



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION
SUMMER FIELDS SCHOOL**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Summer Fields School

Full Name of School	Summer Fields School	
DfE Number	931/6067	
Registered Charity Number	309683	
Address	Summer Fields School Summer Fields Mayfield Road Oxford Oxfordshire OX2 7EN	
Telephone Number	01865 454433	
Fax Number	01865 459200	
Email Address	office@summerfields.com	
Head	Mr David Faber	
Chair of Governors	Mr Andrew Reekes	
Age Range	8 to 13	
Total Number of Pupils	244	
Gender of Pupils	Boys	
Numbers by Age	8-11:	126
	11-18:	118
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	42
Number of Boarders	Total:	202
	Full:	202
Inspection Dates	18 Mar 2014 to 21 Mar 2014	

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2009.

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. 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 school'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 school 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.

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 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 school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school'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.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mrs Serena Alexander	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Helen Chalmers	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Mr Kim Parsley	Team Inspector (Head of Department, IAPS school)
Mr John Preston	Team Inspector (Senior Master, IAPS school)
Mrs Sue Bennett	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
Dr Steve Bailey	Team Inspector for Boarding (Headmaster, IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Summer Fields is a day and boarding school for boys from the ages of 8 to 13, situated in north Oxford. It was founded on its present site in 1864 as a boarding school for boys and is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. The school is centred on a Victorian house and its chapel, with 70 acres of grounds, much of this used as playing fields and a golf course. The school is principally a boarding school, with pupils allocated to one of seven boarding lodges according to their age. Nearly all staff live on the campus, and the boarders spend all of each day in the school, treating their nearby lodge as a home in which to relax and sleep. The school currently has 244 pupils, of whom 42 are day pupils.
- 1.2 The school is an incorporated charity and is administered by a board of governors, currently numbering 12 members. The Maclaren Foundation is a stand-alone charity, named after the school's founder, whose primary purpose is to raise and allocate funds towards scholarships and bursaries at Summer Fields.
- 1.3 Entry to the school is chiefly at eight years of age, but pupils can join at any age if places are available. Summer Fields is a selective school, with places offered after consideration of the pupil's report from his previous school, and assessments of literacy and numeracy skills. Some pupils enter from maintained schools but most come from other independent schools; they remain at the school until moving to senior schools at the age of 13. The ability profile of the school is above the national average. Most pupils come from professional families. One-third of the pupils come from London and approximately one out of every six pupils is from overseas. The majority of the pupils are from white British backgrounds. Twelve pupils do not have English as their first language (EAL); eight of these are receiving additional support. Sixty-eight pupils have individual specialist lessons for their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); no pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection, following a fund-raising appeal, a new all-weather hockey pitch and tennis courts were built in 2010, as well as all-weather cricket nets and various athletics facilities such as long jump pits, discus and shot circles.
- 1.5 The main aim of the school is to ensure that boys of all abilities reach their potential and achieve excellence. The school seeks to provide outstanding pastoral care in a happy, caring, well-disciplined, boarding environment, and to educate boys in the widest sense by providing a great variety of creative and sporting activities. It strives to encourage strong moral and Christian values, and to help boys grow in confidence, acquire self-discipline and discover and express their own individuality.
- 1.6 National Curriculum 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 (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
First year	Year 4
Second year	Year 5
Third year	Year 6
Removes	Year 7
Fifth year	Year 8

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The achievement of the pupils is excellent and fulfils the school's aims. The pupils are very articulate, they listen carefully, the quality of their writing is of a very high standard and they show high levels of understanding and skills in their mathematics. Throughout the school, teaching supports the school's aims and makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' high levels of achievement. The curriculum is very effective at providing a range of learning opportunities and is suitable for all ages and abilities. Music, drama and sport feature strongly and there is a very extensive range of extra-curricular activities. In response to the previous inspection, there is now more independent writing across the curriculum.
- 2.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent. At all ages, the pupils are self-confident and considerate, showing respect for others. Throughout the school, moral development is outstanding. The pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong. They have a very strong understanding of their own and other cultures that is developed through the curriculum and also through school trips, both in England and abroad. The excellent quality of pastoral care is demonstrated by the high levels of mutual respect between pupils and staff. The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. The safeguarding of pupils is taken very seriously, but recruitment procedures have not always been followed correctly. Boarding is good overall and excellent in many areas. Boarders are highly enthusiastic about all aspects of their school life. They feel extremely safe and valued as individuals. By the time they leave the school, the pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education, successfully reflecting the schools aims.
- 2.3 The quality of governance, leadership and management is good. Governors have a wide range of professional expertise and conscientiously endeavour to discharge their responsibilities. Governors carry out their statutory annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures but have not always referenced this to current regulatory requirements, nor have they ensured, through their monitoring, that recruitment checks on staff are scrupulously followed before they begin work at the school. Committed and visionary leadership oversees the academic achievements and personal development of each pupil. In response to the previous inspection, there has been greater monitoring of teaching and learning and a development of the role of middle managers, although this is not yet fully completed to ensure consistent implementation of academic policies across all departments. Successful transfer to the most appropriate senior school is a key focus of the leadership and the scholarships and awards gained by pupils when they leave reflect the staff's close involvement with the process. At the heart of Summer Fields is a sense of community, and this continues to be a strength of the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- ensure all the required recruitment processes, including references, qualifications, barred list and medical checks, are undertaken on staff before they begin work at the school [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(a), (b)(iv) and (e), and 19.(3), under Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; and, for the same reason, Part 3 paragraphs 7 and 8, under Welfare health and safety, National Minimum Standard 11, under Child protection, and National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, as described above.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Ensure the governing body devises a stronger system of monitoring compliance with regulatory requirements.
 2. Develop the role of middle management further in order to ensure consistent implementation of academic policies.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

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

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 The school is very successful in developing the potential of all pupils in accordance with its aim to encourage pupils to reach the highest possible standards in terms of their own ability in everything that they do. The pupils develop their knowledge, understanding and skills very effectively, supported by a varied range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. They are very articulate, demonstrating a wide and sophisticated vocabulary, they listen carefully to instructions as well as to the ideas and opinions of their peers, and can debate effectively, for example in presenting both sides of the argument in a discussion on Scottish independence. The quality of the pupils' written work is of a very high standard as is their presentation. Due attention is paid to structure, spelling and grammar. Following the recommendation from the previous inspection, there is good evidence of independent writing in many subjects.
- 3.3 The pupils' mathematical skills are well developed. Their numerical work is very strong and they can apply this, for example, in a lesson on calculating perimeters of circles and semicircles. Pupils participate, at a wide range of ages, in the UK Mathematics Challenges where they achieve a very high level of success. They successfully conduct experiments in science and can draw accurate conclusions from the results. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) has widened since the previous inspection and pupils demonstrated their technological skills in a range of lessons, including geography, science and art.
- 3.4 Pupils achieve a very high standard in a broad range of extra-curricular areas which makes a strong contribution to their personal development. Their recent success in all sports is outstanding, especially at football, rugby, athletics and cricket. A substantial number of pupils compete regularly in sports, including at county and national level. Pupils take part in musical events, with choirs and orchestras performing to audiences both in and out of the school. A large number of pupils take instrumental lessons and reach a high standard in their music examinations. Pupils' creative talent is stimulated in art, design and ceramics and by the support of a regular artist in residence. Several pupils have won art, music and sports scholarships to senior schools in recent years. Pupils compete successfully in general knowledge and debating competitions, demonstrating high-quality critical thinking skills, and recently a group of Year 6 pupils won a Business Challenge competition.
- 3.5 The pupils' attainment cannot be measured in relation to average performance in national tests but, on the evidence available, it is judged to be excellent in relation to national age-related norms. The pupils follow a very wide curriculum and, on leaving the school, almost all proceed to senior schools which have a high standard of entry. Inspection evidence, as assessed in lesson observation, pupils' written work and curriculum interviews, confirms this judgement. This level of attainment indicates that pupils make excellent progress in relation to pupils of similar ability. Pupils with SEND and EAL are very well supported by learning support staff and also make excellent progress. Evidence of this is seen in the comprehensive monitoring that is done by the school and the very high level of success in their entrance tests to senior schools. More able pupils make excellent progress throughout the school.

This can be seen by the wide range of academic scholarships achieved over recent years by a number of pupils to a variety of schools.

- 3.6 The pupils thrive in an atmosphere of hard work, enjoyment and effort. They work well together and are very supportive of each other both in and out of the classroom. They are very interested and extremely well motivated learners, who apply themselves enthusiastically to all aspects of their learning. The pupils are well organised, show initiative and co-operate exceedingly well. They sustain high levels of concentration during lessons and activities, taking full advantage of the opportunities offered.

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

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.8 The academic curriculum is broad and balanced and supplemented by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities in accordance with the school's aim to educate pupils in the widest sense. The curriculum is well planned with closer communication between developing subject leadership ensuring continuity throughout the school. Cross-curricular links are being strengthened; for example, the use of physics in a music lesson explored the mechanical workings of a piano.
- 3.9 The curriculum is suitable for all ages and abilities and provides ample opportunities for the pupils to achieve extremely well. In addition to the National Curriculum subjects, all pupils learn French, Latin is introduced from Year 5 and Ancient Greek, for the more able pupils, from Year 7. A very comprehensive programme of personal and social education (PSE) reflects the aims and ethos of the school. Through a flexible scheme of setting and streaming the needs of all abilities are met very well. The most able pupils who are preparing for scholarship examinations are given activities that provide greater challenge and expand their thinking. The work of the learning support department is excellent in identifying and supporting those with SEND. Pupils have specialist lessons once or twice a week and detailed records of their progress and their individual education plans are kept. Pupils with EAL also have specialist lessons until their grasp of English is sufficient, but their subsequent performance continues to be monitored. Teachers are kept very well informed of the needs of pupils with SEND and EAL in order that they can plan for these in class. All pupils are very well prepared for entry to their next school.
- 3.10 The school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Each week pupils have the opportunity to explore and enjoy activities as diverse as polo, judo, clay-pigeon shooting, chess and art. There are numerous ways for the pupils to be involved in musical events; these include school plays, various choirs, orchestras and individual music lessons, including the piano, violin and the bagpipes. The school makes a special effort to ensure all pupils are able to play for a school team in a variety of sports.
- 3.11 The pupils take part in a range of educational day and residential trips, many of which are closely linked to the curriculum. These include an art trip to Amsterdam, visits to the British Museum and Ashmolean Museum, and a geography field-trip. In addition, all pupils go on a very carefully planned residential trip during the year. The pupils in the main chapel choir have been on tour to Rome including a visit to the Vatican. Alongside this, a wide range of speakers visit the school. The school has very close links with the local community. The choirs sing in a wide range of local establishments such as residential homes, churches and Oxford colleges. In

addition, members of the local community are regularly invited to attend concerts at the school. The art department participated in a community project at the local church. The school hosts sporting and other events for local schools, both independent and maintained, and raises money for local causes through collections in the chapel and special events.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.12 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.13 Throughout the school, teaching supports the school's aims and makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' high levels of achievement. Extremely well planned lessons support pupils' different needs and provide stimulus and challenge. Teaching at its best is well paced and is characterised by effective and skilful questioning to support individual pupils and at times to encourage lively and challenging debate. For example, pupils in a science lesson discussed the variables produced by a breakfast cereal, identifying the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and the constants, and then using this to plan an investigation on friction.
- 3.14 A new policy for monitoring, evaluation and assessment has established a set of marking guidelines. When these are used effectively, the marking of work is excellent, with realistic targets for improvement set. However, there are inconsistencies across year groups and within subjects. When marking is not so rigorous, less direction is given to the pupils so that they then do not know what they must do to improve. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils felt that their homework, or 'prep', did not help them learn. This was not upheld by the evidence seen from the work scrutiny and from the pupil interviews. Tasks set are suitable; pupils do their prep under supervision and commented favourably on the assistance given to them by staff.
- 3.15 The pupils' attainment is carefully monitored in order to identify those who are achieving well in relation to their ability and those who require support. Data is collected from a range of standardised assessment tasks as well as the school's own tests and examinations. This is very thoroughly analysed and pupil progress is extensively monitored.
- 3.16 Throughout the school, excellent opportunities are provided in many lessons for pupils to work together in carefully chosen groups or pairs. This enables pupils to use peer discussion to support and develop their understanding and to develop collaborative skills. For example, in a music lesson, a jazz-style drumbeat rhythm was composed which the class then vocalised and pupils offered mature and constructive suggestions for improvement. In other lessons, encouragement and responsibility are given to all pupils to work and learn independently on tasks, allowing the teacher to give individual assistance to ensure understanding.
- 3.17 Teaching meets the needs of pupils of different abilities extremely well. In the best lessons seen, the more able pupils and those with SEND are supported with suitably varied tasks which are matched well to their needs, enabling them all to make excellent progress. In a mathematics lesson, tasks were matched exceedingly well through the support given which prepared pupils for the UK Mathematics Trust Challenge, while others had additional individual support in examination technique or researched and prepared a presentation on some of the mathematical exploits of Newton and Pascal.

- 3.18 The use of ICT is developing across the school to enhance teaching and classrooms are well resourced. In some of the best lessons observed, teachers and pupils demonstrated effective use of the interactive white boards, computers were used to process information and there was some imaginative use of tablets. In a science lesson, pupils undertook a 'tablet challenge' to research five products of the fractional distillation of crude oil, arrange them in order of boiling point and 'air drop' the result back to the teacher.
- 3.19 Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and pupils benefit from their specialised teaching. Teachers have very high expectations for pupils. In the best lessons, they encourage exemplary behaviour from pupils through praise and encouragement. All staff know their pupils well and excellent relationships in the classroom are maintained through mutual respect, creating an environment conducive to learning.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The school meets its aims to encourage strong moral and Christian values extremely well. The spiritual development of the pupils is excellent. In an art lesson, on considering Durer's drawing of hands, pupils remembered singing "Thy hands have fashioned me...", and then spontaneously and beautifully sang the psalm. The pupils are self-confident and articulate, showing respect for other pupils' points of view even when they are not their own. Pupils demonstrate empathy for others, as seen in a lesson comparing their experiences to that of a child in Africa. They show a high level of maturity for their age, for example when giving each other a critique of their public speaking skills and in the standard of their poetry published in the annual school magazine. Pupils reflect very well on the issues presented in chapel services.
- 4.3 Throughout the school, moral development is excellent. Pupils have a very strong sense of right and wrong and demonstrate an ability to reflect on their behaviour. For example, during a tutor period pupils explored the impact a lack of effort could have on their achievement. They can discuss moral issues with insight, such as the need for rules without overly imposing state control. Ethical issues in religious stories are discussed very well in the context of life today. Tutors report that pupils readily admit when they are at fault. Pupils' behaviour and manners around school, including in the dining room are exemplary. The monitoring of pupils' personal development, as well as their academic achievement, is given equal status by tutors.
- 4.4 At all ages, pupils' social development is excellent. Very high levels of mutual respect and care are demonstrated between pupils and staff. The sense of community and togetherness is depicted in an outstanding wire sculpture created by the pupils under the guidance of the artist in residence, showing how all are united as one family. In their responses to the pupil questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils felt that there were limited opportunities to take on responsibility. However, on inspection this was not found to be the case. Since the previous inspection, more responsibilities have been introduced. As well as the roles of head boy, deputy head boy, prefects and sports captains, younger pupils have the opportunity to be form captains, senior pupils can take on the role of chapel wardens, and pupils have the opportunity to read in the chapel and to assist in the organisation of activities, such as school plays and concerts. Pupils contribute to the world beyond school by taking part willingly in numerous fund-raising activities, including singing in local churches and a twelve-hour football match for a national charity. An understanding of democratic processes and national institutions is fostered through trips, such as to the Houses of Parliament, and voting within school for members of the school council. The school shop, 'Buzzer', provides the pupils with an opportunity to develop a basic understanding of economics, as they have to manage their pocket money and budget carefully throughout the term.
- 4.5 Cultural development is excellent throughout the school. Pupils develop an extremely good understanding of their own and other cultures through the curriculum and through school trips, both in England and abroad. During their time in school, pupils develop a strong appreciation for other world faiths and traditions, from trips, such as the rugby tour to Africa where they learnt about Zulus, and visitors to the

school, including a local Imam giving them insight into Islam to support their Common Entrance project.

- 4.6 By the time pupils leave the school, they have reached an excellent standard of personal development and are very well prepared for their next steps in education, successfully reflecting the school's aim to produce young men who have developed a character and personality so that they can go out into the world and achieve.

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

- 4.7 The arrangements for pastoral care are excellent.
- 4.8 Arrangements are in accordance with the school's aims of providing a happy, caring well-disciplined environment and contribute very well to the pupils' personal development. The combination of the tutor and form systems, combined with the arrangement of the boarding lodges, helps to ensure that no significant issue can go unnoticed. Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong and pupils show great appreciation for each other. Pupils say that they have a range of adults to whom they can turn if they have a problem.
- 4.9 Pupils' physical wellbeing is fostered by the exceptional provision of a very wide range of sports and activities. Healthy living is enhanced by well-planned, nutritious meals, adapted thoughtfully for individual dietary needs. Many pupils expressed their appreciation of the quality of the food and the choices available to them.
- 4.10 The promotion of good behaviour is strong and very effective, with few incidents occurring that require the imposition of sanctions. Parents' and pupils' questionnaire responses showed that the school's success in dealing with bullying was a concern for a small minority, but inspection evidence did not support this view. At interview, boys commented positively about the school's procedures and expressed confidence that any bullying would be dealt with constructively. Policies and procedures for countering bullying are regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness. The school responds appropriately to any incidents or concerns raised, it employs proportionate sanctions, paying due care to pupils with SEND, and maintains detailed logs and records. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a minority of pupils showed some concern about the fairness of sanctions imposed, but inspection evidence did not support this as records show that appropriate sanctions are employed that match the misdemeanour. However, the school is aware of these concerns, which were also raised by the school council, and is currently in the process of reviewing its procedures and guidance.
- 4.11 The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.12 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small minority of the pupils indicated that they felt their opinions and views were not sought or responded to by the school. The inspection found that pupils' opinions are regularly sought informally, through tutors, as well as through different types of questionnaire. The fledgling school council is very effectively developing the pupil voice, and pupils can see that the expression of their opinions brings about some changes.

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

- 4.13 The arrangements for welfare, health and safety are good.
- 4.14 Health and safety routines throughout the school are excellent and contribute very well to pupils' personal development and to meeting the school's aim to promote education in a positive, safe and well-disciplined environment. Buildings and premises are maintained to a high standard. All electrical and gas equipment is checked regularly and thorough records are maintained. The school has excellent arrangements for fire safety. Fire drills are carried out at least termly in the school and in all the boarding lodges during boarding time. All electrical and fire equipment is regularly checked by external contractors, who also carry out a fire risk assessment. All recommendations made at that time have been implemented. Staff fire training is comprehensive and records of this, and other staff training in health and safety, are kept. Considerable care is given to ensuring that both teaching and non-teaching staff have appropriate health and safety training, according to their role. Pupil safety and welfare are very effectively promoted by the staff on a day-to-day basis.
- 4.15 Excellent provision is made for those who are unwell or who are injured at school. Pupils talk very favourably about the care they are given. Medicines are stored appropriately and medical records completed properly. Any accidents are recorded and stored centrally. These are analysed regularly in order to determine any area where the school could improve its procedures. Risk assessments are carried out meticulously and regularly reviewed.
- 4.16 The designated child protection officer and his deputy have received appropriate training from the local authority. All staff, including non-teaching staff with boarding responsibilities, receive appropriate child protection training both before they start work and on a regular cycle of renewal. In addition, child protection measures are a regular feature of other staff meetings and training days. However, some recruitment procedures have not been rigorously carried out at the appropriate time.
- 4.17 The admission and attendance registers are accurately completed electronically and stored for three years.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.19 Outcomes for boarders are excellent. Their boarding experience encourages significant personal development in accordance with the school's aims. Boarders are proud to contribute to the collective prosperity of their lodge, showing loyalty, integrity and empathy in their outlook. Boarders feel happy and safe and comment on the excellent levels of support of the dedicated lodge staff, whose commitment is exemplary. The highly nurturing environment allows boarders to feel that they are returning 'home' at the end of the school day. Boarders wholeheartedly join in with the birthday celebrations of their peers, singing with gusto and sharing the cake. They develop an excellent awareness of the wider world through daily access to newspapers, radio and television news. Boarders can access the internet, appropriately filtered, in free time, and many boarders regularly email or telephone friends and family.
- 4.20 Boarders universally appreciate the thorough induction and personal support processes. Every new boarder, a 'shadow', is attached to a boarder who has been

at the school for at least a year, a 'substance'. Boarders show highly articulate skills as tour guides for visitors and parents of prospective pupils. Excellent relationships are evident between boarders, with a strong fraternal allegiance being evident in their lodges. Boarders say they are treated equally and fairly and that they appreciate the robust system of behaviour management. Boarders know who to approach for personal guidance, including nominated adults outside school. They show a noteworthy mindfulness of differing cultural and ethnic needs, which brings exemplary mutual respect. Older boarders support younger ones as role models. Boarders enjoy being part of their community, and they are actively encouraged to contribute their views and opinions, either during weekly lodge meetings, by placing comments in suggestion boxes, through periodic surveys, and school council representation. They know that the senior management greatly value their thoughts and will take appropriate action.

- 4.21 The quality of boarding provision and care is excellent. The school's academic and pastoral provisions are closely entwined. Staff know boarders extremely well and provide them with high quality support and guidance. Tutors and lodge parents meet regularly to discuss the individual needs of boarders, which contributes significantly towards continuity and equality of care.
- 4.22 Excellent systems keep boarders safe, fit and healthy. Highly experienced medical staff and local doctors support boarders' health needs. Boarders who become unwell during the night receive exemplary care and emergency visits to specialists, such as the dentist or optician, are arranged when required. Medical policies and procedures include clear guidance on the use of household remedies and self-medication. Documents and records pertaining to boarders' well-being are comprehensive, ensuring that the school has all necessary permissions for emergency treatment and is fully aware of boarders' specific medical or dietary needs. Diligent matrons provide for boarders' laundry needs. Boarders can easily replenish their personal or stationery items during visits to 'Buzzer', the school shop. A small minority of boarders expressed concern in the pre-inspection questionnaire about the availability of snacks and drinking water outside meal times, and about food quality. These responses were unsubstantiated by those spoken to during the inspection and by the inspectors' own observations. Menus are nutritionally well balanced and boarders enjoy their meals. Staff encourage boarders to eat healthily and drinking water is easily accessible at all times. During the evenings, boarders enjoy supper with lodge staff and a snack before bedtime. An exciting and wide-ranging programme of evening and weekend activities enables boarders to experience a rich breadth of learning beyond the classroom and benefit from the school's extensive facilities. The balance of study and free time is carefully structured to provide boarders with plenty of opportunities to relax and to be reflective when they wish to be.
- 4.23 The quality of accommodation is excellent and all lodges are well organised and maintained. Bathrooms are clean and dormitories spacious, homely and welcoming. Ample storage is provided for boarders' belongings and any personal valuables are handed in to the lodge staff for safekeeping. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, a majority of boarders express unhappiness on the safety of their belongings. However, inspection evidence determined that this does not relate to boarding but to locker storage within teaching areas. The school is currently resolving these issues. Boarders are able to personalise their own areas within dormitories. Communal areas are very well resourced and provide cosy places for boarders to enjoy the company of their friends. A rolling programme of boarding accommodation refurbishment is undertaken; significant changes since the previous

inspection include the installation of new audio-visual facilities in all the lodges. Boarders have good opportunities to communicate with their families either electronically or through the use of school telephones. Lodge parents communicate efficiently with parents and warmly welcome them into school on many occasions, such as sporting fixtures, concerts and plays.

- 4.24 Arrangements for safeguarding boarders and ensuring their welfare are good. Training and induction programmes ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities on a day-to-day basis. Designated persons oversee welfare procedures and have appropriate links with the local safeguarding agency. A range of effective policies and procedures promotes boarders' welfare and, by the close of the inspection, any inconsistencies had been successfully remedied. Following actions identified at the previous inspection, some positive progress has been made in relation to recruitment and vetting checks on new staff, although the timing of these has not always been correct and some gap year students were in residence before all checks had been completed. Arrangements for staff deployment are excellent and all staff have detailed job descriptions to support and guide them in their respective roles. Staff conscientiously manage behaviour and anti-bullying procedures to ensure that approaches are consistent. Boarders are confident that the rare occurrences of bullying are speedily and effectively dealt with. They state that sanctions are just and fair within the boarding lodges. There are no incidences of serious misbehaviour or sanctions on record.
- 4.25 Staff have high regard for boarders' safety and supervise them extremely well. Stringent registration systems ensure that staff know boarders' whereabouts at all times. Regular emergency evacuation drills take place, including during boarding time and comprehensive risk assessments, both on-site and off, effectively promote boarders' welfare.
- 4.26 Leadership and management of boarding are good. Dedicated and caring lodge staff create nurturing environments with a strong community feel, within which boarders feel safe and respected. This is fully in line with the aims of the school. Boarding is an integral part of the school's life and effective evaluation processes help to ensure that boarders benefit from high quality boarding experiences. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. For those new to boarding, a good range of guidance supports their roles, although on occasion, supervision procedures for new staff are not rigorously implemented. A clear boarding management structure exists and lodge parents meet regularly with senior managers to review and identify priorities for future development, such as improvements to the bathroom areas. The governing body take an active interest in boarding and periodically visit the lodges and meet with staff. The school has successfully addressed the recommendation made at the previous inspection regarding the recording of complaints. The school's website, alongside comprehensive handbooks and documentation, provide both current families and those who are new to the school with high quality information about boarding life, its principles and practice. In their pre-inspection questionnaire responses, boarders overwhelmingly comment on their enjoyment of boarding and the strength of relationships at all levels. The school warmly welcomes the views of parents. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all parents express complete satisfaction with every aspect of boarding life within the lodges.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 Governors are closely associated with the school and have a wide range of professional expertise that is usefully employed to ensure the school fulfils its aims. They have undertaken training in various aspects of educational administration. Through active sub-committees that inform the whole governing body, they provide effective oversight of most sections of the school and conscientiously discharge their responsibilities for financial planning, investment in staff, accommodation, health and safety, and resources. They are kept informed by termly reports from the headmaster, the bursar and the child protection officer.
- 5.3 Governors have carefully drawn up a plan for the renovation and redevelopment of some facilities to coincide with the 150th anniversary celebrations. They work closely with the headmaster, bursar and members of the senior management team, providing support as well as fresh challenges. The governing body is also looking further ahead, planning strategically for the school's future. They are increasingly involved in the life of the school, both at formal occasions and through visiting classrooms, meeting pupils and staff. This new initiative allows them to have greater insight into the working of the school. They have effective mechanisms for appraising the work of the headmaster.
- 5.4 Governors carry out their statutory annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures but have not always referenced this to current regulatory requirements, nor have they ensured through monitoring that appointments' procedures are scrupulously followed.

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

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 The leadership and management of the school has been strengthened in recent years by key new appointments and the development of a new tier of middle management that now takes more responsibility for academic planning and development. Since the previous inspection, and in line with its recommendation, a new academic management team has been established to monitor teaching and learning. Committed and visionary leadership focuses on the excellent personal development and achievements of the pupils, in line with its aims. Pride is taken in the achievements of each individual pupil; success in all areas, academic, sporting and creative, is celebrated and rewarded. The scholarships and awards gained by the pupils reflect the close involvement of leadership with all stages of the process concerning transfer to senior school.
- 5.7 At the heart of Summer Fields is a sense of community, and this continues to be a strength of the school. There is an effective induction programme and new staff are both well informed and made welcome. All staff are trained in safeguarding, welfare, health and safety measures and school routines. A generous budget is available for other training and all staff are encouraged to further their own qualifications. An

informative staff handbook gives comprehensive guidance. All staff have access to senior leadership; the views of staff are sought and these enable senior leaders to plan future academic and other developments. The school development plan is comprehensive and detailed and encompasses all aspects of the school.

- 5.8 Pupils' well-being is central to activities at all levels of management. Staff communicate readily with each other, ensuring that tutors and lodge parents are kept well informed about the pupils in their care. Highly effective management systems are used by all to record and access information concerning the pupils and this continues to evolve as needs are identified. For example, sensitive issues that arise are handled well and extra provision, such as referral to the school counsellor, is available. All staff show exceptional care for pupils; they know them well.
- 5.9 Since the previous inspection, there has been greater monitoring of teaching and learning with more responsibility being given to heads of department and the appointment of further heads of year groups, to give both academic and pastoral guidance. Regular departmental meetings take place in all subjects and their development plans are evolving. However, the implementation of academic policies such as marking is inconsistent across departments. A new appraisal system for staff has been established and is being carried out.
- 5.10 Scrutiny of the evidence prior to the inspection showed that leadership and management has not always been rigorous in ensuring that current regulatory requirements are being followed, nor in scrupulously following safer recruitment procedures. Not all the required recruitment processes, such as references, qualifications, barred list and medical fitness checks, have been carried out on some staff before they began work at the school, nor have the school's own policies been meticulously followed.
- 5.11 The school has developed excellent links with parents, carers and guardians. Since the previous inspection, a weekly newsletter has been introduced providing parents with information about sports fixtures, school trips, boarding activities and other events. An electronic messaging system is now available to inform parents at short notice of various events, for example changes to school matches. A very high quality annual magazine provides parents with an overview of the whole academic year including sporting achievements, tours, activity days and alumni. Since the previous inspection, a biannual publication, *Summer Fields for Life*, has also been produced about life at Summer Fields and old boys' news.
- 5.12 The school values its strength of partnership with parents. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires showed that all parents believed that the school offered an appropriate range of subjects and areas of experience, and kept their child safe. Almost all parents feel that their child is well looked after at the school and that information about the school and its policies is readily available. A very small minority of parents in the questionnaires do not think that the school handles concerns well; however, this was not upheld by the evidence seen. Records show that informed and considerate responses are made to concerns raised with detailed evidence kept. A very small minority of parents also think that the school does not encourage them to be involved in events. However, evidence demonstrates that there are a vast number of different activities and events in which parents are encouraged to take part including ski trips, choir tours, attendance at matches, camping weekends, informal "coffee" concerts and choral events. The community choir, consisting of current parents, old boys and pupils performs at least annually and recently performed at the Sheldonian Theatre as part of the 150th anniversary

celebrations. Parents regularly attend Sunday chapel services, with many viewing the chapel as their parish church. Old Summerfieldians are encouraged to be part of the school community and it is intended that they will be involved in many of the 150th anniversary celebrations.

- 5.13 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very small minority of parents indicated that they do not receive sufficient information about their child's progress. The inspection team found that parents are provided with excellent communication regarding both their son's academic and personal development; summary reports, or 'orders', are received three or four times termly providing both achievement and effort grades together with details of any sanctions or rewards. Full written reports produced at the end of the Michaelmas and summer terms provide a summary of the grades for the term, together with details of the pupils academic progress, achievement in tests where appropriate, clear targets for improvement and a tutor's report. A shorter written report is also produced at the end of the Lent term. Parents have the opportunity to attend two formal parents' evenings per year. In addition, there are numerous informal opportunities for parents to meet staff, including with the headmaster at sports fixtures and with lodge parents when pupils have weekend leave. Tutors can be contacted at any time via email or telephone. The headmaster also ensures that all parents have at least one formal opportunity to have a discussion regarding senior school choices.
- 5.14 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required information about the school.

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