



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

STAMFORD SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Stamford School

Stamford Junior School and Stamford High School were inspected at the same time and separate reports published.

Full Name of School	Stamford School		
DfE Number	925/6027		
Registered Charity Number	527618		
Address	Stamford School St Paul's Street Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 2BQ		
Telephone Number	01780 750300		
Fax Number	01780 750336		
Email Address	headss@ses.lincs.sch.uk		
Headmaster	Mr William Phelan		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Malcolm Desforges		
Age Range	10 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	691		
Gender of Pupils	Boys		
Numbers by Age	10-18:	691	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	605	
Number of Boarders	Total:	86	
	Full:	41	Weekly: 25
	3-night:	20	
Inspection dates	05 Nov 2013 to 07 Nov 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 chairman of governors and the boarding governor, 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

Mr Adrian Underwood

Mr Timothy Halsall

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant Deputy Head, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Stamford School, a day and boarding school for boys between the ages of 10 and 18, was founded in 1532 and is one of the three constituent schools of the Stamford Endowed Schools foundation, being the original school in that foundation. The other schools are Stamford High School (for girls aged 11 to 18) and Stamford Junior School (for boys and girls aged 3 to 11). The school has a Christian foundation but welcomes pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds irrespective of their personal beliefs. The school is a charity and the governors are the charity's trustees.
- 1.2 The school aims to foster a sense of personal responsibility, service to the community and leadership within its pupils, underpinned by a pastoral ethic which places the well-being of the pupils at the heart of all the school's activities.
- 1.3 The number of pupils on roll is 691, of whom 213 are in the sixth form. The number of boarders is 86. The majority of boarders are of white British heritage, and others come from a range of six foreign countries. There are 22 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 Boarders are members of one of two houses, one for boarders from Year 7 to Year 10 and one for boarders from Year 10 to Year 13. The school offers a full boarding programme as well as weekly and flexible boarding options. Each house is led by a housemaster or houseparents, supported by a resident matron and a team of resident tutors. The head of boarding is the senior master, who is a member of the senior management team.
- 1.5 Since the previous inspection in December 2009, a new headmaster was appointed taking up his post in September 2011. Both boarding houses have had a change of leadership. The housemaster of Browne House took up his post in September 2011 and the houseparents of Byard House started in September 2013.
- 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. Increase the opportunities for staff to develop best boarding practice.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in December 2009. The overall quality rating was outstanding. There were 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 New boarders are appropriately inducted through house handbooks, the support of the house teams and the 'buddy' system. Boarders report that there are a number of staff to whom they can turn for personal guidance, while academic and pastoral staff communicate both formally and informally to support boarders. The school publicises widely several outside agencies, including the Children's Rights Director and the independent listener, whom boarders may contact directly about any concerns. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Policies and procedures to deal with boarders who are unwell are appropriate and regularly monitored. The school's medical centre staff are appropriately qualified and trained and the medical centre itself offers suitable accommodation. Boarders also have access to other health services as necessary. Prescribed medicines are carefully controlled, while those pupils deemed capable of self-medicating are permitted and enabled to do so. The medical team works closely with the house matrons on medical matters. Medicines are safely stored in lockable cabinets. Boarders' confidentiality is maintained and their rights are protected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders contact their families principally through electronic means and boarders appreciate the recent improvement of the wireless internet system. Boarders are supportive of the fact that the school monitors electronic communication for their welfare and safety, including, in Byard, the junior house, the overnight storage of electronic devices. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarders take pride in their boarding accommodation, which is appropriate for the numbers and ages of boarders and is suitably furnished and maintained. Boarders can personalise their areas, and their artwork enhances the boarding experience in communal spaces which are used for relaxing, playing games and watching television. Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available. Access to houses is controlled and the CCTV system does not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Boarders eat in a central dining room which has clean and hygienic facilities. Boys in Byard stand until grace is said then sit communally, reflecting the ethos of the school's foundation. Older boarders arrive less formally but share meal times collectively. All boarders appreciate the quantity of food available and commented on recent improvements to the quality of the food, which offers a choice of healthy and nutritious meals, including a salad bar. The school meets boarders' special dietary needs. Discussions with boarders suggest there remains some variation in food quality from day to day. Fruit bowls in houses are particularly appreciated and boarders have the means to prepare snacks. Older boarders suggested that a later meal time would be a positive development and this is in the boarding development plan. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry provision for boarders' clothing and bedding appropriately supports boarders' lives. It is done daily and promptly returned. Boarders have lockable storage in their rooms and the house kitchens for personal possessions. Stationery and other personal items are obtained from both the school shop and from visits to

Stamford, which, in boarders' discussion with inspectors, are particularly appreciated. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 Boarders have access to a wide range of facilities for activities at the end of the school day and during the evenings, although some of the younger boys suggested they would like a few more non-sporting ones. Boarders enjoy a full weekend programme but also appreciate the free time available during the week and at weekends. The spacious campus affords several safe areas for boarders to be alone or to meet with friends. Boarders follow news events through newspapers, television and the internet. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The safety of boarders is a priority of the school. Appropriate risk assessments, and safety records are regularly monitored by the health and safety committee. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The fire safety policy and practice effectively guard against risk from fire. Drills are held in boarding time, are recorded correctly and any recommendations are addressed. The testing of boarders' portable appliances is carried out regularly by appropriately qualified staff. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The safeguarding policy and procedures are in accordance with official guidance, and the school has suitable links with the Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The designated person's child protection training, including inter-agency working, is up to date. All staff training is in date and suitably recorded and staff understand and implement safeguarding procedures. Records of child protection issues are securely stored. Drawing on discussions with the designated persons at the three schools, the safeguarding governor draws up a comprehensive safeguarding report. This is made annually to the governing body, which reviews both policy and practice. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The policy to promote good behaviour is suitable and boarders confirm that they appreciate the culture of rewards and the necessity for sanctions. Boarders report, however, that sanctions do not have to be imposed that often because of the strength of the house communities and the ethos of self-management. Boarders were swift to confirm that bullying is not tolerated, that the few instances of bullying are effectively managed and that the "speak out" and "don't suffer in silence" culture is the norm. The policies on room searches and physical restraint are suitable. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Staff recruitment policies and checks, and the central register meet requirements. People over the age of 16 living on site, who are not members of staff, have written agreements, are suitably checked and receive appropriate induction guidance. All visitors are monitored, no-one has unsupervised access to boarders and visiting contractors are required to wear purple high-visibility jackets. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The boarding principles and practice are published in the *Boarding Handbook*, are displayed in the houses, and work in practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The school's operational plan, the boarding governor's annual review of boarding, the rolling refurbishment programme and the plans for an increase in boarding provision all confirm the commitment of governors and senior managers to enhancing pupils' boarding experience. Boarding records, policies and documents are regularly monitored by senior managers. These senior managers are very experienced in boarding practice and the boarding teams acknowledge the support they receive from senior managers. Boarders' academic and personal development is tracked and parents receive progress information twice a term. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about their children's boarding life. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 The number of staff employed in the houses at all times is appropriate. All boarding staff have suitable job descriptions and have induction training. Assessment of the contribution a member of staff makes to boarding is included in the programme of staff appraisal and identifies areas for further training, although not all of these opportunities are fully developed. Staff supervision of boarders at all times is appropriate and boarders report that they value the opportunities to talk with boarding staff on a range of matters. Boarders know how to contact staff at night. Signing-out systems are correctly used. Regular registrations each day ensure that staff know boarders' whereabouts; staff are appropriately trained in the procedure if a boarder goes missing, using the school's "missing pupil" flowchart. Staff accommodation is suitable; boarders do not have access to staff accommodation. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 The equal opportunities policy is effective in practice. Boarders report that they experience no discrimination, and that staff treat them fairly and are committed to the personal development of each individual. Those boarders with any specific academic or pastoral needs have additional support including, where necessary, a support plan. Boarders from other countries are fluent in English and said they felt integrated into the life of the houses. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 In Byard House, boarders express their views informally at house meetings or individually with the boarding staff. In Browne House, the house council, with representatives from all its year groups, meets regularly and all their deliberations are published on house noticeboards. Boarders appreciate the increased opportunities to contribute to the development of the houses. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The complaints procedure is published on the school's website and conforms to regulations. Complaints are appropriately responded to and recorded. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 The houses do not operate a prefect system. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]