



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

UPPINGHAM SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Uppingham School

Full Name of School	Uppingham School
DfE Number	857/6002
Registered Charity Number	1147280
Address	Uppingham School Uppingham Oakham Leicestershire LE15 9QE
Telephone Number	01572 822216
Fax Number	01572 822332
Email Address	headmaster@uppingham.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Richard Harman
Chair of Trustees	The Rt Hon Stephen Dorrell, MP
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	789
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (452 boys; 337 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 14
Number of Boarders	Total: 775
	Full: 775 Weekly: 0
Inspection dates	24 Sep 2013 to 26 Sep 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 January 2010 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of trustees, and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. 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 Ian Newton

Mrs Louise Belrhiti

Mr Nick Brown

Mr Michael Tonks

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Head of Boarding, HMC school)

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Senior Housemaster, HMC school)

Team Inspector for Boarding
(Second Master, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Uppingham School was founded in 1584 as a school for boys. It remains almost entirely a boarding school, set in the heart of the market town of Uppingham, in the county of Rutland. Since 2001 it has admitted girls at the age of 13, having for some years previously admitted girls to the sixth form. The school's aim to provide a thoroughly all-round education was established in 1853 by the headmaster at that time, Edward Thring. The school is a charitable trust and limited company, whose work is overseen by trustees. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to develop its accommodation and facilities, opening a new sports centre in September 2010, and it has revised its instruments of governance.
- 1.2 Nine boarding houses provide accommodation for boys and six for girls. Each house has around 50 to 60 boarders from the ages of 13 to 18, with the exception of one of the girls' houses, which has 45 boarders, all aged 16 to 18.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 789 pupils on roll, of whom 452 were boys and 337 were girls. Of these, 118 came from homes overseas. Pupils are admitted following selective examination, and most proceed to university or other higher education when they leave. Pupils from the United Kingdom are drawn from a wide geographical area, ranging from Scotland through the eastern half of England to London. Seventy-one pupils come from homes where English is an additional language, and twenty-four of these receive specialised support.
- 1.4 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Fourth Form	Year 9
Lower Fifth	Year 10
Upper Fifth	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

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. Implement the recently adopted plans to develop fully the pastoral role of matrons.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in January 2010. No recommendations were made.

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 appreciate their induction: the written guidance, the welcome they receive and the quality of care from their mentors. This helps them to develop friendships quickly, leading to supportive relationships between younger and older boarders. Boarders have many adults to whom they can talk, including house staff and tutors, matrons, nurses, counsellors and the chaplain. Staff work closely together while maintaining confidentiality. Boarders appreciate the supportive family ambience in houses. Contact information for external support, such as the independent listener and national helplines, is widely publicised. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The health centre provides appropriate support for those who are ill. Medical procedures, such as for care, the management of drugs, medical emergencies and chronic conditions, are robust. Qualified nursing staff are available in the centre 24 hours of the day. Both doctors and nurses hold regular clinics, and specialist staff such as physiotherapists attend. The accommodation is comfortable, and includes treatment and consulting rooms, and suitable bathrooms. Clear procedures in houses ensure that homely remedies are administered appropriately and prescribed drugs issued correctly. Careful assessment is made of boarders who self-medicate. Detailed medical records are maintained. When boarders with minor illnesses cannot stay in their rooms or in a sick bay, they can move easily to the health centre. Boarders have ready access to local medical services. Staff are very aware of medical confidentiality. Many staff are trained in first aid, emergency kits are carried wherever necessary and school matches are attended by paramedics where appropriate. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders can contact their parents easily, by mobile telephone, landline or email. Arrangements can be made for those from overseas to use internet video communication where necessary. The school is sensitive to the risk of abuse of mobile telephones and restricts their use where appropriate. House staff also keep in regular contact with boarders' homes. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Suitable accommodation is provided for girls and boys, who express considerable satisfaction with house facilities. Bedrooms, study areas, dining rooms and social spaces are comfortable, spacious and generally homely. Houses are well furnished and well maintained. Toilet and washing facilities provide sufficient privacy. Boarders are encouraged to personalise their rooms and many do. No access is available to unauthorised people. No surveillance equipment or other security features intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 House dining is much valued for the way it enhances the family atmosphere. The variety of nutritious, freshly prepared, balanced and well-presented meals is ensured through regular, seasonal adjustment of menus. Hygienic preparation, serving and consumption of meals are overseen regularly by senior catering staff. Care is taken to provide for those with special dietary needs. Boarders also have ready access to drinking water and snacks at reasonable times throughout the day. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Suitable provision is made for the laundry of bedding, and boarders' clothes are normally washed and returned the same day. Boarders find it easy to obtain any personal items they need from the town and the school shops. Their valuables can

be securely stored in lockable spaces in their rooms, or with house staff. They feel that their belongings are safe. (NMS 9)

- 3.8 Boarders enjoy the wide, varied and well-co-ordinated range of activities. There is a balance between compulsory and voluntary activity, and between sport, artistic and other pursuits. Boarders much appreciate the extensive facilities, including the new sports centre. They have adequate space for relaxation through social events and free time, especially at weekends. Boarders' participation in activities is carefully monitored. They have easy access to information about the wider world, through newspapers and the internet. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The detailed and well-implemented health and safety policy is carefully overseen by trustees, senior management and heads of departments. Risk assessments are reviewed frequently and provide clear guidance for activities, both on and off the site. Premises are well maintained to minimise risk. The school is well aware of the proximity of nearby roads, and all pupils are taught about crossing at safe places. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The fire policy fully complies with the regulations and staff responsibilities are very clear. Detailed records of appliance testing are maintained. Regular fire drills are carried out at appropriate intervals. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school takes meticulous care over child protection. Staff are trained regularly by the local social services department, with whom the school has strong working relationships. Training for senior boarders includes discussion of typical scenarios that would require action to be taken. Individual concerns are appropriately followed up, action taken as necessary and information recorded securely. Where appropriate, professional support is available to both boarders and their families. Trustees suitably oversee child protection procedures. Any staff who have concerns are actively encouraged to raise them. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Positive behaviour and good relationships are at the heart of the school. Clear policies are supported by frequent dialogue, written guidance and simple rules. A pamphlet on bullying, for instance, is valued by younger boarders. Staff promote good relations and tolerance. Many boarders feel strongly that their efforts and successes are recognised. Inspectors found that disciplinary issues, such as bullying, are dealt with efficiently, and records ensure accountability and consistency. A very small number of parents felt that bullying had not been dealt with effectively, though in discussion, boarders said that bullying is very rare and quickly resolved. Almost all boarders feel that staff are fair. Communication amongst staff is effective, and help and support are always offered to boarders. Policies on the use of restraint and the searching of boarders' property are clear, but rarely required. School life reflects a strong sense of mutual respect, trust and community. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school operates robust procedures for the appointment of staff. Checks are conducted on any house staff's family members who are over the age of sixteen, and a written agreement between those individuals and the school about how they relate to boarders is in place. Only contractors who have undergone the required checks are allowed to work unsupervised, and other visitors are supervised

appropriately. Access to houses is carefully controlled. The school does not appoint guardians. [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 The pastoral policy document clearly sets out for staff, parents and boarders the school's pastoral and boarding aims. The school has, as a result, a clear sense of its priorities in boarding. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The strong support and liaison amongst boarding staff ensure that, as far as possible, boarders receive consistent care of high quality. The fact that all staff lunch daily in houses contributes to the holistic approach to pastoral care. Reviews of progress between tutors and pupils, nearly all of whom board, ensure that pastoral and academic issues are approached in an integrated way. Staff training focuses regularly on boarding and pastoral issues, so that staff are well prepared for their boarding roles. The clear vision for the future of boarding is supported by school and house development plans. The school keeps a full set of the required records. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff receive thorough induction and detailed job descriptions; they value their appraisal, which helps them to identify professional development needs. The role of spouses not employed by the school is clear, and their informal support underpins the family ethos of the houses. Houses are well staffed. Boarders say that it is always easy to find someone to talk to, and to contact staff at night. Matrons play a key part and the school has plans to develop this role to be more pastoral and less domestic. Careful delineation of bounds, regular roll calls and signing in and out in the evenings allow the school to know boarders' whereabouts or how to locate them; there is a clear and well-known procedure to follow in the event that any go missing. Boarding staff are well accommodated and contact between staff and boarders in houses is appropriate. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders interviewed said that they do not experience discrimination. The school ensures that all boarders, including those new to boarding and those from overseas, settle fully into school life. Needs relating to different faiths and cultural backgrounds are given careful consideration, for example by changing the timing of meals for Muslim boarders during Ramadan. The school has a strong sense of respect for different cultures, evident in boarders' lives. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 There are a number of ways in which boarders contribute their views; house and school councils meet regularly to discuss a range of issues including food, facilities and conduct. In the pre-inspection questionnaires a significant minority of pupil respondents felt that their views are not taken into account, however a large number of boarders interviewed during the inspection provided examples of changes resulting from council deliberations. In addition, there is open, relaxed and informal communication between house staff and boarders. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS17]
- 3.21 The school follows an appropriate procedure for dealing with complaints and the great majority of issues are resolved informally. The sample of more formal complaints scrutinised had been investigated fully within the timescales set. In their responses to the questionnaires, parents were highly positive about all aspects of school life. [NMS 18]

- 3.22 School prefects are appointed following careful selection. They undertake a range of carefully outlined duties. They receive initial induction training from an external trainer in a range of appropriate issues, as well as receiving ongoing guidance. Houses offer positions of responsibility to sixth-form boarders, for which they receive training and support. Prefects may not impose sanctions without the permission of a member of staff. In addition, some boarders provide support as peer mentors. [NMS19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings. [NMS 20]