



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**CLIFTON HIGH SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Clifton High School

Full Name of School	<b>Clifton High School</b>
DfE Number	<b>801/6001</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>311736</b>
Address	<b>Clifton High School College Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3JD</b>
Telephone Number	<b>0117 9730201</b>
Fax Number	<b>0117 9238962</b>
Email Address	<b>enquiries@cliftonhigh.bristol.sch.uk</b>
Head	<b>Dr Alison M Neill</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Hugh D C Stebbing</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 20</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>499</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (203 boys; 296 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 5-11: <b>233</b> 3-5 (EYFS): <b>26</b> 11-20: <b>240</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>492</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>7</b> Full: <b>7</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection dates	<b>23 Apr 2013 to 25 Apr 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 September 2009 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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 chair of governors, and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the lodgings for boarders 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 Maureen Bradley

Mrs Diane Riley

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Boarding,  
Society of Heads school)

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

- 1.1 Clifton High School is a co-educational, day and boarding school for pupils aged three to twenty, which was founded in 1877 in the heart of the Clifton area of Bristol. The junior school has been co-educational since the nineteenth century but the senior school did not accept boys until 2008. Clifton High School operates the diamond model of education whereby boys and girls are taught together in the majority of the school but separately for core subjects in Years 7 to 9.
- 1.2 There are 499 pupils in the school, 203 boys and 296 girls, of whom 259 are in the junior school aged 3 to 11 and 240 are in the senior school aged 11 to 20. There are 48 pupils in the sixth form of whom 7 are boarders; of these 4 are girls and 3 are boys. All boarders are at least 17 years old and at the time of the inspection five of the boarders were over the age of 18 years. The boarders are from overseas, mostly from China and France, and are known as International Host Family Boarders. Each boarder is placed by the school with a host family and is overseen by a dedicated home boarding co-ordinator. They live as members of these families during term time. The school has no facilities to house boarders on the school site. The pupils are from a range of professional family backgrounds. The school has identified 96 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A range of support is offered to all pupils with SEND depending on their needs. There are 23 pupils who receive support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.3 The school is a charitable trust administered by a council of governors and aims to encourage pupils to be flexible, curious and adaptable. They strive to send young people out into the world who not only have a lifelong passion for learning but who are ready to make a real and positive contribution to society. The school aims to provide boarders with every opportunity to realize their full potential, academically, socially and in extra-curricular activities and that during their stay they will integrate fully with English culture and the English education system.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection in September 2009, the school has continued investment in information and communications technology (ICT) and created an art performance centre with specialist fittings for drama, dance and cinema. The sixth-form centre and school dining room have also been refurbished.
- 1.5 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 Clifton High School currently offers host family boarding to seven international students. All are residing in lodgings and for this reason not all National Minimum Standards for boarding schools are applicable. The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011 that apply.

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

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Ensure the support given by teachers in subject lessons to those boarders with EAL develops their understanding of subject-specific vocabulary.

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

- 2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in September 2009 and there were no recommendations made at that time.

### 3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

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

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS that apply under this section.
- 3.2 Appropriate induction and guidance is provided for new boarders. When international boarders first arrive in the UK they are welcomed by their home boarding co-ordinator and their host family. A specific induction pack is organised for them by the boarding co-ordinator. This includes details on school procedures, health matters, cultural guidelines and a '*somebody to speak to*' document if they have any concerns. This information helps them to settle into a new culture as well as the school. Key people are introduced to them, including a school counsellor who is available as an independent listener. The host family has guidance on what is required to help the student to settle initially and make the best use of their time in the country. They help them to liaise with all the relevant people and support the boarder throughout their time at the school. Contact details are provided for people who can offer further advice outside the school and for a number of help-lines including the Children's Rights Director. [NMS2]
- 3.3 The medical centre is a central resource available during the day where boarders can receive health care from registered nurses in appropriate facilities. During the first term, the student is registered either with the school doctor or with the doctor of the host family. When starting school the student will meet the school nurse to have a medical assessment which is followed by regular assessments throughout their time in school. These medicals are documented in the student's confidential medical record. A healthcare plan to support a student's needs is put in place for chronic conditions if required. Students are responsible for their own administration of medicine in accordance with the school's assessment procedures. For minor illnesses, outside school hours, the student is cared for by the host family but the school nurse is also on hand for advice. The host family can prescribe household remedies. Boarders have access to local dental, optometric and other specialist services when needed but the majority of these services are provided in their home country during holiday periods. Medicines in school are safely stored and detailed records are kept. Confidentiality for boarders is fully respected. All school policies and protocols are suitably followed. [NMS3]
- 3.4 Boarders can contact their families freely by using their own mobile phones or the internet and have suitable privacy in their lodgings in which to do so. The school also provides a telephone to be used in private throughout the school day. [NMS4]
- 3.5 The host family boarding accommodation is of an appropriate standard to provide a homely environment to support them during their time in the country. All lodgings are clean, well ventilated with suitable lighting and heating and have comfortable furnishings. Suitable facilities for leisure, socialising, individual study and privacy are provided. Boarders all have their own rooms and have suitable access to appropriate washing and toilet facilities. Some boarders have their own dedicated bathroom facilities. Boarders can personalise their rooms and all have made them into welcoming spaces. [NMS5]
- 3.6 The host family provides breakfast and dinner during the week in term time and breakfast, lunch and dinner during weekends and study leaves. Boarders can have lunch in the school dining room throughout the week or choose to cook for themselves in the sixth-form kitchen or eat out of school. The meals provided by the

host families are reported by the students to be plentiful, nutritious and offer both choice and variety. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of students reported that snacks and drinks are not always provided but during student interviews all reported that food and drink is always available for them. Boarders with special dietary requirements are catered for if requested. The food is prepared in the host family kitchens and allows for a family atmosphere to be provided at meal times when the family eat together. The kitchen facilities both in school and in the lodgings are hygienic and well maintained. [NMS8]

- 3.7 Each host family residence provides a laundry facility for clothing and bedding. Many of the students choose to do their own laundry. Students are able to shop in the town during their free time and their possessions are kept safe and private in their bedrooms. [NMS9]
- 3.8 The school has a suitable activities programme at lunch time and after school although a small number of boarders in the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that they did not have enough activities provided for them. The school actively promotes activities for boarders and, during interviews, all boarders reported they were satisfied with the activities they participated in. The provision of television and internet access enables boarders to keep in touch with news and the outside world. Family discussion with the host family during meal times develops their understanding of world events and current affairs. [NMS10]

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

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS that apply under this section.
- 3.10 The school's arrangements and procedures for health and safety are appropriate to keep students safe during their time in school and in their lodgings. Suitable risk assessments are carried out in both the school and the host family residences. The necessary records for all aspects of health and safety are kept and scrutinised to ensure that any deficiencies are quickly remedied. Lodgings are regularly assessed for their suitability as safe environments. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school has appropriate arrangements for fire safety. All fire equipment is tested regularly and fire drills conducted in school time are logged and evaluated. In the host family residences there are suitable smoke alarms. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Due attention is paid to child protection. Designated persons ensure that all staff have the necessary training and that new staff are fully aware of child protection procedures through an induction programme. One of the governors is responsible for overseeing child protection policies and procedures. The child protection policy is in line with the local authority safeguarding procedures and it is reviewed annually by the governing body. All documents are carefully logged and kept secure with appropriate confidentiality. The governors' awareness is maintained through training provided by the designated person. The host families are provided with a detailed policy and procedures on safeguarding. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school makes the standards expected of boarders clear to them through its behaviour policies and through a sixth-form student contract. A code of behaviour regarding the use of alcohol, drugs and cigarettes is outlined clearly and emphasised as part of the induction procedure. Standards of behaviour are such that sanctions have not yet been required. [NMS12]

- 3.14 The school operates safe recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers. The central register of appointments is suitably maintained. The school does not appoint guardians for the boarders but it does monitor the suitability of guardians appointed by the boarders' parents. [NMS14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS that apply under this section.
- 3.16 A statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is outlined in documents for students, parents of current and prospective boarders, and staff. The statement is included in the induction documentation for boarders and their parents. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 There is a clear structure for the management of boarding. The boarding co-ordinator manages the boarding and she reports to the head. A job description defines her responsibilities. Regular meetings between the boarding co-ordinator and members of the school's senior management team and governors enable matters concerning the boarders' welfare and the development of the boarding provision to be discussed and monitored. The boarding co-ordinator maintains regular communication with the host families and informs the school of any relevant concerns or issues. All the required records regarding boarding and boarders are maintained and reviewed on a regular basis. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 The supervision of boarders throughout the day is suitably maintained by the school procedures, and after school the host families provide appropriate levels of care. The role of other adults in the households is clearly defined through written agreements. An adult is always present overnight in the host family home and the whereabouts of each boarder during the evenings and at weekends is managed effectively. The boarding co-ordinator has suitable levels of training and experience for her role and receives an annual appraisal. [NMS15]
- 3.19 The school and the host family ensure that due attention is paid to the cultural needs and customs of boarders from different ethnic backgrounds. The students receive some support for EAL but subject-specific language difficulties in lessons occasionally cause students concern. Students are treated equally and no inappropriate discrimination takes place. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders have a range of opportunities provided for them to express their views or concerns and to make suggestions. When interviewed, boarders reported that they freely share their concerns and ideas with the host family, the boarding co-ordinator or their tutors. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 A clear complaints procedure is available for all parents of current and prospective pupils and for the students. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Many of the boarders have responsibilities in school including senior pupil positions but no other student is in a position of authority over boarders. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school arranges the long-stay lodgings for its boarders and parents are made aware of this procedure. These lodgings provide appropriate facilities which are monitored each term by the school. The boarding co-ordinator meets and interacts with the host families to make sure that the accommodation provided to the international boarders is secure, comfortable and of a high standard as well as appropriate for their needs. Members of the host family over the age of sixteen years are checked with the disclosure and barring service. References are secured

for the host family before boarders are allocated to them. The school provides suitable written agreements and guidance with the host family for the standards of care expected. The boarding co-ordinator meets each term with the host family and with each student to receive an evaluation of the care provided and this is fully documented. This evaluation includes a questionnaire completed each term by both the student and the host family. [NMS20]