



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

GRESHAM'S SCHOOL

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Gresham's School

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

Full Name of School	Gresham's School
DCSF Number	926/6003
Registered Charity Number	1105500
Address	Gresham's School Cromer Road Holt Norfolk NR25 6EA
Telephone Number	01263 714511
Fax Number	01263 712028
Email Address	headmaster@greshams.com
Headmaster	Mr Philip John
Chairman of Governors	Mr Anthony Duckworth Chad
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	496
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (285 boys; 211 girls;)
Number of Day Pupils	218
Number of Boarders	Total: 278 Full: 278
Final (team) visit	8 Mar 2010 to 10 Mar 2010

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in April 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

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

Under the Care Standards Act 2000, an inspection of boarding was carried out at the same time by the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). The report of this inspection is available separately at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Gresham's School is situated in Holt, Norfolk. It was founded in 1555 by Sir John Gresham, and has a strong association with the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers and the City of London. It is a co-educational independent boarding and day school for pupils from the ages of three to eighteen.
- 1.2 Since the last inspection in April 2004, the International Baccalaureate has been introduced for sixth form study and there has been major refurbishment of the boarding houses.
- 1.3 The school aims to offer a seamless education from the age of three to eighteen, combining a warm school community with innovative teaching, modern facilities and boundless opportunities. It strives to bring out the best in each child, helping every pupil to identify and pursue their strengths. The school takes a pride in its ability to cater to the needs of every pupil, enabling them to excel and realise their full potential. It seeks to cultivate a generation of communicative and enquiring young people with a sense of self-worth, a sense of being valued as an individual in a community and a strong sense of social, moral and environmental responsibility who are able to influence the world around them.
- 1.4 The senior school comprises a total of 496 pupils aged from thirteen to eighteen (285 boys and 211 girls), including 200 in the sixth form. There are 278 boarders. Entry to the senior school is by selective examination at the age of thirteen, and about twenty pupils enter at sixth form level.
- 1.5 Standardised national tests indicate that most pupils are in the top half of the range of ability and approximately a tenth are below average ability nationally. About ten pupils per year leave after completing GCSE examinations. Almost all sixth form pupils proceed to higher education, some after taking a gap year.
- 1.6 There are two pupils with statements of special educational needs funded by parents, 104 have learning support and 29 receive help with their English.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Third Form	Year 9
Fourth Form	Year 10
Fifth Form	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning because of a wide-ranging, flexible curriculum and extensive programme of activities. Teaching is predominantly good and is lively and enthusiastic. The best teaching gives pupils opportunities to think for themselves, enhancing the pace of their learning. An over-reliance on photocopied material is sometimes evident, which does not support pupils' individual learning. The pupils' excellent attitudes, their exemplary behaviour and good relationships with each other and their teachers all contribute to their academic achievement. There is much success in non-academic activities, and the wide choice of activities available adds significantly to the pupils' educational experience.
- 2.2 Excellent pastoral care, effective welfare arrangements and good health and safety procedures underpin the strong personal development of pupils. This is further enhanced through a strong provision of boarding where boarders and day pupils mix with ease. Pupils are particularly tolerant and respectful of each other's differences and collaborate very well when working together. The school forum and activities within the boarding houses allow them to contribute to their community in a positive way. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time in the school. Their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is shown in their admirably active approach to charitable giving.
- 2.3 The aims of the school are largely fulfilled. The governing body is committed to the academic and personal progress of each pupil. The governors have satisfactory oversight of the whole school informed by reports from the headmaster. Together with senior managers they have responded well to the recommendations from the last report. However, they have been less rigorous in carefully following their recruitment procedures. There is no long term strategy plan that focuses on the educational direction of the school. The governors have recognised this and have recently formed an education committee. Leadership and management are particularly effective, with robust policies and procedures which support pupils well in their academic and personal development. Clear structures are now in place to effect further improvements. Heads of department are working hard in their role of monitoring the quality of learning and teaching. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of this monitoring leading to differences in assessment of pupils' work and the quality of reports to parents. Development planning is not well co-ordinated between governors, senior staff and department heads. The school promotes strong and effective links with parents, whose replies to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated their support for the school in the education provided for their children.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended, and therefore it was required to:

- carry out all the recruitment checks on staff before they are appointed and enter the date of their completion and initials of the checker on the centralised register [Regulation 4.(2)(a) and (b), 4A(6), 4(2)(a), (c) and (d), 4C(3), 4C(4)(b) under The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors] and, for the same reason [Regulation 3.(2)(b) under The welfare, health and safety of pupils].

2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had rectified all of the above shortcomings, as noted in the text of the report.

(ii) Recommended action

2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements:

1. ensure development planning is coordinated between governors, senior and middle managers and that plans contain precise and measurable targets in each section of the school;
2. establish more effective procedures for the sharing of good teaching practice including the use of ICT;
3. raise the quality of marking and reporting to the quality of the best.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' learning and their achievements is good throughout the school. It meets well the school's aims of bringing the best out of each pupil and realizing their full potential. Pupils develop a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills which they use confidently. Their work is thorough, well presented and carefully ordered reflecting both the pride of pupils in their study and the expectations of their teachers. Throughout the school, some classroom displays demonstrate high quality work that is both exciting and stimulating. Pupils' use of ICT is uneven both during the academic year and between subjects. The best practice does, however, advance pupils' learning. ICT is often used very effectively when coursework is undertaken. The school's intranet is proving to be a useful resource for pupils who value the opportunity to use it. The pupils are articulate and communicate fluently both orally and in writing. They can reason well and think for themselves but independent learning is less obvious at all stages. There are, however, curriculum areas where there is excellent engagement and promotion of effective independent learning and creative thinking, as illustrated by the art and design technology (DT) departments. The Auden society, the history society and the Colloquium offer more able pupils the opportunity to develop independent learning skills and to share their knowledge with others. While the school has responded well to the recommendations of the last inspection report, in developing strategies to encourage independent learning the school recognises there is more to do and these are outlined in a comprehensive academic development plan. Pupils support each other well and good examples of effective and co-operative learning were seen throughout the school. The school has responded well to the recommendation of the last report in developing strategies in every subject area to encourage pupils' personal initiative and intellectual ambition and to ensure that their potential, especially that of the most able, is fully realized but recognizes that there is still work to do.
- 3.2 Pupils make good progress over time in relation to their ability profile, which is above the national average. Results in GCSE and A Level, in the last three years for which comparative data is available, have been high when compared with the national average for all maintained schools, and similar when compared with the average for maintained selective schools. As identified at the last inspection pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and English as an additional language (EAL) make excellent progress.
- 3.3 Pupils are successful in sport, music, drama and debating. At regional level they have excelled in team games and nationally in shooting, swimming, public speaking, debating and the Model United Nations. Pupils have sung in the National Youth Choir, performed with the National Youth Theatre and represented both the UK and Britain shooting teams. The shooting team is nationally renowned, having won the Ashburton Shield in 2009. Pupils' art work is displayed around the school and is of a high standard. Pupils' successful achievement is supported by their good attitudes to learning, their largely exemplary behaviour both in and out of class and the extremely good relationships enjoyed between themselves and with staff. Pupils are ambitious, keen and competent learners who feel they are being well prepared for the time when they leave school.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.4 The school offers a broad and generally well balanced curriculum which has a positive impact on achievement and fulfils the school's aims in helping every pupil identify and pursue their strengths and catering to the needs of every pupil enabling them to excel and realise their full potential. It provides a good educational experience for the pupils and is well supported by an excellent range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities. It is suited to all ages, abilities and needs and it covers all the required subjects.
- 3.5 The curriculum is timetabled effectively to allow all pupils to benefit from the wide range of subjects offered and when required to receive outstanding assistance from the learning support department. In addition to the normal core subjects, three sciences and five languages, three modern European, Latin and Japanese, are available. Art, DT, drama and music offer the pupils plenty of opportunity to be creative in these media and to develop the skills associated with them. The introduction of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) has broadened the curricular provision at sixth form level. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is timetabled in Year 9 only and there is a lack of structure to the PSHE course elsewhere in the school as well as a lack of integration of careers guidance within the curriculum. The school is aware of this and is reviewing both the content and delivery of the programme throughout the school including Years 12 and 13.
- 3.6 The extensive extra-curricular programme is a strength of the school. Pupils have a wide choice of activities ranging from sport, music, drama, and flying to kayaking, mechanics and outward bounds activities. Academic subjects are contributing increasingly to the extra-curriculum programme and plans are well under way for the introduction of an Arts Festival. The Colloquium provides older pupils the opportunity to discuss philosophical issues and is much valued by more able pupils. A wide range of drama productions and musical concerts are organised each year. Pupils value the opportunity to hear from external speakers who regularly visit the school to give lectures. High numbers of pupils take part in the Combined Cadet Force, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and in the expeditions which are arranged during the holidays, and they much value the opportunities these afford them.
- 3.7 The school has excellent links with the local community and these make an effective contribution to the pupils' education and their personal development. There is a strong commitment amongst the pupils to make significant contributions to the local community. Examples include Year 12 and 13 pupils visiting old people's homes in the local area and younger pupils visiting local primary schools to help with mentoring and creative writing. The drama and music departments put on events to which the local community are invited. Commitment to fundraising in support of charities is high and pupils take the initiative to suggest appropriate beneficiaries. Significant amounts of money are raised each year for a variety of international projects, including earthquake appeals and the construction of a school in Kenya.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.8 The standard of teaching is predominantly good, with some excellent features, and is rarely less than satisfactory enabling pupils of all abilities and ages, including those with LDD or EAL, to acquire new knowledge, increase their understanding and develop new skills. Pupils are enabled to make good progress, in line with the school's aims. In the best lessons, lively and enthusiastic teaching which includes effective questioning techniques enables pupils to achieve well, with tasks set appropriately to the pupils' abilities. Less effective teaching hinders pupils' progress, especially where pupils are allowed to dominate the class. Teachers give freely of their time outside the classroom to help individuals who experience difficulties with their work. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect, and this adds to pupils' enjoyment of the topics studied. Lessons are planned well and teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teaching is extremely well supported by the learning support department which is highly effective and enables pupils with LDD and ESL to make excellent progress. Consequently, teachers are well informed and alert to the individual needs of pupils and work is pitched at an appropriate level that gives equal access to all pupils, making good use of setting arrangements that exist throughout the school.
- 3.9 Assessment procedures are inconsistent. In most subjects work is marked regularly. The best marking is accompanied by helpful, detailed and encouraging comments, for example in English and history, explaining how pupils can make further progress, but frequently marking lacks comment on what pupils need to do to improve. The pupils value the orders system, which gives them a clear indication of their standards and potential future achievement. End of term reporting procedures are regular and effective and many teachers use the opportunity to report thoroughly.
- 3.10 Teachers make good use of the wide range of resources available to them with many classrooms well stocked with textbooks and other teaching resources. However, many teachers rely too heavily on the use of photocopied notes, which restricts opportunities for independent learning. Whilst the school has two well-stocked libraries, they are under-utilised by the pupils for academic purposes. The use of ICT is limited and few lessons observed showed innovative practice in line with the school's stated aims. An example of excellent practice was observed in geography, where virtual globe software was used most effectively.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and in accordance with the aims of the school to cultivate young people with a sense of self-worth, a sense of being valued as an individual in a community and a strong sense of social and moral responsibility.
- 4.2 Pupils have good levels of self-esteem, are caring and considerate towards others, and are sensitive to their feelings. The chapel is a feature of the daily life of the school. Pupils have an opportunity to take part, but the level of their engagement is not always clear. The spiritual content of midweek assemblies is limited, but there are more traditional services at the weekends. The use of the chapel for baptisms, weddings and other more formal services offers pupils an opportunity to explore and develop their spiritual understanding. Through the Colloquium, pupils in Years 12 and 13 have opportunities to explore aspects of spirituality, but such enquiry is less evident further down the school.
- 4.3 Pupils are well-mannered, confident and outgoing, and their behaviour throughout the school is largely exemplary. Tolerance and understanding are an expectation in the school. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and of any injustice done to others. Younger pupils receive considerable support from older pupils within their houses. There is a strong sense of community with pupils supporting one another; for example, day pupils return in the evening to attend house productions, and viewing other pupils' art exhibitions is very popular. The school is working to develop a scheme of work for PSHE beyond Year 9 to assist all pupils in increasing their understanding of themselves and others. Sensitive issues are addressed via outside agencies and speakers including local health agencies and the police. Pupils are pro-active in raising money for various charities, nationally and internationally; activities range from individual efforts, to house activities and whole school fundraising. They show compassion for the plight of others and appreciate the difference their support makes to the lives of those less fortunate than themselves.
- 4.4 The quality of pupils' social development and the interaction between pupils is particularly strong, underpinned by excellent relationships within the school community and the excellent pastoral care shown by all staff. Pupils are pleasant and courteous and have excellent social skills. The newly formed house forums, activities within the houses and delegation of responsibilities within the houses allow the students to contribute to their community in a positive way. There are also opportunities to join the catering committee to express their views on the provision in the dining room. The pupils have the confidence to develop as individuals and to make their own decisions. The system of inviting pupils to comment on their own progress in the end of year reports encourages them to set realistic and achievable targets for their own progress and development and to comment objectively about that progress.

4.5 The cultural awareness of the pupils is particularly strong and they have a tolerant attitude towards those from different cultural backgrounds. Pupils from abroad comment on how quickly they settle in and are made to feel at home in the school. The religious studies work on alternative faiths, cultures and traditions encourages an appreciation of cultural diversity. The programme of visits organised by the boarding houses offers further opportunities for pupils to increase their cultural awareness.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

4.6 The pastoral care shown to pupils is excellent. The staff provide effective support and guidance, fostering the pupils' strong personal development and good academic achievements. Pupils are happy, confident and relaxed in the school environment. In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire pupils commented that they are well cared for. They all feel that they have someone to whom they can turn for advice and support if they should have a problem, but understand that it can be better to deal with a problem themselves initially. Pupils feel that they can take issues to a member of staff, but the senior pupils seem to turn to friends first, and younger pupils feel able to ask older pupils for help in the first instance, especially if the issue is relatively minor.

4.7 The relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils of different ages are particularly strong. Not only do the pupils often report that they find the staff very approachable and helpful, but there is also a good rapport between junior and senior pupils, resulting in a happy and thriving community.

4.8 The health and safety of pupils is good. The school has a well-formulated anti-bullying policy, and pupils commented in their questionnaire responses on the very low level of bullying in the school. The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and is supported by designated officers. All staff are trained, although at the time of the first visit the policy had not been implemented fully for recruitment checks for all staff and governor appointments. Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards; regular fire drills are held and staff receive fire training. Health and safety procedures are effective, with risk assessments covering all aspects of school life. A health and safety committee, chaired by the resources director, meets regularly to discuss any issues arising. Electrical testing is appropriately carried out and health and safety documentation is thorough. Accidents are suitably recorded and facilities for those who become ill during the school day are excellent. An accessibility plan has been written, which is designed to improve the educational provision for those pupils with disabilities and is in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act.

4.9 Pupils understand well the importance of choosing a healthy diet and participating in physical exercise. They enjoy school meals, which are nutritious and provide choice, although in the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and in conversations with pupils they commented that while they particularly enjoy breakfast the choice and quality at tea and weekend meals were sometimes inadequate. The admission and attendance registers have been accurately maintained and are suitably stored.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.10 A boarding inspection was conducted by Ofsted. The ISI inspection has considered boarding in a whole-school context. The boarding experience plays a valuable part in the pupils' education and development and contributes effectively to the school's aims. Relationships within boarding are characterized by warmth, courtesy, and concern for the individual. The mix of day and boarding pupils in the houses is appreciated by both groups and develops a sense of loyalty to both the school and the house. The family atmosphere and the loyalty as highlighted in the previous report remain features of boarding at the school. Pupils derive effective role models from staff and treat each other with respect. A suitably relaxed atmosphere ensures that there is a homely feel to houses, in which pupils are ready to take responsibility and help others, for example as mentors.
- 4.11 Caring pastoral relations are calculated to support individuals through the different stages of their school careers. Older pupils provide effective role models for younger members of the houses but all pupils can express their voices through the new house forum. The trust and mutual respect that exists between the boarders and those who care for them is a notable strength of the school, ensuring that pupils can develop with confidence in a safe and supportive environment which, nevertheless, offers plentiful opportunities for maturing young people to expand their horizons.
- 4.12 Relations between pupils in different houses are friendly, but there is a productive spirit of competition between houses as can be seen in a variety of inter-house competitions in art, music and in the major sports. Pupils make a special effort to excel for their house and produce many excellent achievements as a result. Houses stage entertainments which aim at giving as many pupils as possible the chance to display their particular talents. Special activity programmes are organised at the weekend on a house and school basis to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to engage in an activity if they wish: for example ten pin bowling and visits to places of interest such as Cambridge. Such excursions enable students who have recently come to Britain from abroad to acquire a better knowledge of the country where they are studying.
- 4.13 Boarding heads continue to give positive leadership. They have a clear perception of their roles. Apart from overseeing pupils' welfare, they are an effective link between academic staff, pupils and parents. Resident house tutors and matrons support them well as they have a considerable knowledge of all pupils in their houses. Boarding heads are valued as part of the Senior Management Team and contribute to shaping pastoral and academic policy in the school.
- 4.14 The school has responded well to the recommendation of the previous report, and since the last inspection the programme of renovation in the boarding houses has enhanced the quality of the accommodation. The programme of renovation continues with one house half-way through refurbishment, and further work is planned for another.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governing body satisfactorily oversees the work of the school, and helps to secure the school's aims, which strongly support pupils' personal and academic development. The structure and management arrangements related to the governing body have been recently reviewed to ensure that the governors continue to have efficient oversight of all areas of school life, thereby enabling them to respond to the needs of present and future pupils. There are now fewer members of the Fishmonger's Company and more local governors. Good care is taken to ensure that the board includes a suitable range of expertise and interests.
- 5.2 The governors, together with senior managers, have responded well to the recommendations from the last report relating to the refurbishment of boarding houses, coherence and consistency in the assessment and monitoring of academic performance and the professional development and appraisal of staff, developing strategies in every subject area to encourage pupils' personal initiative and intellectual ambition to ensure that their potential, especially that of the most able, is fully realised, and complying with the regulatory action points on admissions registers and registration. Governors receive regular reports from the headmaster, which give them insight into the achievements and challenges of the whole school. One governor oversees pastoral and welfare matters, including child protection. The governors' oversight and monitoring of the undertaking and recording of recruitment checks was not initially sufficiently rigorous.
- 5.3 There is no long-term strategic plan that informs the school's management and leadership about the future direction of the school. The focus of the governors has been on the financial running of the school and has lacked an educational focus. The governors have recognised this and have recently formed an education committee.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Clear direction and leadership ensure that good standards of educational provision are successfully promoted in line with the school's aims and ethos. Good academic results, a wide ranging extra-curricular programme, and the care of pupils are the major priorities. Links with the prep school are developing well. Senior management ensures a good quality of education and the excellent personal development of the pupils. The monitoring of the teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is effective, and group deliberations on academic development involve middle as well as senior managers.
- 5.5 Policies and procedures have been produced for aspects of school life and are implemented successfully. Senior staff are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified areas in need of development. Strategic plans have been drawn up but have not yet been formulated in to a full school development plan. The recommendation of the last report concerning the review, training and development of staff is being fulfilled through the appraisal scheme. There is much good practice at middle management level, but overall quality is uneven. Development planning at this level sets out specific areas for educational improvement in the short to medium term, but rarely includes any costings or overall strategic objectives and needs greater clarification and refinement. Systems for

monitoring the work of departments are effective, but lack consistency. Heads of department acknowledge their responsibility for monitoring the performance of their teams and are working diligently in this respect, but uniformity of practice is not assured. Liaison across the school for monitoring purposes, for example, to ensure consistently high standards in the quality of report writing and marking, lacks sharpness.

- 5.6 Teaching staff are deployed well. All contribute significantly to pupils' learning and welfare, including LDD and EAL pupils. High quality staff are appointed and staffing levels are excellent, so that strong support is given to pupils throughout the school. In-service training and appraisal are regular features of staff development, and the safeguarding, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are given high priority, with all staff trained in these areas. Whilst the recruitment of staff is now carried out satisfactorily, the centralised register was not robust and not all checks were made, including those with the Criminal Records Bureau on every member of staff or governor before appointment. The appropriate procedures are now being followed.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.7 Links between school and parents are good and strongly support the academic and personal development aims of the school. Parents are clearly very appreciative of the good links maintained between them and the school, and the frequent contact is both welcomed and valued. The questionnaire completed by parents before the inspection showed a high level of satisfaction with key areas of school provision, including the teaching, pastoral care, academic standards and extra-curricular activities, particularly music, drama and sport. Some parents expressed their concerns at the standard of behaviour but the inspection team found that this was not the case. They observed the exemplary behaviour of pupils both in and out of the classroom.
- 5.8 Parents are invited to at least one parents' evening and receive three written reports a year, which give a strong indication of their children's progress, but do not consistently contain meaningful targets for improvement. In addition there is a settling in report sent to parents of all new pupils in Year 9 and all pupils in Year 12. Parents receive regular newsletters which highlight all the events that have taken place as well as the successes of the pupils both in and out of school. The website contains all letters sent as well as success highlights and events. Parents are welcomed into school for special events, and the head has set up a social club on Saturdays for parents of day pupils as well as a blog for all parents, but especially for those of boarders.
- 5.9 Parents are encouraged to contact the school straight away to discuss any concerns with the house heads, the subject specialist or senior staff. All complaints are effectively dealt with through a robust and compliant complaints procedure.

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

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 governors and governors, 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.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools were inspected by a team of three Ofsted inspectors over three days.

Inspectors

Dr Stuart Nuttall	Reporting inspector
Miss Theresa Holmwood	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC)
Dr Ernst Zillekens	Senior Team Inspector (Head of Dept, HMC)
Mr David Elstone	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC)
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