, assuming responsibilities when invited. Opportunities for responsibility and leadership are available through the house boarding council, and in helping to look after younger and new boarders through the peer support group. Boarders have regular opportunities to express their views through the house boarding council and suggestion box. They play an active part in the local community and take care to keep safe, fit and healthy.

- 4.20 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. House staff work extremely hard and take time to get to know boarders well as individuals. They make a concerted effort to ensure that new boarders settle well in the house. The newly appointed pastoral staff, boarding staff and academic heads of year meet regularly and liaise extremely well, ensuring that boarders are well looked after and cared for. Boarders are able to maintain regular contact with their families, and the school communicates extremely effectively with parents, carers and guardians. The extensive range of co-curricular activities ensures that boarders have many opportunities to take part in activities. The well-planned weekend programme provides boarders with excellent opportunities to visit the locality as well as galleries, museums, and places of cultural and historical interest. School facilities are readily open to boarders; they are provided plenty of space, as well as free time amongst their daily activities and studies.
- 4.21 House staff show concern for the health and well-being of boarders, and take note of their suggestions for any improvements or activities concerning the running of the house. Any care plans are well formulated and their implementation is closely followed in liaison with the medical centre. Arrangements and facilities for sick or injured boarders are of a high quality. The medical centre is staffed by experienced and well qualified staff, and provides on-call help and advice at all times. The newly refurbished and well-maintained boarding accommodation has been designed to the highest specification. A minority of boarders reported that there has been some recent loss of property, but the school has dealt fully with this and boarders are now confident that their possessions are secure. A range of comfortable common rooms, well-equipped kitchens and study facilities support the boarders' recreation and relaxation extremely well. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders indicated that they felt the food is not of a good quality and that snacks and drinking water are not available between meals. The inspection found that the quality of the food is excellent with great care taken to meet individual dietary needs, and that snacks and drinks are adequately available. In discussion, boarders reported that the food has greatly improved.
- 4.22 The effectiveness of the arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. Arrangements for the safeguarding of boarders are rigorous. The safeguarding policy provides clear guidance on all aspects of safeguarding, including safe internet use and prevention of radicalisation, and is effectively implemented. Safeguarding training of house staff is up to date and to the appropriate level. Senior pastoral staff meet regularly with boarding staff to ensure the welfare and safeguarding of boarders. Rigorous recruitment procedures, including all suitability checks, are carried out and recorded accurately. Written agreements are undertaken for any person over the age of 16 who lives in house accommodation and is not employed by the school. Boarding and school staff work hard to minimise incidents of bullying, and emphasis is placed on openness and a culture of co-operation between house staff and boarders. Bullying of any kind is actively discouraged by staff and all pupils. In the event of any known bullying or behaviour incident, procedures are



carefully followed from the appropriate policies. Behaviour is almost always excellent and is supported by clear systems designed to improve conduct in the houses. Sanctions are implemented so that pupils learn from their mistakes and improve their behaviour. Any need for physical restraint follows DfE guidelines closely.

- 4.23 Boarders are very clear about when to report any concern, and have confidence in the response of house staff and external support such as the independent listener. Risk assessments are rigorously undertaken to ensure that boarders are protected from danger. Monitoring of welfare, health and safety ensures that boarders are kept safe, and fire evacuation drills are undertaken termly during boarding time. Arrangements for knowing the whereabouts of boarders are well observed and carried out. Staff know where boarders are at all times, and boarders know who to turn to for help and how they can contact a member of staff during the night. In the rare event of a boarder going missing, the routine for locating them is clearly established and well known by staff.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Boarding has clear aims, which are set out and available to parents and pupils. Clear systems and procedures ensure that staff understand their role and responsibilities. Priorities for the smooth running of the houses are firmly established and carefully monitored. Regular meetings between pastoral leaders and house staff, and in-house weekly boarding meetings ensure excellent communication and sharing of information so that any concerns are raised and followed up. Records are properly kept and information is judiciously shared for the benefit of the boarders. Policies are of high quality, and are reviewed and updated as required to ensure that regulatory requirements are met and procedures are thoroughly implemented. The leadership ensures that staff are well trained and experienced, and that supervision is efficient at all times. Staffing levels are well maintained. The vast majority of parents report in their questionnaire responses that they are highly satisfied with boarding provision and the academic and personal development of their daughters. The recommendation of the previous boarding inspection was for the school to develop a programme of self-evaluation for each boarding house involving all house staff, and has been fully met.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 Governance provides extremely effective oversight of the school, which ensures that the school is highly successful in achieving its aims. Committed trustees have a clear strategic vision for the future and an excellent range of skills to both support and challenge the school.
- 5.3 Trustees most effectively discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and accommodation, as observed in the recent refurbishment of the boarding houses, the provision of excellent learning resources and investment in high-quality staff. One trustee has specific designation for boarding and for safeguarding. Strategic planning is extremely strong. Trustees have recently worked with leadership to create a new five-year strategic development plan to ensure the fulfilment of their shared vision.
- 5.4 Trustees have a detailed understanding of the workings of the school through regular visits, classroom observations, and attendance at school events. Council minutes indicate that trustees evaluate the school's provision carefully, which enables them to challenge and support senior leaders for the pupils' benefit. Appropriate appraisal arrangements are undertaken for evaluating the work of leadership.
- 5.5 An excellent knowledge of compliance with regard to all safeguarding regulatory policies is demonstrated by the trustees. They are committed to discharging their responsibilities for child protection and welfare, health and safety through meticulous monitoring and exacting auditing. Council carries out a thorough annual review of the safeguarding policy. Trustees have received comprehensive induction and safeguarding training, including most recently regarding the Prevent strategy.

### **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 excellent.
- 5.7 Leadership and management provide extremely clear educational direction which fulfils the school's aims and is reflected in the high quality of the pupils' education and the excellent standard of their personal development. This vision has led to the creation of a comprehensive five-year strategic plan, demonstrating a deep commitment to school improvement. The plan arose from extensive consultation with parents, staff and pupils, and by thoughtful and perceptive self-evaluation by the newly created senior leadership team. Excellent planning and financial management has led to the refurbishment of four boarding houses. The senior leadership team has been successful in communicating its ambitious plans for the school. Surveys of pupils and staff are now established processes which are used to evaluate the progress of the school against its stated expectations and short and medium-term plans.

- 5.8 Senior leadership has high aspirations for the school and its pupils, and a number of initiatives such as frequent lesson observations have been introduced to raise academic standards. The senior leadership team has been strengthened by the appointment of additional post holders since September 2015. A new layer of faculty leads and master teachers has begun to make an impact on improving the quality of leadership at departmental level. A revised meeting structure has helped to strengthen links between the academic, pastoral and boarding functions of the school. New working groups and an extended leadership team has been established to strengthen, support and extend the work of the senior leadership team. Pastoral leadership is excellent at all levels and enables highly effective monitoring of pupils' well-being throughout the school. Leadership ensures that the ethos of the school includes the key British values of democracy and respect for others.
- 5.9 There has been a significant change in staff over the last three years and the school has been successful in recruiting highly qualified staff. Values that encourage respect for others are very evident in the aims of the school and from the senior leadership team's approach to supporting staff during a period of rapid change. The senior leadership team has recognised the challenges of change and has introduced initiatives to deal with staff concerns. An effective programme of induction for new staff is in place. Formal schemes for appraisal of all teaching staff are linked to clear targets. A newly introduced system of professional development review has strengthened both individual and whole-school evaluation and reflection. The smooth running of the school is supported extremely well by efficient administrative and highly competent support staff. Senior staff know the pupils well and are quick to address any issues which may arise. In interview, pupils reported that they found the senior staff very approachable. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they believe the school is well led and managed.
- 5.10 Leadership is highly effective in its discharge of delegated responsibilities, with a thorough grasp of compliance with the regulations. Policies are detailed and related documentation undergoes a robust process of review. Arrangements for the safeguarding of children are most effective, and staff and trustee suitability is checked rigorously. The information is held on a well-maintained single central register of appointments. Scrutiny of staff files demonstrated the school's commitment to ensuring that the school complies with all regulatory requirements with regard to staff recruitment. Policies are implemented consistently and shortfalls are quickly remedied to ensure greater understanding and clarity.
- 5.11 Excellent leadership ensures that matters of safeguarding and welfare, health and safety are well managed and that staff are well trained for their roles. The newly created team of senior designated safeguarding staff hold weekly meetings to ensure that all pupils who may be in need of support or at risk of harm are monitored and provided the right support.
- 5.12 The school's links with parents are in accordance with its aims, and very constructive relationships with parents are maintained. The school handles any concerns in accordance with its published policy. It has a thorough complaints procedure and keeps a detailed record of concerns and complaints received. The scrutiny of a sample of concerns and complaints demonstrated that the school follows proper procedures in dealing with them. Patterns of concern are monitored and scrutinized with the aim of ensuring no reoccurrence.

- 5.13 The school encourages parents to be involved in the work and progress of their children. Parents of day pupils regularly attend sports fixtures, concerts and productions, and work together with the school to support charitable events. They are also invited to attend lectures at the school, some as guest speakers. Parents of overseas boarders are encouraged to be involved in their children's progress through the parent portal and through regular contact with boarding staff.
- 5.14 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the overwhelming majority of parents reported that they are satisfied with information provided about the school and its policies. Communications have improved since the previous inspection. The communication of general information is comprehensive and regular. In addition to the publication of the head's review and a weekly bulletin, the school website has a parent portal on which copies of all relevant information including booklets, calendars, team sheets, up-to-date policies and handbooks are available. Information for parents of prospective pupils is plentiful.
- 5.15 Parents have appropriate access to personal information about their children's progress and development, including conduct records and attendance. A very small minority of parents in their questionnaire responses felt otherwise. Parents receive regular updates of their children's academic development through report cards, where colour-coding of pupil progress reports provides an easily accessible visual display of improvement. The more-comprehensive written reports provide clear information on work covered, achievement and subject-specific ways to improve. Parents are invited to attend induction and consultation evenings. This allows parents to monitor their children's progress and follow up with staff if any concerns have arisen.

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