



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

EASTBOURNE COLLEGE

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Eastbourne College

Full Name of School	Eastbourne College
DfE Number	845/6014
Registered Charity Number	307071
Address	Eastbourne College Headmaster's House Old Wish Road Eastbourne East Sussex BN21 4JX
Telephone Number	01323 452300
Fax Number	01323 452327
Email Address	reception@eastbourne-college.co.uk
Head	Mr Simon Davies
Chair of Governors	Sir Ian Forbes
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	620
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (360 boys; 260 girls)
Numbers by Age	13-18: 620
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 309
Number of Boarders	Total: 311 Full: 311 Weekly: 0
Inspection dates	04 Dec 2012 to 06 Dec 2012

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. 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 May 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 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 Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Jeffrey Shipway	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, The Society of Heads school)
Mrs Diana Watkins	Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Headmistress, GSA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Eastbourne College is a co-educational, boarding and day school for pupils aged 13 to 18. Situated in a residential district in the town of Eastbourne, East Sussex, it was founded as a boys' school in 1867 and started to admit girls in 1969. The college is now fully co-educational. While welcoming pupils of all faiths and none, the college's religious affiliation is to the Church of England. The college is administered by a board of governors known as the Eastbourne College Council. In February 2010 the council also became the governing body for St Andrew's School, a local prep school. The council's role is now to govern both schools under a single charity and the amalgamation enables the sharing of facilities, investment and some managerial functions. Each school has its own committee of governors and the Eastbourne College Committee is directly responsible for the college. Since the previous inspection in May 2009, the school has implemented an ongoing refurbishment programme of the boarding houses including new roofs, redecoration and improved common areas. A new creative arts centre has opened and sporting facilities have been extended.
- 1.2 As far as possible, the school aims not to distinguish between boarding and day pupils. The ethos of the school is based on the idea of a twenty-four hour day and seven-day week experience. All pupils are exposed to an extended day and Saturday school. The college sets out to be a happy, inspiring community promoting the key values of participation, the pursuit of excellence, integrity, courtesy and kindness. It aims to provide young people with the wherewithal to flourish both at school and beyond, and to give pupils the best possible preparation to lead, serve and achieve personal fulfilment in their adult lives.
- 1.3 There are 620 pupils in the college of whom 311 are full boarders. There are 128 girls boarding and 183 boys. The school does not offer weekly boarding. The majority of boarders come from the south-east of England and a small number from a range of countries overseas. Day pupils travel to the college from the surrounding areas of East and West Sussex and Kent. The pupils are from a range of professional family backgrounds with a preponderance of parents involved in the financial sector. The school has identified 15 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) but a range of support is offered to 32 pupils depending on their needs. There are 44 pupils who receive support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 There are five boarding houses, two for girls and three for boys. Each house has a housemistress or housemaster in charge, supported by a team of tutors and matrons who are all resident in the College. The school's deputy head is in charge of boarding.
- 1.5 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.

1. Incorporate the views of staff and boarders in re-evaluating the principles of boarding to more closely reflect the ethos of the boarding community.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in May 2009. The school has successfully implemented all the recommendations of the previous report. All staff who administer medication and first aid are now suitability trained and there is a robust system to inform the medical centre of medicines given in house. Boarders have a good choice of food whenever they arrive for meals. Policies for whistle blowing and missing children are known to staff. There is a robust procedure for signing in and out of the college and boarding houses. Suitable window restrictors have been installed and all the fire exits have clear signage. All toilets are adequately ventilated and cleaned, and have hygienic hand-drying facilities.

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 Appropriate induction and guidance is provided for new boarders. An induction day takes place before term starts with extra attention is given to new international boarders. During their first weeks in school new boarders are guided through house procedures by house staff, older pupils and the house prefects. House handbooks are issued with relevant information for boarders and their parents. Boarders say they have a choice of staff and older pupils within their house who they feel comfortable to approach if they have a concern or require guidance. In addition, a school counsellor acts as an independent listener and the medical centre staff and school chaplain provide further support. Contact details are displayed for people who can offer advice outside the school, and for a number of help-lines including the Children's Rights Director. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The medical centre is a central resource where boarders receive health care from registered nurses and doctors in appropriate facilities. In addition medical care is given in houses by experienced and well-trained staff. Adequate provision is made to isolate pupils in separate accommodation when necessary. The recommendation of the previous report, to ensure that all staff in the houses who administer medicines and first aid are qualified to do so, has been met. Medicines are safely stored and detailed records are kept. Health records are shared between the medical centre and the houses as recommended in the previous report. A small number of boarders self-medicate and they are fully assessed as responsible to do so. Confidentiality for boarders is fully respected. All policies and protocols are suitably followed. Boarders have access to local dental, optometric and other specialist services when needed. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders can contact their families freely by using their own mobile phones, house telephones or the internet and have suitable privacy in which to do so. In the pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of boarders reported that they did not find it easy to contact their family and friends outside the school but the inspection team found no evidence to support this. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 The boarding houses are clean, well ventilated with suitable lighting and heating and have comfortable furnishings. Appropriate facilities for leisure, socialising, individual study and privacy are provided. Boys and girls are accommodated in separate houses. Bedrooms are either single study rooms or allow for two, three or four beds and all have suitable access to appropriate washing and toilet facilities. The school has ensured that all toilets are adequately ventilated and clean, with hygienic hand dryers as recommended in the previous report. Boarders can personalise their living space and common rooms. Boarding accommodation is reserved for the sole use of boarders during term time. Security arrangements do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 The meals provided are nutritious and offer both choice and variety. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of pupils reported that the food was not good but the inspection team found no evidence to support this view. There is sufficient quantity, and pupils have good access to additional drinks and snacks. Boarders with special dietary requirements are catered for with care and those with medical or religious needs treated with due regard. International menus for special events, house parties and celebrations are provided. The food is prepared in appropriate facilities that are hygienic and well maintained. There is a good choice

of food for boarders who sometimes arrive late for meals, as recommended in the previous report. [NMS 8]

- 3.7 Each house provides a laundry for clothing and bedding and care is taken to ensure that each boarder's laundry is safely returned to them. Opportunities are provided to enable boarders to purchase toiletries and stationery from the school shop or from shops in the town. Lockable furniture in bedrooms allows boarders to keep their possessions safe and private. Facilities are available for money and valuables to be looked after by boarding staff, who issue money each day through a house bank. A minority of boarders in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed the view that their belongings were not safe. However boarders interviewed felt that they had the opportunity to lock personal belongings away securely. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 A small number of pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed the view that there isn't lots to do at weekends and in evenings. However, inspection evidence suggests that the school has a suitable activities programme in the evenings and at weekends. Boarders have access to a range of activities and facilities on the school campus and there are spaces, both in the boarding houses and at school, where they can be alone if they so wish. The provision of newspapers, television and internet access enable boarders to keep in touch with news and 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's arrangements and procedures for health and safety reflect the attention paid by everyone in the school to protecting boarders from harm. Suitable risk assessments are in place and the necessary records for all aspects of health and safety are kept and scrutinised to ensure that any deficiencies are quickly remedied. Suitable window restrictors have been fitted to windows as recommended in the previous report. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school has appropriate arrangements for fire safety. Clear instructions, together with regular fire drills, enable all boarders to be fully aware of the procedures for evacuation during the day and at night. Fire drills are logged and evaluated. All fire exits have clear signage in accordance with local fire safety recommendations as recommended in the previous report. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Due attention is paid to child protection. A designated person ensures that all staff have the necessary training and that new staff are fully aware of child protection procedures through an induction programme. The child protection policy is in line with the local authority safeguarding procedures and it is reviewed annually by the governing body. The governors' awareness is maintained through training provided by suitable outside agencies and the designated person. An aide memoir, with the required procedure clearly outlined, is produced for support staff to carry. A suitable whistle-blowing policy is in place, meeting the recommendation of the previous report. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school makes the standards expected of boarders clear to them through its behaviour policies. A culture of respect and support between pupils, boarding prefects and boarding staff ensures that concerns regarding behaviour are handled quickly. In the pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of boarders felt that teachers are not always fair in the way they give sanctions and rewards but the inspection team found that the boarders they spoke to thought the procedures in the

boarding houses were fair. A suitable anti-bullying policy is implemented effectively. In the pupil pre-inspection questionnaire almost all pupils reported that the school deals well with any bullying that occurs. A suitable policy on the use of physical restraint is understood by staff. Arrangements for searching boarders and their possessions are clearly defined. [NMS 12]

- 3.14 The school operates safe recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers. The central register of appointments is suitably maintained. Visitors are carefully supervised so they do not have unsupervised access to the boarding accommodation. Appropriate recruitment checks and agreements are set up with all persons over the age of sixteen who reside in school. The school does not appoint guardians for the 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 the school's boarding principles and practice is outlined in documents for pupils, parents, prospective parents and staff. However, the principles seen to be relevant to both boarders and staff in the houses today are not fully reflected in the current statement. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 A clear management structure for boarding staff has been established and job descriptions define individuals' responsibilities. The housemasters and housemistresses are experienced and suitably trained in their responsibilities for the management of the five houses. Parents strongly agreed in the pre-inspection questionnaire that boarding is well organised and managed effectively. Regular meetings enable matters concerned with boarders' welfare to be discussed and monitored. The ethos of the school not to distinguish between day and boarding pupils results in effective links being made between boarding and day staff. All the required records are maintained, kept securely and reviewed. A day log is maintained to record daily concerns about boarders and to ensure that communication between staff is effective. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Supervision in the boarding houses is by qualified and experienced staff and the level of supervision is suitable both during the day and at night. Duty rotas are displayed which enable boarders to contact a member of staff at all times. There is no inappropriate access to staff accommodation. Staff with boarding responsibilities have a thorough induction programme, and the roles of other adults resident in staff households are clear. All house staff are appraised and this process leads to personal support and training. Regular registration and pupil role calls ensure that the boarders' whereabouts are known at all times. Procedures are in place for boarders to sign in and out of houses as recommended in the previous report and there is a missing child policy with which staff are familiar. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Staff ensure that due attention is paid to the cultural needs and customs of boarders from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils are treated equally and no inappropriate discrimination takes place. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders have a range of opportunities provided for them to express their views or concerns, and to make suggestions. In the pupil pre-inspection questionnaire a small number of boarders thought that the school does not seek their views or respond to them. Inspection evidence does not support this view. The house staff hold regular formal and informal meetings with boarders and their views are asked for and acted upon. When interviewed, boarders reported that they freely share their concerns and ideas with house staff and have had many of their ideas put into

practice. The school council and International Committee are also effective channels for communication. [NMS 17]

- 3.21 A clear complaints procedure which conforms to the regulations is available for all parents of pupils in the school and to prospective parents. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Boarding prefects in the houses act in a supportive role in helping new boarders to settle in and assisting all boarders when they require help. Prefects and heads of house receive training by the boarding staff for their roles. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for any of its boarders. [NMS 20]