



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**MILLFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Millfield Preparatory School

The Early Years department and the senior school were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	<b>Millfield Preparatory School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>933/6115</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>310283</b>		
Address	<b>Millfield Preparatory School Edgarley Hall Glastonbury Somerset BA6 8LD</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01458 832446</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01458 833679</b>		
Email Address	<b>office@millfieldprep.com</b>		
Headmistress	<b>Mrs Shirley Shayler</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Sir John Reith, KCB, CBE</b>		
Age Range	<b>2 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>421</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (229 boys; 192 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>6</b>	5-11: <b>176</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>35</b>	11-13 <b>204</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>303</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>118</b>	
	Full:	<b>118</b>	Weekly: <b>0</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 November 2009 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, 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 Colette Culligan	Reporting Inspector
Mr Jonathan Powis	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy head, IAPS school)
Mr Chris Wright	Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant head, IAPS school)

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

- 1.1 Millfield Preparatory School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged between 7 and 13, situated on the outskirts of Glastonbury. Founded in 1935, it is part of the Millfield foundation. This includes a Pre-Prep department for pupils aged 2 to 7, on the same site as the Prep school, and a senior school, Millfield School, three miles away. The schools are overseen by the same board of governors.
- 1.2 The school aims to offer all pupils a breadth and depth of experience in every aspect of their lives by encouraging pupils to be considerate, generous and tolerant of others, as well as to do well in their academic work and in other pursuits. The school sets out to provide a fulfilling and balanced education so that pupils will grow to be confident and friendly individuals, with an enthusiasm for life and an awareness of the world around them. Boarding intends to provide a range of experiences and opportunities within an encouraging atmosphere of equality, respect and tolerance, so that all pupils can develop into fully rounded individuals with a sense of responsibility for themselves and for others.
- 1.3 Currently there are 421 pupils at the prep school of whom 118 are boarders. The school also accommodates day pupils on an occasional basis. There are two houses for girls and three for boys. The largest house, Hollies, has 29 girls boarding while there are 18 boys accommodated in the smallest house, Chestnut. The other girls' house, Berewall, has 26 boarders; Edgarley Manor, currently accommodates 19 boys and Champion has 26 boys. Each house is overseen by houseparents and assistant houseparents, all of whom are residential.
- 1.4 Boarders come from a wide geographical area of the UK and from a number of countries overseas, including Hong Kong, Russia and various European countries. There are 52 international boarders, of whom 38 have English as an additional language (EAL). Two-thirds of these receive extra support for their English. The school has 145 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and three pupils with statements of special educational needs. Specialist learning support is provided by the school for 101 pupils.
- 1.5 Since the previous inspection a new head and pastoral deputy head have been appointed to the Prep school and there is a new head of the Pre-Prep department.
- 1.6 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) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that all boarders are aware of the role of the independent listeners.

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

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in November 2009. It judged the boarding provision to be outstanding in all aspects and made no recommendations.

### **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 suitable induction procedure exists for all boarders, including boarding handbooks, a buddy system and an induction checklist for staff to complete. Boarders confidently name many different staff members to whom they would turn for help or guidance. Contact details of outside sources of support are provided, including those of the independent listeners, although many boarders are unaware of their role. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Suitable policies for the care of boarders who are unwell are implemented. The medical centre, staffed by trained nurses, is open all day throughout the week. Each boarding house has a designated en-suite sick room, appropriately supervised. Boarding staff are trained in first aid and in the administration of household remedies and prescription medications as required. The latter is given only to those for whom it has been prescribed. There is effective liaison between nurses and houseparents. A doctor attends the school four times weekly and appointments are made with other specialist services as required. A few older boarders with asthma are assessed as sufficiently responsible to self-medicate. Boarders' rights and confidentiality are respected. [NMS3]
- 3.4 Boarders have no difficulty in contacting their families, using pay phones, mobile phones or the internet. The school has systems in place to guard against unsafe use of electronic communication. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarders' sleeping and living accommodation is clean and welcoming, with ample space for study and social activities. Younger pupils complete their prep in classrooms. Toilets and washing facilities offer appropriate privacy. Heating, lighting and ventilation levels in houses are appropriate. Rooms and furnishings are suitable with appropriate separation between age groups and from houseparents' accommodation. Bedding is clean and warm. Boarders personalise their rooms with posters and their own duvet covers. Houses are protected from unauthorised access. Security measures do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Varied and nutritious menus ensure appetising choices, including provision for specific dietary, medical or religious needs. The dining room, school kitchen and house kitchens are clean and tidy. Drinking water is freely available. Snacks, including fresh fruit, are provided every evening in the houses. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry is done daily and returned promptly. Boarders may obtain personal and stationery items from the school shop. Boarders' valuables are stored securely by the school and boarders may also use their own lockable boxes. Pocket money is managed efficiently by the houseparents. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 Boarders enjoy an appropriate range of activities and have sufficient free time each day. A small number of pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt they would like more things to do, but inspectors judged that the school offered a wide range of options. House common rooms and the extensive grounds provide plenty of recreational areas, including space for boarders to be alone. Arrangements are made to ensure the welfare of boarders with demanding sporting commitments. Boarders have access to local facilities on organised trips.



Newspapers and television provide access to information about events in the news. [NMS 10]

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

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school is committed to ensuring the health and safety of pupils and employees across the site. Policies and procedures meet the necessary requirements. School risk assessments, including those for trips and for testing portable electrical items, are thorough. Houses carry out risk assessments of the accommodation, house routines and organised activities to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard against risks. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 Each house is required to carry out regular checks on fire safety procedures, with guidance encouraging alertness both for obvious and inadvertent risk factors. The logs of these checks are monitored regularly to ensure compliance with legislation. Suitable fire notices are in place throughout the school. Fire drills are carried out regularly, at least one each term being while the pupils are asleep. [NMS7]
- 3.12 The safeguarding of pupils is a priority of the school. Policies and procedures meet all requirements. Staff are trained at the appropriate levels and intervals, and demonstrate understanding of the correct procedures. Files of safeguarding concerns are appropriately stored. The school liaises with local authorities as needed. [NMS11]
- 3.13 The school's behavioural expectations and written code of conduct are well understood by staff and pupils. Pupils respect the rules and understand the sanctions for misbehaviour. Boarders told inspectors that instances of bullying are rare. They are confident that once the school is aware of any such behaviour, action is taken to stop it. There are suitable policies on use of restraint and searching pupils, although these have never been used. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school's policies on the safe recruitment and checking of staff meet requirements. All necessary checks are carried out before staff take up their appointment. There are no persons over 16 living in the same premises as boarders who are not either employees or pupils of the school. All adults living on the site sign an agreement specifying the terms of their accommodation. Visitors to the houses are supervised to ensure no inappropriate access to the boarders. The school does not appoint guardians of overseas pupils but ensures that it maintains contact with those appointed by parents. [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 has a suitable statement of its boarding principles and practice. Responses from parents and pupils to the pre-inspection questionnaire show very high levels of satisfaction with the school. In discussions, pupils expressed their happiness and confidence in their houseparents. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 There is clear management and leadership of boarding. The majority of houseparents are also teachers in the school. Non-residential staff undertake house duties. This supports effective communication between boarding and academic staff. Senior boarding staff are experienced and suitably trained. All required records are appropriately maintained and monitored. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff have job descriptions and receive appropriate induction training. The expectations of spouses living in the boarding houses are made clear. Staff have been appraised and there is evidence of continued professional development of boarding practice. There are always sufficient staff on duty, so that boarders are in the charge of a named member of staff. Signing in and out systems, regular roll calls and the use of a software package showing the attendance of pupils at activities, enable staff to know the whereabouts of boarders at all times. Staff are confident in implementing the policy for missing pupils. Houseparents or their assistants sleep in each house at night and are easily contactable by boarders. Staff have suitable accommodation, to which boarders do not have access. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders confirm that they are well cared for and experience no inappropriate discrimination. Houseparents are made aware of pupils with SEND, EAL or other specific needs and appropriate support is provided in the houses. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders are encouraged to contribute views and suggestions and to raise concerns in weekly house meetings with houseparents and in forums such as the boarders' council, food council and school council. Boarders are confident that the school responds to their requests, as in the provision of different food items and the installation of a wireless network in houses. Pupils are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 A suitable complaints procedure is available to all parents and is followed by the school. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Each house has a pupil head of house, who supports new pupils and assists in the happiness and smooth running in the boarding house. Heads of house are appropriately supervised and may not impose sanctions. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]