



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

ALDRO SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Aldro School

Full Name of School	Aldro School		
DfE Number	936/6110		
Registered Charity Number	312072		
Address	Aldro School Lombard Street Shackleford Godalming Surrey GU8 6AS		
Telephone Number	01483 810266		
Fax Number	01483 409010		
Email Address	hmsec@aldro.org		
Headmaster	Mr David Aston		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Michael Sayers		
Age Range	7 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	236		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	7-11:	150	11-13: 86
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	213	
Number of Boarders	Total:	23	
	Full:	13	Weekly: 10
Inspection dates	07 May 2013 to 09 May 2013		

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 June 2009 and can be found at 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 members of staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the boarding accommodation 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

Mr David Bunkell

Mr Steve Webb

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Head of Boarding, IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Aldro School is a day and boarding preparatory school for boys from the ages of 7 to 13. Established in Eastbourne in 1898, it moved to Shackleford near Guildford in Surrey during the Second World War. In the 1970s it became a charitable trust, and currently it is administered by ten governors who are also the trustees.
- 1.2 The school aims to give pupils an outstanding all-round education offering breadth, depth and quality of achievement, with a balance between the best traditional standards and modern approaches. Its vision is to be a vibrant school that operates with the values and traditions of a boarding school, adapted to the requirements of the 21st century, with academic excellence and a wide range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities, and committed and professional staff, preparing pupils to excel at their senior school. The school has a Christian foundation, and strives to be a caring community, focusing on the individual.
- 1.3 Currently, 236 pupils attend the school, of whom some board on a flexible basis, while 13 are full boarders and 10 are weekly boarders. The boarders are housed on the upper floors of the main school building. Since the previous Ofsted boarding inspection in 2009, refurbishment has continued. The availability of boarding has been made more flexible, with the option of part-time boarding, leading to a substantial increase in the number of pupils who board.
- 1.4 The school has identified 40 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities; specialist learning support is provided as necessary. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Support is given when needed to the eight pupils for whom English is an additional language. The majority of pupils live near the school or in the surrounding countryside, with a few boarders coming from overseas. The pupils come mostly from families with business or professional backgrounds. The vast majority are white European, but a few have other ethnic origins.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) 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 2011.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Extend access to information about current events in the world outside school.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in June 2009. Recommendations were made with regard to record keeping for the administration of medication and staff training information. Both have been met in their entirety.

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 Documentation for new boarders and their parents is provided before boarders arrive, and matrons' checklists show that every relevant matter is covered, including explaining fire escape routes for boarders staying on a flexible basis. A system of peer guides is used until new boarders are settled. The boarders confirmed that staff are always available for guidance or to help with a difficulty. An independent listener's telephone number is displayed adjacent to each telephone, together with the required external helpline numbers. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Policies are in place for medical matters and the well-being of the boarders, and are applied consistently. First aid is provided by matrons and a nurse. Chronic conditions and emergencies are dealt with efficiently, and household remedies used when appropriate. The sick bay has two beds, and those who are ill are checked regularly by matrons from their nearby room. Boarders see health professionals during school time if necessary. Careful records are maintained to ensure that prescription medicines are given only to the correct boarder, meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection. When judged responsible, asthmatic boarders carry their own preventative inhalers. Medical confidentiality is respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 The boarders may bring mobile telephones to school for use at set times, in between which they are kept securely. Mobile telephones may be used only in public areas. The boarders may also use email at set times and in public areas. In addition several landline telephones are provided, whereby boarders may arrange to receive incoming calls from their families. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All dormitories provide appropriate sleeping accommodation. The boarders have a common room and a separate room with indoor games. Dormitories for senior boarders include furniture for additional private study, to supplement the sessions scheduled for all boarders. Toilet and washing facilities are on each floor, near to the dormitories. The newest facilities provide complete privacy, with doors for individual shower cubicles. Elsewhere, some shower cubicles have curtains, but the boarders are content with the privacy this provides. Dormitories are well lit and heated, with ventilation provided by opening windows, fitted with rails to prevent the risk of falling. Access to upper floors is by staircases, and boarders with any temporary restricted mobility may be assisted. Dormitories are allocated according to the age of the boarders, and all are sufficiently spacious. All bedding is suitable, clean and warm, and if they wish boarders may bring their own. Every bed has a board nearby that may be personalised. Boarders are not permitted routine access to their dormitories during the school day, and no other pupils or unauthorised people have access to the boarding accommodation, except day boys requiring medical attention, and for occasional daytime activities in the boarders' common room. Some of the school's boarding facilities are also used by outside groups during holidays. No security measures intrude on the privacy of the boarders. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Three meals are provided daily, with variety and choice, and ample quantities are always available. Care is taken to ensure that specific dietary needs for medical or religious reasons are catered for. All food is freshly prepared in kitchens adjacent to the dining room. Water is widely available throughout the school, clearly labelled as

suitable for drinking. In addition to main meals, snacks are available at other times. [NMS 8]

- 3.7 All bedding and clothing are laundered on the premises. Care is taken that clothing is returned to the correct boarder. Matrons or form tutors are able to supply toiletries or stationery requisites when necessary. Any valuable possessions are kept safe by staff and issued when appropriate. Pocket money is looked after and given out as required. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 A range of activities is available for boarders each evening and throughout weekends. In addition, time is available each day for the boarders to spend as they wish. The boarders can use many parts of the school grounds and indoor facilities for organised activities, or be alone in a safe environment if they prefer. The boarders are not subject to any unusually onerous demands. Newspapers are provided for their use, and current events are sometimes discussed in tutor groups or lessons. However, the boarders do not generally have access to television or radio news bulletins. During the summer term, boarders in Year 8 may sometimes visit the village shop. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The health and safety policy complies with relevant legislation, and is consistently implemented. All facilities and premises are maintained to a high standard, contributing to the effective welfare, health and safety of all the boarders. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 All necessary measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire. Regular fire drills take place, including at times when the boarders are asleep. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Measures to safeguard the welfare of the boarders are taken and follow carefully all statutory guidance, with policies correctly implemented and regular training provided for all staff. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Positive behaviour is encouraged, and sanctions are in place to deal with any minor misdemeanours. Separate systems of sanctions are used for misbehaviour during the day and for any instances in the boarding house. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders disagreed with the overall use of sanctions, although in discussion, boarders said that boarding house sanctions are applied fairly. In responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of parents felt that the school does not respond effectively to incidents of bullying. The views of the boarders and inspection evidence do not substantiate this. Measures to prevent bullying and to deal with any incidents are constructive and effective. Detailed electronic records are carefully kept of any bullying issues so that patterns of behaviour can be monitored. Codes of conduct appropriate to the age of the boarders are provided, and the required procedures to be followed in the event of restraint becoming necessary, or the searching of pupils or their possessions, are clear. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 All prospective staff are checked thoroughly for their suitability to work with children before appointment, following all guidance with regard to safer recruitment, including the recording of details of all appointments in a single central register. All people who are not employed by the school but live on school premises and are over the age of 16 have been subject to a criminal records check. These people have signed an agreement regarding the use of accommodation, any contact with the boarders and supervision of visitors. All visitors to the boarding house are closely supervised

to ensure that they have no unauthorised access to the boarders or their accommodation. Boarders whose parents live overseas make arrangements for guardians within the UK. [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 Parents are given a statement of the principles and practice of boarding and this is also displayed throughout the boarding house. It was seen accurately to reflect current practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The leadership and management structure of the boarding provision is clearly defined. Several academic staff undertake weekly duties, establishing effective links between teaching and residential staff. All senior boarding staff are suitably trained and experienced. All necessary records are suitably monitored and maintained, with appropriate action taken when relevant. [NMS 13]
- C1** All adults who work with the boarders have job descriptions. Induction training takes place for new staff, including safeguarding arrangements, and the boarding practice of each member of staff is regularly reviewed, and training opportunities identified. Training records are kept, meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection report. At all times, several staff are deployed to supervise boarders outside teaching time. Announcements at each main meal make clear who is in charge for the forthcoming period. This is always a member of staff who is suitably experienced and qualified. Regular roll calls and record keeping enable staff to know where each boarder is at all times. A policy is in place for the event of a boarder's whereabouts becoming unknown. Staff understand the action to be taken, including working with the emergency services when necessary. Several designated adults sleep in the boarding house each night, and a notice board makes clear which member of staff to contact in the night should this be needed. Although most staff eat with the boarders, they may take meals elsewhere, and their residential and washing facilities are entirely separate from those for the boarders. Boarders rarely visit any staff accommodation, and when they do, for example for birthday parties, access is carefully supervised. [NMS 15]
- 3.18 The boarders do not encounter discrimination for any reason. Care is taken to cater for the needs of every individual. [NMS 16]
- 3.19 Boarders may make their views known to staff informally and, in addition, the boarder council, the school council and the food committee meet regularly to provide more formal opportunities. No boarder is penalised for raising a concern in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.20 The school implements appropriately and with care the required procedures for parents to make any complaints, and a simple child-friendly complaints process is available for the use of the boarders. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents expressed the view that their concerns have not been effectively handled and that they do not receive timely responses to these. Inspection evidence from scrutiny of the comprehensive records of concerns and complaints kept by the school does not support this view. [NMS 18]
- 3.21 Although some school prefects are boarders, they have no specific responsibilities within the boarding house. Supervision and a clear job description ensure that there can be no abuse of the role. [NMS 19]

- 3.22 Boarders whose parents live overseas occasionally spend weekends with the families of local boarders. All such arrangements are made directly between the relevant parents and not by the school, and this is clearly stated. [NMS 20]