



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

CAMBRIDGE CENTRE FOR SIXTH-FORM STUDIES

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies

Full Name of College	Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies		
DfE Number	873/6021		
Registered Charity Number	1084601		
Address	Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies 1 Salisbury Villas Station Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB1 2JF		
Telephone Number	01223 716890		
Fax Number	01223 517530		
Email Address	principal@ccss.co.uk		
Principal	Mr Stuart Nicholson		
Chair of Trustees	Mr Peter Cowley		
Age Range	15 to 24		
Total Number of Students	178		
Gender of Students	Mixed (89 boys; 89 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5-11:	
	3-5 (EYFS):	15-24:	178
Number of Day Students	Total:	46	
Number of Boarders	Total:	132	
	Full:	131	Weekly: 1
Inspection dates	05 Feb 2013 to 08 Feb 2013		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the college. The previous ISI inspection was in February 2008.

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. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the college's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

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

This inspection contains specific judgements on the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the college in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education, personal development and welfare. Until September 2011, Boarding inspections were carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

The inspection of the college 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 college, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college'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 judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the college but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the college's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with students and examined samples of students' work. They 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 boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured students. The responses of parents and students to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the college.

Inspectors

Mr Adrian Underwood

Mr Colin Ashby

Mrs Susan Watts

Mr Nigel Willetts

Mr Tony Halliwell

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector

Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)

Team Inspector (Housemaster, HMC school)

Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

- 1.1 The Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies is a boarding and day college for students aged 15 to 24. Located in central Cambridge, the college was founded in 1981 and in 2001 became a charitable trust overseen by a board of trustees. The three teaching buildings, plus a bursary and five boarding houses, are all on separate sites. Since the previous inspection the college has bought and refurbished a new building representing about a third of teaching facilities, substantial investment has taken place in information and communication technology (ICT) and the management structure has been revised following the appointment of a new principal and vice-principal.
- 1.2 The college aims to provide education which helps all students to prepare, within and beyond the curriculum, for the demands and possibilities of adult life. It believes in providing an environment for its students which enables them to develop independence while safeguarding and promoting their welfare. It believes that the diversity of the students' backgrounds encourages respect for difference and for achievement. The college aims to offer teaching which is academically challenging, interactive, stimulating and well-resourced. It aims to promote co-operation, integrity and openness in dialogue as the most effective means of ensuring good working, teaching, and learning relationships.
- 1.3 The college currently has 178 students, of whom 12 are studying GCSE subjects, 166 are studying A-level subjects and 132 are boarders. Students come to the college from wide range of backgrounds and previous educational experiences. Over 30 nationalities and a wide range of ability and prior educational experience are represented in the student population. Nationally standardised tests, which A-level students take shortly after joining the college, indicate that the overall ability of A-level students in recent years has been below average with individual abilities ranging from less able to very able. Current intakes reflect a more stringent entry policy and are overall of average ability, again with a proportion of the most able. The few Year 11 GCSE students are not tested but, similarly, the overall ability on entry of these cohorts is judged as below average. Fifty students from overseas for whom English is an additional language (EAL) receive support for their language development. Twenty-seven students have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), four of whom receive specialist learning support. No student has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the college.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE COLLEGE

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Cambridge Centre for Sixth-form Studies is very successful in meeting its aim of providing education which helps all students to prepare, within and beyond the curriculum, for the demands and possibilities of adult life. Results in public examinations are good and extra-curricular achievements are strong. Good academic achievement is supported by good teaching. The previous inspection's recommendations to improve teachers' marking and the provision for students with SEND or EAL have been successfully met. The college has taken measures to improve students' punctuality in response to a recommendation of the previous inspection. The curriculum and extra-curricular programme are excellent.
- 2.2 Students' personal development is excellent. Inspectors enjoyed meeting students who were benefiting from the college's distinctive aim of providing an environment for its students which enables them to develop a sense of responsibility and independence. Students are enthusiastic, academically inquisitive and very appreciative of the opportunities for personal development in a college with over 30 nationalities. As students say, getting on with a variety of nationalities is an invaluable lesson for adult life. Students' boarding experience is excellent, particularly through the opportunities for developing self-determination in a supportive environment. Staff give excellent support to students, who acknowledge this is a significant factor in their academic achievements and personal development. Students who responded to the questionnaire were positive about their life at the college and almost all said they enjoyed being at the college. They did express some concerns about the quality of the food and the availability of extra-curricular activities. The inspection team judged the food to be good and the programme of extra-curricular activities to be wide-ranging, but did note that a minority of students did not take up the opportunities offered by the activities programme.
- 2.3 Governance, management and leadership are excellent. The significant progress made by the college since the previous inspection confirms the commitment of its leaders to improvement in all areas. Complementing the improvement of facilities have been the initiatives to improve students' academic results and their personal development. Staff are very committed and caring and support students strongly in giving their time freely for additional individual academic tutoring and pastoral advice. The college has an excellent relationship with its parents. Whilst it may be challenged by the fact that the majority of parents do not live in the UK, it meets this challenge by ensuring communications are regular, detailed and individually tailored to parents' needs. The previous inspection's recommendation to include extra-curricular activities in reports to parents has been successfully addressed. In an understandably small response to the parents' questionnaire, parents expressed their pleasure at all aspects of the college's life. They were particularly pleased with their children's academic progress, the quality of the boarding experience, the range of curriculum subjects and college's responses to parental communications.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The college meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.
- 2.5 The college meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

- 2.6 The college is advised to make the following improvement.
1. Encourage greater participation in extra-curricular activities by all students.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the students' achievements and learning

- 3.1 The quality of students' achievement and of their learning, attitudes and skills is good.
- 3.2 Students are well educated, fulfilling the college's aim that education should help all students to prepare, within and beyond the curriculum, for the demands and possibilities of adult life. Students have good subject knowledge and understanding and, even though most students are working in a second language, they have very good literacy skills. They articulate their reasoning adeptly as in a Year 13 sociology discussion on the changing role of women in society. Students' workbooks contained good use of ICT for research. Students' creativity is, reflected in their art, photography and graphics, displayed in all the college's academic buildings. Students have good numeracy skills which they apply in work across the curriculum.
- 3.3 Students achieve good standards in their extra-curricular activities. Some have qualified for national championships in cross country and swimming. They have been notably successful in the science Olympiads, the UK Mathematics Challenge and the National Navigation Award. Students have been successful in gaining places on the Global Young Leaders programme in recent years.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2009 to 2011. These are the most recent three years for which national comparative statistics are available. Results in GCSE have been similar to the national average for maintained schools, and in 2009 they were above average. Results in IGCSE have been broadly in line with worldwide norms, with results in English as an additional language higher than worldwide norms.
- 3.5 Results at A level have been similar to the national average for all maintained schools. The results in 2012 showed a distinct improvement on previous years and this was complemented by the improved progress as judged by national standardised tests. These levels of attainment at GCSE and A level, given the academic challenges for a number of students, particularly those with EAL, indicate that, overall, students make good progress relative to the average for students of similar ability. This level of academic achievement enables students to gain places at a range of UK universities.
- 3.6 Achievement is good for students identified with SEND, as confirmed by the progress they make in their work against the targets set for them in their support plans. Students who have EAL make very good progress; they are articulate in class discussions and their written work is well developed, so much so that such students are amongst the highest achievers in the college.
- 3.7 Students have very positive attitudes to learning. Indeed, this is a hallmark of lessons at the college. Students readily engage in class, both with each other and their teachers. Their concentration levels are high and they embrace the college's academic ethos of taking responsibility for their own learning, often challenging teachers and each other with their personal interpretation of a concept or topic. Students' files and workbooks are very well organised and contain evidence of personal research to a high level. Students speak of how much they value the relationship they have with their teachers and the support given to them at all times, but particularly in the weekly one-to-one sessions in every subject they study.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

- 3.8 The quality of the curriculum and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.9 The curriculum supports the aims of the college to offer a wide choice of A levels and GCSEs and a tailored extra-curricular programme. The curriculum is highly flexible and a broad range of subjects is offered at A and AS level. A wide variety of subject combinations is also made available so students can pursue their preferred courses of study. In addition to a normal two year A-level course, students can complete their A-level programme in one year. Currently twelve students are pursuing a one-year GCSE course, where the curriculum is focused on the students' individual needs, rather than adhering to National Curriculum requirements.
- 3.10 Since the previous inspection report the college has responded positively to one of its recommendations, by improving provision for students with SEND and EAL. This provision is now more explicit in schemes of work and includes targets in students' individual support plans and the assessment of progress in relation to them. To assist the students with EAL, specialist teaching is provided at different levels. Students are taught and prepared for a range of certificated courses including International English Language Testing System (IELTS) where the college's required score of 6.5 is exceeded by many students. A one-week intensive English course, prior to entry, is offered for some students, which includes a cultural awareness programme. Of the 27 students identified with SEND, four receive one-to-one support. The progress of the other 23 is monitored through learning support plans on a termly basis. The personal, health and social education (PHSE) programme and the global awareness sessions develop students' understanding of moral, ethical, cultural and environmental issues. Individual guidance for writing personal statements and curriculum vitae are appreciated by students as they apply for university entrance.
- 3.11 The extra-curricular programme includes competitive sports from rowing to soccer, table-tennis to volleyball. Non-sporting activities encompass the extended science curriculum, the mathematics challenge, art and photography. Additional activities can be arranged at the request of students, many of whom take advantage of the sporting facilities for swimming, squash and climbing at a local leisure centre. Students also benefit from residential opportunities such as art trips to Turkey and Barcelona, an arts tour to New York and Washington, the holiday activity trip to Australia, which included sky-diving, and the post-exam outing to Cornwall offering kayaking, surf-boarding, climbing and abseiling.
- 3.12 Excellent use is made of Cambridge's cultural centres and university facilities, such as the science museums and the Cavendish laboratory. These enrich students' experiences, as do opportunities to see live performances at London theatres. Visits to a brewery, museums and a power station, also help to broaden students' horizons. The college has forged links with the community, through such activities as volunteering at a local hospital and working in local charity shops. Most Year 12 students take part in two of the extra-curricular options each week. Whilst a number of students, in responding to the student questionnaire, said that there were insufficient extra-curricular activities, this is not the case. However, not all students are involved in at least one extra-curricular activity.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.13 The quality of teaching is good.
- 3.14 The teaching meets the college's aim to offer teaching which is academically challenging, interactive, stimulating and well-resourced. Lesson planning is detailed, with clear objectives, and the different needs of individual students (including those with EAL and SEND) are identified in this planning. Teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their students very well and tailor teaching accordingly. Although the small classes allow for individual support, strategies for supporting gifted and talented students are not yet fully developed. Students benefit from the high level of teachers' subject knowledge as this supports wide-ranging discussion. Teachers relate very well to their students and mutual respect is the norm. Both teaching and learning are accelerated by the small classes and personal and individual attention offered to students. Teaching was excellent in a significant number of lessons. This teaching was characterised by the dynamic interaction of teacher and students and teachers' passionate and highly knowledgeable delivery.
- 3.15 The good variety of teaching methods helps to motivate students and support independent learning, notably in framing answers in a second language before using these answers in class discussions. Cross-curricular links are commonplace, although little use is made of the students' ICT skills during their learning in the classroom. In the few cases where its use was seen, there was a clear improvement in the pace of learning and achievement, and the use of visual media helped students to handle complex concepts, as in an A-level mathematics lesson where solving equations with partial fractions was well understood by students. Almost all teaching uses a good variety of teaching approaches which cater effectively for different learning styles and needs.
- 3.16 In the last two years, and in response to the previous inspection's recommendation, the college has developed a uniform assessment policy which has improved students' academic performance. All written work is returned with a comment and grades cover sheet, regular testing takes place and reporting is half-termly. Students not achieving their targets are monitored closely and given additional support. Feedback in lessons provides clear advice and teachers encourage and praise their students. In interviews students confirmed how much they valued the academic monitoring, which made them aware of their current levels of achievements and supported the high expectations they had of themselves. The one-to-one weekly tutor sessions with both subject teachers and personal tutors are much valued by students, who welcome the close monitoring they receive.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 Students' spiritual awareness is excellent. Students have a high level of self-awareness evident in the quality of their relationships and conversations. Given the mix of nationalities, they readily appreciate that people have different philosophies and faiths. They are encouraged by the college to attend religious observance if they wish. In particular, students of any faith or none who attend services at King's College chapel say they find them spiritually uplifting. Students are sensitive to the non-material aspects of life and show well-developed aesthetic and spiritual awareness in subjects such as art and English. Participation in activities such as the National Navigation Award encourages self reliance.
- 4.3 The moral development of the students is outstanding. They are given as much opportunity as possible to determine what they do themselves. They appreciate that there are few rules in college and this increases their sense of moral responsibility. They appreciate being treated as adults and mature accordingly. The students have a clear sense of right and wrong, fostered by discussions in PSHE, philosophy and ethics lessons, and the weekly global issues forum, where students tease out the subtleties of moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia and nuclear weapons. In these sessions, students also gain an insight into the British political systems and the foundations of British democracy.
- 4.4 Students' social development is excellent. They have a well developed sense of social responsibility both within the college and in the wider community. From fundraising, through organising fun runs, to working in care homes, the students involve themselves in charitable activities. Further afield, students undertake community work abroad during the holidays, such as hospital work in Nepal. The students achieve economic awareness by opening bank accounts and managing their own finances. They understand the importance of living harmoniously and treating each other as equals. The general view is, 'We don't want to hurt each other's feelings'. They are quick to offer support or advice to each other. Students comment that induction events such as 'Go Ape' or punting quickly integrate them into college life and help them forge strong friendships.
- 4.5 Students' cultural development is outstanding. They appreciate the diversity of cultures in a college where over 30 different nationalities are represented and respect and value each other's differences. Discussions on topical subjects such as gay marriage or, in languages, bull fighting in Spain enable a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural opinions. Students enrich their cultural awareness through visits to museums and galleries locally, in London and abroad to such cities as Istanbul and Barcelona. The study of European abstract artists by students from the Far East exemplifies the richness of the students' cultural awareness.
- 4.6 The quality of the students' personal development is excellent. Many have a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Students are articulate and considerate and courteous. They express their views confidently but listen to and respect the views of others. They take responsibility for their actions and rise to the

challenges presented by the split site, saying that they enjoy the walk or bike ride between buildings; it keeps them fit. They were very enthusiastic about the college; there was nothing that they would change.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

- 4.7 The quality of the college's arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The pastoral care meets the college's aim to provide an environment for students which enables them to develop independence, while safeguarding and promoting their welfare. The college's commitment to supporting students both in their academic and social development is the hallmark of its provision. A comprehensive system of student support plans is in place and stored electronically on the college's network which is accessible by authorised members of staff.
- 4.9 Relationships between the staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent. Such positive relationships underpin the strong sense of community spirit clearly evident across all sites. Staff know and understand the students well. Students know to whom they can turn for help if they have personal or academic difficulties. Students value the extent of their supportive relationships with staff, particularly the one-to-one tutoring sessions.
- 4.10 Whilst a number of student questionnaire responses were critical of the food at the college, inspectors found the food to be nutritious and well presented, and a large number of students to whom they spoke were happy with the meals provided. The meals attended offered carefully planned menus of a balanced, nutritious nature including a range of healthy and vegetarian options. Students have daily exercise as they walk between teaching sites and the boarding houses. In addition, students use the local sports centre.
- 4.11 The college successfully promotes high standards of conduct, with appropriate policies. Students report that there are very few, if any, instances of bullying. The cultural mix of the student body and small class sizes are considered to be a real advantage in this regard. The college has a well-planned strategy for improving educational access for students with particular needs and works hard, within the confines of older buildings, to ensure that these students are suitably supported. The college attaches considerable importance to the need to be responsive to students' views. The student council and the food council are popular with students as a channel for expressing their opinions.

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

- 4.12 The college's arrangements for welfare, health and safety are excellent.
- 4.13 The college achieves a high level of risk management across all its sites, exemplified in the fact that over twenty staff have undertaken formal training in risk assessment. This makes a significant contribution to risk management at departmental level. The board of trustees monitors health and safety issues termly and has developed a trustees' risk register for all college operations.
- 4.14 All members of staff are trained appropriately in child protection, and safe recruitment guidance is carefully followed. The school's arrangements for safeguarding have regard to official guidance. Forty-three members of staff have received training in first aid, which ensures sufficient first aid support on all the college sites. Students who are ill are cared for, in the first instance by the college

nurse and, if necessary, by a doctor. The identification of, and provision for, students who require extra learning support is excellent. The admission and attendance registers are accurately maintained and stored. Since the previous inspection, teachers are more vigilant about punctuality.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.15 The quality of boarding is excellent.
- 4.16 The excellent outcomes for boarders are reflected in the fulfilment of the college's boarding aims. Boarding makes a vital contribution to the distinctive nature of the college; the successful integration of the cultural and international dimensions within the college is a real strength and actively encourages boarders of all nationalities to use English as the natural means of communication. Boarders, both boys and girls, contribute significantly to the life of the college. Their individual contributions reflect the college's commitment to equality and diversity, and the importance it places on fulfilling each boarder's potential.
- 4.17 Boarders enjoy their house environments and acknowledge the efforts made by the house managers to create a homely atmosphere. They often regard their house as their home. Boarding students make a positive contribution to the college through the student council and through participation in sport and community service. They are very polite and well behaved. The wide range of nationalities and backgrounds represented in boarding are integrated positively and add to the cultural diversity of the college. Boarders value the friendships they form with one another and a strong pastoral system within the house, together with a valued tutorial system in the college, reinforces the support in welfare and academic terms.
- 4.18 The quality of the boarding provision and care is excellent. Thorough induction processes are in place for new boarders, including the large number of students who join each year from overseas. Parents and guardians of new boarders are invited to induction days at the start of the college year to meet with the house managers. Boarders reported that they feel safe. Staff work hard to ensure that the academic and pastoral needs of individual students are well met. Medical care is very good. A college nurse tends students who are unwell and they are able to recuperate under supervision in their own boarding house rooms. Very good collaboration between medical staff, house staff and the counselling services ensures a high standard of pastoral care is maintained. A healthy lifestyle is encouraged and students benefit from appropriate periods of non-directed time for rest, relaxation and study. Students comment positively on the more relaxed and less regulated atmosphere of the college which promotes individual responsibility closely reflecting that of a university lifestyle. During the inspection a good range of sporting and non-sporting activities was noted and a number of appropriate activities are arranged for the smaller numbers of students who board at weekends.
- 4.19 Boarding accommodation is comfortable and boarders have the opportunity to personalise their working and living space with posters, photographs, and personal items. A refurbishment programme is underway and this has resulted in improvements across all houses, although, at present, the standard of decor in one of the houses is not as high as in the other boarding houses. All residences are, however, included in a rolling decoration and refurbishment programme and the majority of boarders now benefit by having their own rooms with en suite facilities. Routines and procedures are posted on the house noticeboards together with contact details for the college's own medical support and independent counselling

services. Boarders are able to communicate easily with their friends and parents. Internet availability in houses, which can be variable at times, facilitates communication for overseas students. House managers and tutors maintain regular contact with parents, usually through email and telephone.

- 4.20 In response to questionnaires parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with boarding. In their questionnaire responses, a minority of boarders expressed adverse comments regarding being able to make snacks and drinks when they wanted to, and some criticised the college's provision of activities in the evening and at weekends and the quality of the food. Inspection evidence does not support these views. Most boarders, in discussions, reported that the food on offer is good in terms of quality, quantity and variety; healthy eating options are available and individual dietary needs are met. Meals sampled during the inspection were of a high quality. Additionally all boarding houses have the facility for students to prepare snacks.
- 4.21 The effectiveness of the arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is excellent. Boarding staff ensure that child protection is given a high priority. Procedures for promoting the welfare and safety of boarders are very well controlled by the house managers supported by the college's senior pastoral team. In discussion, boarders reported without hesitation that they felt safe and that they knew that there were members of staff and others to whom they could turn should a concern arise. All staff with access to boarders are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. In response to the recommendation in the previous Ofsted boarding welfare report, all the required recruitment checks are completed. Staff undergo thorough induction procedures. Boarders are at all times under the supervision of suitably qualified and experienced staff, all of whom have received appropriate training and hold first-aid qualifications. Arrangements to ensure the security of students in the boarding houses are effective. Boarders report no instances of bullying but they are fully aware of how to report any concerns, confident that they will be dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Clear guidance is given on sanctions and rewards so that boarders know and understand what is expected of them, and they respond appropriately.
- 4.22 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is excellent. Boarding houses are led by highly professional and dedicated staff teams who demonstrate an on-going commitment to professional development. Consistency of approach and uniformity of procedures are maintained without compromising the unique identity and flavour of each house. The trustees use an auditing process as a significant tool to monitor and support the mid and long term development of boarding. Regular meetings of the house staff teams ensure that boarding matters are consistently reviewed and dealt with. Staff are well supported, benefiting from regular review leading to appropriately related training. A number have complete boarding pastoral courses, and good practice is shared across the five house teams. Long-term plans demonstrate that the senior management of the college and the trustees are committed to the on-going development of boarding at the college.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governance of the college is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing board's aim to support the college and its future development is being met by a dedicated and far-sighted group of trustees with a very realistic approach to their responsibilities. Since the previous inspection, the trustees have overseen the purchase and refurbishment of a new centre for teaching and the appointment of a new principal. It has appointed new trustees with expertise particularly relevant to the college's needs and also restructured its committees to make them more effective.
- 5.3 Trustees are well in touch with the pulse of the college. This is reflected in detailed forward planning documentation and the involvement in the daily life of the college by trustees with identified responsibilities such as such safeguarding and boarding. The education programme and academic standards are carefully monitored by the teaching and learning committee. The board of trustees and senior leadership team work very well together. Trustees give invaluable support to the senior leadership team but also offer challenge to these college leaders in the best interests of the students' education.
- 5.4 The trustees discharge their responsibilities very well in relation to statutory requirements. Policies are reviewed by the full governing body and committees. Appointment procedures for all staff, trustees and volunteers, and health and safety issues are monitored; the full board of trustees conducts an annual review of child protection procedures.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management of the college and of its links with parents, carers and guardians are excellent.
- 5.6 The senior leaders strongly support the college's aim of providing education which helps all students to prepare for adult life. Since the previous inspection, a new senior leadership team has been put in place. This team, working closely with the trustees, has improved the school's processes for self-evaluation. Strategic planning is strong, with a five-year plan in place. This plan identified the need for more focused assessment strategies and subject tutoring, both of which have been developed. Self-evaluation has also highlighted the distinct challenge of managing three academic sites and senior leaders' availability to students and staff across these sites. Departmental development plans are in line with the college plan and, in a number of departments, reflect exciting initiatives for enhancing students' learning. It is clear, from the improved A-level results in 2012 and the quality of work observed, that the self-evaluation and its concomitant strategies are raising students' achievement in all areas of their lives.
- 5.7 Safeguarding of students is given a high priority, and all staff receive appropriate child protection training. Staff awareness of health and safety and welfare procedures is high, complemented by a programme of health and safety training. Staff recruitment is carefully monitored and checking of staff, trustees and volunteers

is well documented in a single central register. The induction process for new staff is thorough and supportive.

- 5.8 Links with parents support the aim of the college to involve all members of the college community, including parents, in achieving the effective education of the students. Parents receive excellent information about the school and their children's progress. Reports are sent home five times a year and include details of progress made and targets for further improvement. Parents and guardians are invited to the college to discuss progress and the next stage of a student's education. Close communication has been further improved by the use of on-line video conferencing in addition to phone calls and email. Overseas parents are welcome to visit the college when they are in the country. Information about the college and its policies is readily available, and meets requirements. The college website, letters home and the termly *Pathway* newsletter keep parents up to date with college life.
- 5.9 The recommendation in the previous inspection report to include participation and achievement in extra-curricular activities in reports to parents has been successfully tackled.
- 5.10 The response to the parents' questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive. Parents feel that they receive timely responses to their questions and that they can easily contact the staff who care for their child. The college contacts the parents, wherever they are, promptly and effectively. A few parents felt that they were not encouraged to be involved in the life of the college, but inspectors judged that this reflects the fact that parents living abroad cannot be as involved as much as they might wish. Parents expressed high satisfaction with the education, boarding life and support for their children.

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