



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BOUNDARY OAK SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Boundary Oak School

Full Name of School	<b>Boundary Oak School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>850/6047</b>		
Address	<b>Boundary Oak School Roche Court Fareham Hampshire PO17 5BL England</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01329 280955</b>		
Fax Number	<b>01329 827656</b>		
Email Address	<b>HKellett@boundaryoak.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mrs Hazel Kellett</b>		
Proprietor	<b>Mr Aaron Stewart</b>		
Age Range	<b>2 to 13</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>110</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (63 boys; 47 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>30</b>	5-11: <b>69</b>
	11-13:	<b>11</b>	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>96</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>14</b>	
	Full:	<b>8</b>	Weekly: <b>6</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>10 Nov 2015 to 12 Nov 2015</b>		

## PREFACE

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) Regulations 2014, as amended. 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.

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 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 proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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 Sara Wiggins

Reporting Inspector

Mr Alistair Telfer

Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Department, ISA School)

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

- 1.1 Boundary Oak School is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from the age of three to thirteen years. It was founded in 1918 in Waterlooville and moved to its present site in 23 acres of playing fields, pasture and woodland on the outskirts of Fareham, Hampshire in 1961. The boarding house is situated in the main building with separate sections for boys and girls. Since the previous inspection, the leadership of the boarding house has changed. In September 2014 the school became proprietorial, being owned by a private education company, Quo Vadis Education, of whom two members form part of the school's senior management team. The aims of the school are to value and treat each pupil as an individual, within a family community and to develop and support differing needs whilst fostering an enjoyment of learning and promoting a growth mindset.
- 1.2 The school has on roll 110 pupils, comprising 63 boys and 47 girls. Thirty pupils attend the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), of whom 13 attend part-time. In Years 1 and 2 there are 17 pupils and there are 63 pupils in Years 3 to 8. Fourteen pupils are either full or weekly boarders with six others boarding occasionally. Pupils come mostly from professional families with parents who live and work in the area surrounding the school, with a small number of pupils from families who live and work abroad. The majority are from a white British background with a very small minority coming from several other different ethnic minority groups. Five pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 14 receive support with their learning. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Three pupils have English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.3 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 does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, and therefore it must take the following action.

- Ensure that staff recruitment checks are implemented prior to appointment, principally with regards to overseas gap assistant staff [National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults] and for the same reason National Minimum Standard 11 under child protection].

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

2.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure the rigour regarding processes and procedures for the monitoring of recruitment records remains thorough.

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

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by ISI in November 2012. There were no individual recommendations for boarding in this inspection. Boarders' handbooks have been revised and are now child friendly, and opportunities to personalise dormitory areas have been provided. Accommodation was satisfactory and this has undergone a programme of extensive refurbishment.

### **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 There is a well organised induction procedure for boarders who receive a detailed boarding handbook, produced in a pupil friendly manner, which provides comprehensive information regarding all aspects of boarding in advance of arriving at school. A buddy system is in place for new and occasional boarders. Boarders confirm that there are a number of staff members to whom they can turn for help and appreciate the 'Circle of Care' guidance that outlines this procedure. The house notice board provides contact details of appropriate outside sources of support, including the school's independent listener and the Office of the Children's commissioner. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Procedures to support the physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing of boarders and those who are unwell or who suffer from serious conditions are suitable and understood by staff and boarders alike. The medical centre, adequately separated from other boarders and providing separate accommodation for male and female boarders, is manned by suitably qualified house staff. Clear procedures are in place for the administration of household remedies. All medication is securely stored and proper records of its administration are kept confidentially. A doctor is available for consultation as are other medical practitioners, who can be organised as required. Boarders' rights and confidentiality are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders confirm that no limitations are placed on contact with their families. They may use a phone, privately, in the school phone booth and their mobile phones or the internet at suitable times. Systems are in place to ensure their e-safety. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarders' sleeping accommodation is well organised and managed with risk assessments undertaken and findings acted upon. Appropriate arrangements are made for private study, with teaching staff available to assist when necessary. Toilets and showering facilities offer appropriate privacy and heating, lighting and ventilation levels in the house are appropriate and rooms are clean. Accommodation, recently refurbished, and furnishings are suitable for the number, needs, ages and gender of boarders with appropriate separation from accommodation for adults. Bedding is clean, warm and fit for purpose. Boarders can bring their own duvet covers and personalise their rooms with posters and personal items. The house is protected from access by unauthorised individuals, and use of school facilities by groups does not allow unsupervised access to pupils, or to boarding accommodation. Security procedures do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 The school provides a varied menu of food, including choices suited to specific dietary, medical or religious needs. The school kitchen and dining room are hygienically maintained. Drinking water is freely available throughout the school and boarders are provided with light snacks in the evening. Boarding staff are sensitive to boarders' individual needs [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry is regular and returned promptly. Boarders may obtain toiletries and stationery from the school. Tuck is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Boarders' valued items and money are looked after by the school. Pocket money is issued weekly. [NMS 9]

3.8 Boarders have a wide choice of organised activities throughout the week and at weekends with suitable risk assessments in place. The school site provides safe recreational areas including pleasant outdoor spaces, common room and places where boarders may be alone. Internet access, newspapers and televisions enable boarders to access information about outside events. [NMS 10]

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

3.9 The school meets does not meet two of the NMS under this section.

3.10 The school takes care to ensure the health and safety of the boarders. Detailed policies and procedures cover appropriate areas of the school's provision for boarders and are implemented effectively. The careful maintenance of the school's premises, accommodation and facilities is underpinned by efficient record keeping. Since the previous inspection, an extensive programme of refurbishment has been undertaken of boarding accommodation. Suitable risk assessments are carried out and monitored with action being taken as appropriate. [NMS 6]

3.11 Fire risk assessments exist for all areas which are reviewed regularly. Equipment is tested and maintained on a regular basis and documentation is in line with government guidance. Fire drills are regularly carried out in the boarding house including during sleeping hours. [NMS 7]

3.12 The school's child protection policy complies with official guidance and lays out effective procedures to safeguard boarders' welfare and promote their well-being. These are implemented effectively in nearly all areas. Contact with the local safeguarding board is constructive, and the school demonstrates clear understanding of the requirement to make ready contact without investigation if any disclosure is made. Detailed records are maintained. Proprietors carry out an annual review of the school's safeguarding arrangements. Staff have had all the correct recruitment checks although very occasionally this was not completed before appointment. All necessary safeguarding training is up-to-date and recorded, including recent training regarding radicalisation. Appropriate guidance is provided for newly appointed staff, contract catering and cleaning staff. [NMS 11]

3.13 Boarders are clear about expectations of behaviour. They feel that staff are fair in the way they encourage good behaviour and deal with any misbehaviour. Boarders confirm that bullying and cyber-bullying are rare and the school's response is well managed. Arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions and for applying physical restraint, including reasonable force, are appropriate and employed with care when necessary, which is rare. All required policies have regard to published guidance and are known to staff and records are carefully maintained. [NMS12]

3.14 The system for the safe recruitment of governors, staff and volunteers is diligent in obtaining disclosure and barring list checks and all staff have had this and other required checks. Very occasionally references and medical fitness checks were not taken up before appointment. On one occasion, the barred list check for an overseas gap year assistant had not been taken up prior to appointment; however a police check abroad was in place, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) had been requested and references had been taken up. Systems to improve the recording and checking process had been developed prior to the inspection visit. Visitors to boarding areas are carefully supervised. All residents over sixteen who reside in boarding, but are not employed by the school, have an enhanced certificate

with barred list information obtained from the DBS and appropriate written agreements with the school. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all the NMS under this section
- 3.16 The school has a suitable statement of its boarding principles and practice which are seen to work in practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Boarding is effectively led by a team of dedicated staff, with good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, who actively promote the wellbeing of boarders. Through the pre-inspection questionnaire and during interviews, parents and boarders indicate that the boarding experience is enjoyable, that boarders get on well together and that they feel safe. The school follows and maintains the recommended records, policies and documents required by the NMS. The proprietors carefully monitor the effectiveness of leadership, management and the delivery of the boarding and welfare provision to ensure that all standards are consistently met. Action had been taken as appropriate and procedures and processes had been clarified and put in place to support this prior to the inspection visit. Residential and academic staff maintain close liaison, and teachers are involved in house duties. Boarding staff are suitably trained and experienced. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff have appropriate job descriptions and thorough induction procedures into the life of the house. This usually involves shadowing a more experienced colleague. Formal staff appraisals are carried out annually. Professional development of boarding practice and training is undertaken regularly by boarding staff, and gap year students complete a national vocational qualification during their year in the school. Duty rotas ensure that there are sufficient staff on duty outside teaching time so that boarders are always in the charge of staff members who are suitably qualified and experienced. Signing in and out systems through the school reception and the boarding house enable staff to know the whereabouts of boarders at all times. There is a clear policy for missing pupils which is known and understood by all house staff. There are always staff members on duty in the house and they are easily contactable by boarders at night. Staff accommodation is appropriate and boarders do not have inappropriate access to this. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders confirm that they are well cared for and, in accordance with the school's equality policy, are not discriminated against. House staff have access to boarders' academic and pastoral records. They are fully aware of their cultural backgrounds and of pupils with SEND and EAL, and provide appropriate, caring support in the house. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders are actively encouraged to contribute their views and suggestions, raise concerns or make complaints through a suggestion box and at the weekly boarding meeting. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school's complaints procedure is available to all parents on the school website. Its procedures are followed by the school and the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated complete satisfaction with boarding arrangements. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 In the house, dormitory captains have appropriate duties and responsibilities and help with day- to-day routines. [NMS 19]

3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]