



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**MILLFIELD SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Millfield School

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

Full Name of School	<b>Millfield School</b>
DfE Number	<b>933/6022</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>310283</b>
Address	<b>Millfield School Butleigh Road Street Somerset BA16 0YD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01458 442291</b>
Fax Number	<b>01458 447276</b>
Email Address	<b>office@millfieldschool.com</b>
Head	<b>Mr Craig Considine</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>General Sir John Reith KCB CBE</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>1225</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (737 boys; 488 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	13-18: <b>1125</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>297</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>928</b> Full: <b>928</b>
Inspection dates	<b>12 Nov 2013 to 14 Nov 2013</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

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. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with 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. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in January 2010 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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 judgement.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with the vice-chair of governors, and the governor with responsibility for the safeguarding of pupils, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mrs Gwen Caddock	Reporting Inspector
Mr Alex Balls	Team Inspector for Boarding (Senior Housemaster, HMC school)
Mr Timothy Bayley	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, The Society of Heads school)
Dr Helen Brooke	Team Inspector for Boarding (Vice Principal, HMC school)
Mr Graham Dunbar	Team Inspector for Boarding (Senior Master, HMC school)
Ms Jo-Anne Duncan	Team Inspector for Boarding (Headmistress, GSA school)
The Reverend Graeme Rainey	Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant Head, GSA school)

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	2
(iii) Progress since the previous inspection	2
<b>3 COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS</b>	<b>3</b>
(a) Boarding provision and care	3
(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding	4
(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision	5

## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Founded in 1935, Millfield School is a boarding and day school for pupils aged between 13 and 18 years occupying a large campus in and around Street in Somerset. The school is part of the Millfield foundation which includes Millfield Preparatory School, incorporating a Pre-Prep department, at Edgarley Hall located near to Glastonbury. The two schools are overseen by a single board of governors, who also act as trustees to the charitable company limited by guarantee. The governance of the school is supported by a comprehensive range of committees and also through individual governors taking on specific responsibilities, for example for the safeguarding of pupils.
- 1.2 The school aims to provide opportunities for all pupils to succeed, through the range of academic opportunities offered, high staffing ratios and a full co-curricular programme. Through the boarding programme at Millfield the school seeks to inculcate a sense of respect, humanity and moral courage in all its pupils and at the same time recognise that all will need resilience in facing the challenges that school and life will bring. Within the curriculum and wider experience the school seeks to offer two particular areas of specialism: teaching pupils who have a range of learning difficulties and encouraging sporting excellence.
- 1.3 The school has 1225 pupils on roll including 737 boys and 488 girls. Nineteen boarding houses accommodate 928 boarders. Seven houses accommodate girls with 12 houses for boys. Three of the houses for boys are located in surrounding villages; all the remaining houses are on the campus or adjacent to it. Three houses are specifically designated for members of the sixth form. The boarding community includes pupils from all parts of the United Kingdom with a proportion of English pupils whose parents live and work overseas, and overseas pupils from 74 countries representing a very broad range of cultures and religions. Pupils are encouraged to practice their faiths and also to worship together. One hundred and fifty pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and of these 65 have specialist support for their English. Five hundred and twenty-two pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and of these 325 have specialist support, in addition four pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. SUMMARY**

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

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

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

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Consolidate the current plans for self-evaluation and staff appraisal processes within boarding in order to further develop boarding practice.
2. Raise the profile and increase the number of ways boarders can express their views and ensure that they receive responses.
3. Develop further the initiatives to promote a consistent approach to positive behaviour in the school.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in January 2010. Recommendations centred on medical protocols, recording fire safety checks, written agreements with non-staff residents, and record keeping and monitoring within the boarding houses. These recommendations have been met in full.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 A comprehensive induction programme for new boarders includes an induction day, meals with house parents and a dinner for overseas boarders to celebrate their arrival. Boarders confirmed that they have a choice of staff to whom they can turn for help or guidance. Contact details for the independent listeners, helplines and the Children's Rights Director are displayed on house notice boards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The required medical policies and protocols for the care of boarders are in place including a comprehensive first aid policy. Recommendations made in the previous boarding inspection have been fully met. Suitable accommodation is provided for male and female boarders who are sick or injured, with trained staff on duty at all times. Boarders have access to the full range of practitioners: transport is arranged for appointments. Prescribed medicines are given only to the named boarder and careful assessments are recorded to allow boarders to self-medicate. The confidentiality and rights of boarders as patients are fully respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders contact their families using their mobile phones, computers and house telephones located in private booths. Careful arrangements are in place to ensure cyber safety. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Accommodation for boarders is appropriately furnished, well maintained and cleaned with suitable study areas in all rooms. Some single rooms have ensuite facilities and other rooms have access to washrooms which provide privacy. If they wish to, boarders may personalise their rooms. The accommodation is for the use of boarders only and appropriate security measures do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Boarders enjoy well-balanced menus with healthy options and provision for special dietary needs. Kitchens provide for hygienic preparation of food and dining rooms are spacious and comfortable. Boarders make drinks and snacks during the evenings and weekends in house kitchens with ample provisions including supplies of fruit. In some houses boarders are able to cook if they wish to. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Central laundry services are efficient and in most houses boarders do their own laundry which many said they enjoyed as good preparation for university. The school shop stocks stationery and personal items and boarders are able to shop in the town. Boarders have lockable storage for their possessions and said that arrangements for pocket money and the deposit of personal valuables with house parents work well. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 The school provides an extensive range of activities before and after prep and at weekends which include training times for boarders who compete in a wide range of sports at high levels. Boarders balance their commitments with free time and relaxation and appreciate the recreational areas and sports facilities available to them at the school. House staff and group tutors are aware of the high levels of commitment of many boarders to their sports or other activities and support them in their endeavours. Boarders have many places where they can be alone if they wish, including specific quiet areas in houses, the chapel and the grounds and gardens. Newspapers, televisions and the internet help boarders keep in touch with events in the world outside school. [NMS 10]



### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Appropriate written policies and procedures for health and safety are in place which meet legal requirements and are fully implemented. High standards of maintenance ensure the health, safety and welfare of boarders. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies with fire safety standards; regular checks and maintenance are fully recorded and fire drills are held at the required intervals including within boarding time and detailed records are maintained. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Arrangements which meet official guidance are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders. Staff have received training at the required intervals according to their responsibilities including induction training for new staff. Boarders with senior posts of responsibility receive safeguarding training. The school has developed positive links with the local authority designated officer (LADO). Boarding staff implement the procedures to safeguard their boarders. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding works with the school child protection officer to conduct the required annual report and review of safeguarding to be undertaken by the full governing body. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The written policy to promote good behaviour includes measures to reduce bullying and promote positive behaviour, setting out clear expectations, and disciplinary sanctions. In the inspection questionnaires a small number of parents and boarders indicated concerns about bullying in the school. House and whole school records show that bullying is properly dealt with. The school is implementing strategies to ensure that any bullying is unacceptable in all areas of the school, supported by work in the personal and social education and positive education programmes and reinforced, for example, in assemblies. In questionnaire responses a significant proportion of boarders indicated that they did not think the use of sanctions and rewards by staff was fair. However, in interviews boarders did not support this concern. School records show that at all levels sanctions are carefully recorded and monitored. Appropriate policies are in place for searching boarders and their possessions and when restraint may be used. The latter has not been used. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Comprehensive safe employment procedures include checks on all staff, which are recorded appropriately on a central register. Non-employees living in boarding accommodation undergo checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service, and are subject to written agreements. Appropriate arrangements are in place to supervise contractors working on site and visitors. Responses to the parental questionnaire showed high levels of satisfaction with the care of the boarders. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS 14]

### **3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision**

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section
- 3.16 The school publishes a comprehensive statement of boarding principles and practice which is seen to work as intended. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 There is effective management and leadership of boarding both at senior management level and by house parents. Both self-evaluation and appraisal of staff within boarding are being developed from informal to more formally-established and recorded processes in order to focus on the development of boarding and realise the vision for the school. Suitable protocols are in place for the appointment of boarding staff. All are encouraged to undertake appropriate training and many have done so. All the required records are maintained and monitored by the school. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All working in boarding have job descriptions and receive induction training. The roles and responsibilities of non-employees living in boarding accommodation are clearly defined. Boarding teams are sufficient in number, properly trained and well experienced to meet the needs of the boarders. Boarders know who is on duty. Staff know the whereabouts of boarders through the booking out system, boarders' mobile telephone numbers are recorded to ensure that staff can contact them. Boarding staff know the missing boarders procedure and, although rarely used, can effectively implement the policy when necessary. At least one adult sleeps in every house at night and boarders know how to contact the duty staff. Appropriately separated accommodation is provided for staff, there is no inappropriate favouritism and boarders only access staff accommodation for house social events. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Clear policies ensure equality and boarders do not experience discrimination. Boarders who have exacting schedules in sporting, musical and academic areas receive support from teaching and boarding staff to help them achieve their goals. Parents say they are delighted with the achievements of their children including those who receive additional support for SEND or EAL and many express their appreciation of the encouragement their children receive in realising their ambitions. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 In questionnaire responses a significant proportion of boarders indicated that they did not think their views were listened to. This was not raised in the written comments and in interviews boarders talked of evening roll call time as an informal forum for discussion. A number of school councils and committees, including a food committee are operating, and some proposals have been accepted and implemented. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school publishes a compliant policy on responding to complaints and records show that the policy is fully implemented. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Senior boarders have the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility. Heads of houses have clear job descriptions and receive safeguarding training to enable them to carry out their duties. Prefects do not give punishments and are supervised by staff. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20 not applicable]