



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

STAMFORD JUNIOR SCHOOL

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Stamford Junior School

The senior schools were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	Stamford Junior School		
DfE Number	925/6045		
Registered Charity Number	527618		
Address	Stamford Junior School Kettering Road Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 2LR United Kingdom		
Telephone Number	01780 484400		
Fax Number	01780 484401		
Email Address	headjs@ses.lincs.sch.uk		
Head	Mrs Emma Smith		
Chair of Governors	Mr Malcolm Desforges		
Age Range	3 to 11		
Total Number of Pupils	362		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (166 boys; 196 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	85	5-11: 277
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	341	
Number of Boarders	Total:	21	
	Full:	7	Weekly: 4
	Flexi:	10	
Inspection dates	5th to 7th November 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 December 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 senior members of staff and with the 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 Bridget Windley

Reporting Inspector

Mr Martin Ford

Team Inspector for Boarding (Senior Teacher, IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Stamford Junior School operates as a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils aged between three and eleven. Together with two senior schools, Stamford High School for girls and Stamford School for boys, it forms part of the Stamford Endowed Schools foundation which is run as an incorporated charity. The school was created in 2000 when the two junior sections of the senior schools merged. The school shares a governing body and overall principal with the senior schools, with four governors taking a specific interest in Stamford Junior School. The school occupies its own site of over 11 acres in the village of Stamford. The accommodation known as St Michael's comprises a co-educational boarding house located in the grounds of the school. During the evenings and at weekends the boarders have access to the sports hall, the indoor swimming pool and an adventure play area. Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed.
- 1.2 Of the 21 boarders, 10 board on a flexi-basis up to three nights a week, seven are full boarders and four board on a weekly basis. The school emphasises the value of its Christian foundation but accepts children from all faiths. Boarders are drawn from business and professional backgrounds in the local neighbourhood and are almost all of white British origin. Just under three-quarters of the total boarding community have parents in the armed forces.
- 1.3 Within its Christian ethos, the school aims to create a happy, exciting and supportive environment in which learning is the priority and where young people are inspired. The school strives to help boarders achieve their best in all aspects of school life, develop their intellectual curiosity and to gain a caring and respectful attitude towards each member of their diverse and welcoming community.
- 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 2011.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

- Ensure that all boarders are aware of the role of the independent listener.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in December 2009. It judged the school's boarding provision to be outstanding 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 The school has a suitable induction process to ensure that new boarders settle into the school's way of life. This includes an overnight taster stay, the provision of a handbook and an allocated 'buddy'. Boarders have a choice of adults to turn to with a concern and they all report that they are well looked after. The contact number for the independent listener is displayed on notice boards, although in interviews a few boarders reported that they were unsure of her role. Details of appropriate helplines are posted next to boarders' telephones. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Suitable policies and arrangements are established for the care of boarders who are unwell, including provision for first aid, medical emergencies and chronic medical conditions and disabilities. A suitably equipped medical room in school and an appropriate sick bay in the boarding house cater for the needs of boarders. There is close liaison between the fully qualified medical and residential staff. Household remedies and prescribed medicines are appropriately stored and careful checking and recording ensures they are always administered to the correct boarder. With only isolated and appropriate exceptions, boarders do not self-medicate. The boarders' confidentiality and privacy are appropriately respected. Boarders have access to local medical, dental, optometric and other specialist services or provision. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders have regular contact with their parents and families at appropriate times, using the landline telephone in the boarding house or their own mobile telephones. They have frequent supervised opportunities for email, and video messaging is allowed at the weekends. The school monitors the use of electronic equipment to ensure that boarders are kept safe. In addition to half term holidays, full boarders have five weekends away from school during the academic year. [NMS4]
- 3.5 The boarding areas for boys and girls are suitably separate. All dormitories are appropriately maintained and warm. Boarders are encouraged to bring their own duvet covers and favourite toys to personalise their space. Showers are clean; they afford privacy and are close to the dormitories. A common room and a games room allow for recreation and socialising with suitable furniture, table games, computers and televisions. Outside the school day, boarders have areas available for organised and private study. The boarding house is not accessible to those other than residents. Security arrangements do not intrude on privacy. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents unanimously agreed that the school keeps the boarders safe. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Boarders, including those requiring special diets, are provided with healthy, nutritious meals which they eat in the homely dining room in the boarding house. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils indicated that the food was not good, but in further discussions with boarders and through first-hand experience the inspectors found no evidence to support this view. Drinking water is available all day from water dispensers and designated taps around the school; evening and weekend snacks are provided as appropriate. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Boarders may purchase personal and stationery items on their weekly shopping trips to Stamford or they can be obtained from staff. Boarders have secure lockers in

which to keep any personal possessions and valuable items are looked after safely by the school. The boarding staff make thorough arrangements for the laundering of the boarders' clothing and bedding, which is labelled, stored and returned to the correct boarder. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 Boarders attend a range of activities each evening and at weekends, with full use being made of the school's extensive grounds, the sports hall and the swimming pool. Weekend off site visits are arranged to a variety of venues, including the theatre, cinema, and beach. There are several safe areas where boarders can be alone should they choose to be. The provision of newspapers and a variety of technology allows boarders to have access to information about events in the outside world. [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 has comprehensive arrangements to ensure that boarders are protected from harm. Risk assessments cover all aspects of safety and detailed records are kept and monitored. Suitable professional audits and maintenance tests are undertaken regularly. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school meets all statutory responsibilities regarding fire precautions. Fire drills are held regularly and both children and staff are fully aware of the appropriate evacuation procedures. Records are up to date and efficiently kept and fire extinguishers are regularly inspected and maintained. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The governors and staff have a clear appreciation of the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils. Child protection procedures are set out in the school's safeguarding policy, which has due regard to official guidance. All staff are trained regularly in child protection and for new staff, procedures for safeguarding are covered as part of their comprehensive induction programme. The designated persons with responsibility for safeguarding have established useful links with the local safeguarding children board. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 There is clear evidence of strong relationships between both boarders and boarding staff. The promotion of good behaviour amongst pupils, with due emphasis on promoting positive values is covered across a range of policies. Boarders understand the rewards and sanctions systems that are in place and consider that the very minor sanctions which are occasionally used are fair. Pupils report that there is no bullying and they are confident that staff would deal with any unkind behaviour should it arise. Suitable and appropriate policies for physical restraint and for searching pupils are in place, but have yet to be used. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school operates safe recruitment procedures and the central register is maintained accurately. Appropriate checks and suitable written agreements are in place for all family members over the age of 16 living in boarding accommodation. Control of visitors and other adults to boarding accommodation is effective. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders. [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 A statement of boarding principles is provided on house notice-boards for the boarders and it is available to parents and staff in the boarding handbooks. These principles are accurately reflected in current practice. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents were overwhelmingly positive about every aspect of the school's support and care for their children. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Leadership and management of boarding ensure that standards are upheld consistently. High levels of communication between boarding and day staff ensure the boarders' needs are quickly addressed. Self-evaluation of the boarding provision is undertaken by senior staff through discussion with boarders, staff and parents, and the results are used to plan for the future. Appropriately experienced boarding staff ensure that all records required by the NMS are appropriately maintained and monitored. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff and volunteers have detailed job descriptions reflecting their roles and responsibilities, they receive a comprehensive induction before they commence work and have regular reviews of their practice. In interviews staff reported that they are routinely offered opportunities for training and professional development. Spouses living within the boarding house do not have a designated role in the school. Staff who supervise boarders outside teaching time are suitably experienced and the ratio of staff to pupils is generous. Pupils know how to access a member of staff at all times and staff know the whereabouts of pupils in their charge. Resident members of the boarding team live in suitable accommodation which is appropriately separate from the boarders. Boarders do not have access to this accommodation. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders are treated equally, with due respect for religious or cultural backgrounds and dietary needs. Those with particular pastoral needs receive appropriate care and support to enable them to participate in school life. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders' views are gathered through half termly meetings and suggestion boxes and boarders spoke positively of the ways in which their opinions and suggestions are taken into account. In the pre-inspection questionnaires and in discussions, boarders unanimously expressed their enthusiasm and enjoyment of boarding. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The complaints policy is available on the school's website for parents to access, and makes clear the related procedures to follow. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS18]
- 3.22 Older boarders are elected by their peers to take on positions of responsibility within the boarding houses and they are clear about the limits and expectations of their role. In interviews the younger boarders spoke very highly of those fulfilling these roles and showed appreciation for the help and guidance they provide. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]