



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

EF ACADEMY TORBAY

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

EF Academy Torbay

Full Name of School	EF Academy Torbay
DfE Number	880/6006
Address	EF Academy Torbay EF House Castle Road Torquay Devon TQ1 3BG
Telephone Number	01803 202900
Email Address	andrew.williams@ef.com
Head Teacher	Mr Andrew Williams
Chair of Governors	Ms Anna Ireland
Age Range	14 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	267
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (140 boys; 127 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 0
Number of Boarders	Total: 267
	Full: 267 Weekly: 0
Inspection Dates	19 to 22 Jan 2016

PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations 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.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

This is the school's first inspection by ISI. It was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2012.

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.

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. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

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 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 Deborah Forbes	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Denise Hammersley	Team Inspector (Deputy Principal, ISA school)
Mr Alun Watkins	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr Stephen Bailey	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 EF Academy Torbay is an international co-educational boarding school for pupils aged from 14 to 19. It was founded in 2005 and is located in the centre of Torquay in South Devon. The school is owned by EF (Education First). This is a privately held company which operates schools and offices globally. EF Academy, its newest brand, has three campus locations, in Torbay, Oxford and New York, with a fourth planned to open later in 2016 in San Diego. The school has a board of three governors, all of whom are senior employees of the parent company and act as the school's proprietors. An interim head is leading the school currently, but a permanent appointment has been made for September 2016.
- 1.2 The school aims to open a world of opportunities for pupils through a superior education, thorough preparation for university and a future that knows no borders. There are 267 pupils, over half of whom are in the sixth form. All the pupils are boarders, with approximately an even proportion of girls and boys. The school has three boarding houses, each of which is a short distance away from the main school buildings. More than half of the pupils are accommodated off the site, with homestay families. The majority of pupils are preparing for International GCSE (IGCSE), A level or the International Baccalaureate (IB), while some are following an English preparation course.
- 1.3 All pupils are from overseas and represent 37 nationalities, as well as a wide and diverse range of family backgrounds. The ability of the pupils on entry is wide ranging. School data indicates the majority are above average on entry to the school. All pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) and require support from the school for their English. Thirteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); eight require support for their learning. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- 1.4 The school has recently undergone a full refurbishment, with the addition of a new classroom block.
- 1.5 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 NC equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Prep A	Years 10,11,12,13
10 (IGCSE)	Year 10
11 (IGCSE)	Year 11
12 (A level)/12 (IB)	Year 12
13 (A level)/13 (IB)	Year 13

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Pupils' achievements are good, meeting the school's aims to prepare its pupils for university. English is an additional language for all the pupils but the high level of support provided to them by excellent teaching enables them to overcome language difficulties and achieve their desired goal, supported by a lively, good curriculum that is tailored to meet individual needs. The pupils' own attitudes to their work contribute greatly to their progress. They are hard working, enthusiastic and willing to improve their language skills.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. Pupils are living away from home and in a foreign country, most for the first time, and the school has good systems of pastoral care that help them to develop independence as well as to form firm friendships with their international peers. As a result, pupils are friendly, polite and respectful of one another and of visitors. Their confidence and their pleasure in what they do are evident. The school's attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety is unsatisfactory. The school has not been rigorous in carrying out pre-employment vetting checks on staff and host families and recording them appropriately. Safeguarding training has been provided but it has not included everyone who works or lives with pupils. Boarding provision has failed to meet 15 of the 20 National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS), including safeguarding, health and safety, and leadership and management.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. Governance is effective in financial management but has not fulfilled its obligations with regard to welfare, health and safety; nor has it established monitoring systems. A lack of continuity has hampered the effectiveness of leadership and management. As with governance, leadership and management have failed to demonstrate sufficient skills and knowledge for their roles so that the regulatory standards are met consistently and the well-being of pupils is actively promoted. Parents have been provided with much useful information about the school but the leadership has not ensured that they receive all the required information.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and therefore it is required to take the following action.

- Implement all required safeguarding arrangements by ensuring that all staff receive suitable training, that all pre-employment checks are carried out, and that the safeguarding policies and procedures and their implementation are reviewed annually [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), and for the same reason paragraphs 8.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety, and NMS 11.1, under Child protection].
- Implement effectively the health and safety policy in the boarding houses [Part 3, paragraphs 8.(b) and 11, under Welfare, health and safety, and NMS 6.1 and 6.2, under Safety of boarders].
- Ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [Part 3, paragraphs 8.(b) and 12, under Welfare, health and safety, and NMS 7.1 and 7.2, under Fire precautions and drills].
- Ensure the suitability of staff by making an enhanced criminal record check on each and obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate [Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(d) and (f), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and NMS 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- Complete all vetting checks before a person starts work [Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(f) and 18.(3), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and NMS 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- Maintain an accurate single central register of appointments, showing that all required checks have been carried out, by whom and the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained [Part 4, paragraphs 18.(2)(f), 21.(3)(a) and (b), and (4), under Suitability of staff and proprietors, and NMS 14.1, under Staff recruitment and checks on other adults].
- Provide accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility [Part 3 paragraph 8.(b), under Welfare, health and safety, and Part 5, paragraph 24.(1)(b), under Premises and accommodation, and NMS 3.2, under Boarders' health and well-being].
- Ensure that the premises are maintained to a standard such that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured [Part 5, paragraphs 25 and 30, under Premises and accommodation, and NMS 5.4 and 5.5, under Boarding accommodation].
- Have regard to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools [Part 5, paragraph 30, under Premises and accommodation].

- Provide the required information to parents, pupils and parents of prospective pupils [Part 6, paragraphs 32.(1)(a), (b), (c), (d) and (e), and (2)(a), (c) and (d), under Provision of information].
 - Ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently and that they that they actively promote the well-being of pupils [Part 3, paragraph 8.(b), under Welfare, health and safety, and Part 8, paragraphs 34.(1)(a), (b) and (c), under Quality of leadership and management in schools, and NMS 13.1 to 13.6, under Management and development of boarding].
- 2.5 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015, as described above.
- 2.6 The school does not meet additional National Minimum Standards for Boarding, and therefore must take the following action.
- Ensure that a statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is made known to staff and is made known to boarders, and is seen to work in practice [NMS 1, under Statement of boarding principles and practice].
 - Identify an independent listener and provide that person's contact details for boarders [NMS 2.3, under Boarders' induction and support].
 - Establish a system for assessing pupils as competent to self-medicate and give or withhold consent to treatment [NMS 3.4, under Boarders' health and well-being].
 - Ensure that boarders' accommodation is adequately heated and of sufficient size [NMS 5.4 and 5.5, under Boarding accommodation].
 - Ensure that boarders in all residences have the means of hygienically preparing food at reasonable times [NMS 8.3, under Provision and preparation of food and drinks].
 - Afford reasonable protection for boarders' personal possessions [NMS 9.3, under Boarders' possessions].
 - Ensure that staff in all boarding residences are trained for their roles [NMS 15.3, under Staffing and supervision].
 - Provide suitable accommodation for all boarding staff, appropriately separated from the accommodation and facilities for boarding pupils [NMS 15.9, under Staffing and supervision].
 - Actively encourage boarders to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision [NMS 17, under Securing boarders' views].
 - Carry out Disclosure and Barring Service checks on all members of host families aged over 16 prior to placement of a pupil [NMS 20.5, under Lodgings (Long-stay)].
 - Provide training in child protection for all adults providing lodgings for boarders [NMS 20.6, under Lodgings (Long-stay)].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.7 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that governance has access to appropriate expertise and systems of monitoring to enable the school to meet all regulatory requirements.
2. Establish satisfactory methods for governance to hold school leadership to account for raising standards across all areas of education.
3. Ensure that the school has effective control of all provision in boarding.
4. Provide continuous, appropriate training for all staff involved in boarding.

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 good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated, in accordance with the school's aims to deliver a superior education. This is achieved through providing effective learning experiences that develop pupils' critical thinking skills well and support pupils with learning needs. Pupils are successful in gaining entrance to universities. By the time they leave, the pupils acquire good levels of knowledge, skills and understanding both in academic and extra-curricular disciplines. Pupils show creativity, for example in their production of a lively illustrated school magazine. In science, pupils are able to demonstrate the application of mathematical concepts in drawing graphs to represent velocity. Pupils develop good English language skills, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. Information and communication technology (ICT) is evident in pupils' frequent use of computer-based resources, such as research into a specific artist on the IB art course. Physical development is achieved through the enrichment programme, which encourages an active and healthy lifestyle.
- 3.3 Pupils achieve well in both academic and non-academic activities. The UK Maths Challenge senior team achieved fourth place in regional finals, and two teams represented the school in a business challenge in London. Photography and art exhibitions have been successful in showing pupils' ability, and pupils in the guitar club have achieved good grades in their music examinations. Two groups of pupils have gained The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) at silver level, and both the football and basketball teams secured second place in local area inter-school competitions.
- 3.4 Pupils with SEND achieve consistently at levels similar to their peers. More able pupils make good progress through extension or independent work.
- 3.5 The following analysis relates to the most recent three years' results, for which comparative data is available. Results at IGCSE are mostly below worldwide norms. A-level results are below the national average for maintained schools overall, but in 2012 and 2014 were similar to the national average for maintained schools. The results of boys are consistently higher than those of girls, being similar to the national average for boys in maintained schools each year. In the IB, results have been similar to the worldwide average. Results in 2015 show an improvement in the grades achieved.
- 3.6 These levels of attainment, allied to pupils' responses in discussions, lesson observations and work scrutiny, show that pupils make good progress throughout the school from their individual starting points. The context, with all pupils attaining these results in a language which is not their mother tongue, confirms the good progress. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses, the large majority of parents indicated that they are pleased with the progress their children make, and the great majority of pupils feel that they are making good progress. Leavers apply to a variety of UK and overseas universities, with many securing places at selective institutions. In 2015, nearly three-quarters of pupils were accepted by their first choice of university, both in the UK and overseas.
- 3.7 The pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are characterised by good levels of motivation, enthusiasm and a strong work ethic. Pupils give one another

support in collaborative tasks, although many are happy to work independently. They are keen learners, responsive and articulate in lessons. Pupils use the library for private study and homework, or the school canteen, where they offer one another good academic support.

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

- 3.8 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.9 The curriculum supports the aim of the school to deliver a superior education. It does this through focusing on English language tuition and providing faculty-led whole-school enrichment days and a wide range of clubs. The school offers both A-level and IGCSE courses, as well as the IB programme and an intensive English access, or preparation, course. In addition to a regular two-year IGCSE course, pupils can complete their IGCSE programme in one year. The IGCSE curriculum takes into account the pupils' individual needs and is sufficiently broad to enable pupils to progress to the next stage of their education. The main purpose of the preparation course is to improve the pupils' English skills so that they can achieve a sufficiently high level to begin an IGCSE or sixth-form course. They also receive lessons in art, science, physical education, literature and mathematics. In addition, the school provides coaching classes to help pupils who wish to take national examinations in their first language.
- 3.10 Strategies and targets for pupils with SEND are not yet effectively embedded in teaching and learning. The school has this in hand. A few pupils receive individual support from the school, and others with identified needs are monitored through in-class support from teaching assistants. All pupils are given individual help and support by their teachers when they are required. To assist pupils with EAL, specialist teaching is provided at appropriate levels. Pupils are taught and prepared for a range of certificated courses, including the International English Language Testing System. The IB pupils study English as part of the course and IGCSE pupils have the opportunity to study for English literature IGCSE. The more able pupils are given the opportunity to take part in an international business challenge as well as the national mathematics challenge.
- 3.11 The personal, health, social and economic education (PHSEE) programme, as well as the subject-based enrichment days, develops pupils' understanding of moral, ethical and cultural issues as well as the nature of Britishness in terms of democracy, individual liberty and tolerance. Careers guidance is comprehensive. Pupils receive excellent guidance regarding university admission and they are carefully advised about appropriate courses and university destinations. In addition, they are prepared for life at university with advice on financial, social, economic and domestic matters.
- 3.12 The extensive extra-curricular programme includes a variety of competitive sports, from soccer, climbing or yoga, to Ultimate, a non-contact team field sport played with a flying disc. Non-sporting activities include drama, French, cookery, art and photography. Additional activities can be arranged at the request of the pupils, many of whom attend a local gymnasium at no cost to them. A small minority of the parents who responded to the questionnaire said that the school does not provide a good range of extra-curricular activities. During the inspection a number of different activities were observed and were well attended. The published programme of activities also indicates a good range. Pupils benefit from weekend excursions to

local places of interest as well as subject-specific trips to support the curriculum, for example to the London Film Academy or the theatre.

- 3.13 The school has good links with the local community through the Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) project of the IB programme. All pupils following A levels and the IB programme participate in the CAS project, working with a variety of charities in the local community. For example, they organise the collection of food and clothing for disadvantaged people, and volunteer at a local farm, working alongside community members to prepare vegetable patches. Pupils applying for medicine at university undertake work experience in a local hospice to enhance their applications.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

- 3.14 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.15 Teaching successfully fulfils the aim of the school to prepare pupils for university. All teachers know their pupils very well and identify their individual needs when planning lessons. They are familiar with pupils' favoured learning styles and know how to motivate them to achieve. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of pupils said that their teachers help them to learn. In both formal and informal discussions, pupils spoke of the exceptional help given to them by teachers, who always afford them time and understanding.
- 3.16 Teaching shows strong subject knowledge. Expertise in dealing with pupils who speak English as an additional language is excellent. This skill is central to teaching in all subjects, in a school where all pupils are from overseas. It leads directly to pupils' good overall achievement. Teaching supports different levels of fluency and helps to grow pupils' confidence.
- 3.17 As well as being sensitive to the needs of those pupils who need additional help, teaching provides opportunities for the more able pupils. This is accomplished either by stimulating, open questioning, for example when undertaking literary analysis, or through the thoughtful devising of individual projects. At all levels, teaching engages the pupils' interest and enjoyment. For example, a sixth-form law lesson was enlivened by varied activities and games, and in a lesson on bio-diversity, pupils learnt about natural selection by picking up different sizes of nuts and seeds with varying sizes of implements.
- 3.18 Teaching exhibits high levels of care in dealing with pupils, as well as patience and sympathy for their language challenges. They manage time effectively, varying activities in lessons to maintain pupils' commitment and interest. They make productive use of available resources and are able to utilise electronic communication with pupils to give feedback, to assess work and to set tasks. Teaching makes good use of assessment in planning, and marking is mostly constructive, offering suggestions for future improvement. The guidance also invites a response from pupils, who show that they have read and understood the teachers' comments.
- 3.19 Activities within lessons are skilfully managed so that pupils must participate actively but do not have time to lose focus. For example, in increasing English speaking skills, teaching often enables pupils to work in pairs to practise using new constructions. The range of methods encourages participation and debate. As a result, more sophisticated speakers of English, who are preparing for IB examinations, can quote from Shakespeare and enjoy discussing, for example, the relative strength of Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's characters. They are happy to

perform and explore the meanings of the text. More able pupils in a mathematics session at the highest level responded with excitement to the challenges of offering different solutions to the same problem and sharing their ideas.

- 3.20 All teaching promotes tolerance and respect for others. It is a notable feature of lessons that pupils listen respectfully to one another. Teaching is not partisan in its coverage of political issues.

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 pupils have a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. The proprietor actively promotes principles that ensure that pupils are articulate, considerate and courteous, rising to the challenge of living away from their home countries. In discussions the pupils were very enthusiastic about the school and almost all of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that they like being at the school.
- 4.3 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They demonstrate a high level of self-awareness, evident in the quality of their relationships with their peers and teachers. The pupils are encouraged by the school to attend their own services of religious observance in the local community, and the school has provided a space for independent prayer at the request of the pupils. In an applied ICT A-level lesson, pupils used animation to explain instructions for Muslim prayer. Pupils show well-developed aesthetic and spiritual awareness in subjects such as art and English. They acquire increasing self-reliance through living with host families and boarding houses, and through participation in activities such as the DofE.
- 4.4 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. The pupils appreciate being treated as adults, which increases their sense of moral responsibility. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, which was very apparent in a sociology lesson when the pupils were discussing state crime and human rights. The comprehensive PHSEE programme and regular assemblies allow pupils to gain insight into issues such as tolerance and radicalisation, as well as British political systems and the foundations of British democracy. Around the school the pupils demonstrate a very good response to the school's work to actively promote understanding of Britishness, such as respect for others and the rule of law.
- 4.5 Pupils' excellent social development is shown by their strong sense of social responsibility, evident both within the school and in the wider community. All pupils learn about service, either by volunteering with local charities or by raising money to support national good causes such as Children in Need. Pupils reported enjoying having the opportunity to take on responsibilities such as being part of the EF Ambassador Scheme in representing the school within the EF group, as well as roles on committees that have very recently been introduced. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils reported that they are not given the chance to take on responsibility. Inspectors judged that the school offers a variety of opportunities, such as being heads of school. Pupils are quick to offer support to each other, both informally and in a more formal way. For example, as organised by guidance counsellors in the outreach committee, pupils are chosen to act as mentors for peers who may have language difficulties or simply feel homesick. Pupils commented that they value the three-day induction event at the beginning of the year in September as it helps them to integrate quickly into school life and to forge strong friendships.
- 4.6 Pupils' cultural development is excellent. The large mix of nationalities within the school helps pupils to appreciate different philosophies and faiths; they fully appreciate the diversity of cultures in a school where 37 countries are represented, and respect and value each other's differences. Pupils enrich their cultural

awareness by organising national days and by attending the various cultural pursuits on offer, such as Chinese, Russian and French clubs. The Chinese club offers opportunities for pupils to learn Mandarin or Cantonese. In discussions, pupils reported feeling part of a large family and that they show understanding of each other's cultures through mixing with each other all the time.

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

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is good.
- 4.8 The pastoral care system ensures that pupils are supported and guided effectively by staff, assisting the school to fulfil its aims. Relationships between the staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, are strong. Staff know and understand the pupils well. An overwhelming majority of the pupils who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that there is a member of staff whom they can turn to if they have a personal difficulty, an opinion reiterated in discussions. Links between academic and pastoral staff in the boarding residences have yet to be fully developed.
- 4.9 Pupils are encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices through their studies in the IGCSE PHSEE programme. During the visit, inspectors found the food at the school to be of a good standard, with a large choice of dishes. Physical education and additional sporting activities ensure that pupils are encouraged to exercise.
- 4.10 The school successfully promotes high standards of conduct. Appropriate policies are in place which detail sanctions for academic, pastoral or attendance issues. The school has introduced a system of rewarding pupils for good behaviour. A very small minority of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that teachers are not fair in the way they give rewards or sanctions. Inspectors judged that systems are clear and pupils are given the opportunity to say if they feel they are being unfairly treated. In dealing with any unacceptable behaviour, the school takes due account of any related difficulty or disability. Pupils reported that there are very few, if any, instances of bullying and they knew whom to turn to if they felt that they were being bullied. The school ensures that pupils are taught about the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- 4.11 The school has recently devised a suitable plan to improve accessibility for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 4.12 The school has recognised the importance of the need to be responsive to pupils' views with the introduction of committees. These have not been in existence for long enough to judge their effectiveness. A very small minority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire said that the school does not listen to them or ask their opinions. The inspectors found that the pupils are listened to on an individual basis but not yet as a collective voice.

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

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is unsatisfactory.
- 4.14 The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are in accordance with the latest guidance but they are not consistently applied. All those who work in the school have received training in child protection in accordance with the local safeguarding children's board, including awareness of the risks of radicalisation, but not all staff working in the boarding houses have received such training. Vetting checks have been carried out but a failure to date receipt of the checks means that it is not possible to tell whether they were carried out before employment began. In some cases, references have not been received. Host families have been employed to provide lodgings for pupils before vetting checks have been received.
- 4.15 In the classroom buildings, health and safety are given a high priority. Excellent records of maintenance and repairs show high levels of competence. There are efficient systems in place for identifying and rectifying faults. The buildings are kept clean, tidy and free from hazards. Risk assessments are carried out for all buildings and activities off site, and, whenever possible, risks are minimised. Wherever necessary the school employs the services of external consultants to carry out testing of equipment. External consultants carry out fire risk assessments in the school, provide training for staff and regularly service equipment. Fire drills in school are carried out and recorded each term. Standards in the boarding houses are unsatisfactory in this regard. The school does not have overall control of health and safety and fire safety within the boarding houses and homestay families, nor does it have the authority to monitor them.
- 4.16 A number of staff are qualified as first aiders and a medical room is provided for sick and injured pupils in the teaching building, but there is inadequate provision for medical care for boarders.
- 4.17 The attendance and admission registers are maintained and stored appropriately.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.18 The quality of boarding is unsatisfactory.
- 4.19 Outcomes for boarders are sound. The boarders at the school are motivated, personable, engaging young people. They have clear and varied designs for both future academic pursuit and careers. They benefit from the international nature of the pupil body and are wholly accepting of pupils from a variety of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds. Together, they create a caring community, and some describe a family atmosphere within the school. Most boarders enjoy their experience at school, and for those in the three main boarding houses, they feel that their communal interaction is the greatest benefit. Some boarders living in the boarding houses believe that their collective voice goes unheard. Inspectors recognised that new committees have been formed, but these are very recent, and boarders have no established means of putting forward their views. Boarders from homestays spoke highly of their hosts and value the experience of living with them. They feel that they benefit from life with a local family. In some of the boarding residences, pupils build strong relationships with their house parents and are complimentary about the level of care they receive, whilst in others the atmosphere is less conducive to building strong links between the staff and pupils. The boarders stated that they know and can identify staff to whom they can turn if there is a concern.
- 4.20 The quality of boarding provision and care is unsatisfactory. Pupils are inducted into boarding in a suitable manner and most describe the experience as satisfactory. The school provides pupils with a range of detailed information on external agencies who may be able to provide them with specific help in a crisis. They value the work of the school's guidance counsellors and see them as the focal point of their lives at the school, acting as the vital communication link between their families and the school. However, the school has not been able to identify an independent listener for boarders to contact directly about personal difficulties or concerns. The staff have recently implemented a new and effective system for the recording of medicines dispensed to pupils both in school and within the boarding houses. Appropriate records are kept of stocks remaining. Medicines held by the school are maintained in an appropriate and secure manner. Some house parents are still unsure as to which home remedies or over-the-counter medicines pupils can control. The school does not have a system to assess whether boarders are competent to self-medicate or to give or withhold consent to treatment. All boarders have access to and are registered with a local doctors' surgery. There is also access to the local hospital and other specialists. The school's accommodation for sick pupils is inadequate. Provision at school and within the three boarding houses is not of sufficient size or flexibility for the boarding community. This point was highlighted in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, where a small minority of boarders said that they do not feel well looked after if ill or injured. In some instances, neither the school nor boarding houses are able to provide for both boys and girls simultaneously. In one of the boarding houses, at the time of inspection, the designated sick room was used as staff accommodation at weekends.
- 4.21 The school does not have appropriate or robust oversight or control of all aspects of health and safety in the boarding houses it uses, and they are not maintained so as to consistently ensure the health and safety of all boarders. One of the boarding houses does not have a current fire assessment certificate. Fire drills are carried out within the boarding houses, but the recording of events is varied in detail. Some of

the evacuations have not taken place during boarding time, and there is therefore no guarantee that all pupils have experienced such drills.

- 4.22 In responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of pupils stated that the food provided is not good. After examining all menus and visiting mealtimes at the school canteen and each of the three boarding houses, inspectors found the food to be sufficient and of a good standard. However, it is apparent that the quality, nature and variety of meals vary between the boarding houses. The school's boarding handbook states that all residences should provide a kettle, toaster and microwave for pupils to use for the hygienic preparation of suitable snacks outside of mealtimes. This provision is not consistent across all of the boarding houses and in one is completely missing, which supports the view of a small minority of pupils who stated in responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are unhappy with the availability of snacks and drinking water outside of mealtimes. The school provides boarders with a lockable money tin for their valuables, but it is small and can be easily removed. In discussions during the inspection a number of pupils complained of the loss of personal items, which supports the view of a few pupils who stated in the pre-inspection questionnaire that their belongings are not safe.
- 4.23 The furniture used in the boarding houses is modern and uniform in nature but some rooms for sixth-form boarders are overcrowded. The use of bunk beds is unpopular and study desks are too small. In one study bedroom there are insufficient desks for the number of pupils, and the alternative study room in the boarding house is in the basement and appears damp. During discussions, pupils complained about rooms being cold. A lack of hot water at shower times in one of the boarding houses results in some pupils having to take cold showers on a regular basis. The boarding houses are made safe from intruders and the entrances are secured by key pads and keys. Fire exits are alarmed to protect boarders and prevent unnecessary and inappropriate use for any purpose other than an emergency. The boarders have a variety of ways of contacting their families and friends, including the use of mobile telephones and social media sites available through internet access. Boarders enjoy a good range of after-school activities. At the weekends, they can visit areas of interest and participate in events include bowling, aquarium visits and trips to Dartmoor. They appreciate these opportunities. Many of the arrangements for boarders in lodgings are satisfactory. The school provides written guidance to the host families, who are monitored at least yearly. A member of staff interviews each pupil accommodated in lodgings every term to record the pupil's assessment. Pupils spoke warmly about their host families.
- 4.24 The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding is unsatisfactory. The school's arrangements for promoting the welfare of boarders are not fully implemented in terms of safer recruitment procedures and appropriate comprehensive safeguarding training for all staff and host families. The school encourages good behaviour and its policies apply in the boarding residences, as in the school, with the same sanctions and rewards. House parents report any difficulties to the guidance counsellors and do not apply sanctions themselves. There are effective measures in place to combat bullying; boarders report that it very rarely occurs. Protocols for the use of restraint are suitable but there have been no incidents. Individuals visiting the boarding accommodation are kept under staff supervision. The staffing of boarding residences is adequate in number and there is always at least one responsible adult on duty overnight in each residence. Staff know how to contact boarders at all times and what to do on the rare occasions when they cannot readily locate a boarder.

- 4.25 The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision is unsatisfactory. The management team is inexperienced in terms of formal training in boarding. Some staff with posts of responsibility for boarding have little or no understanding of the NMS. Although the school has a statement of the principles and practice of boarding, it is not well known to the staff or boarders. Policies and documents are incomplete, including the main boarding handbook for staff. The school's leadership, management and governance do not actively promote the welfare of boarders.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is unsatisfactory.
- 5.2 The governing body provides sound financial management to the school, which has enabled it to provide a new building for classrooms. It ensures that the school is able to employ sufficient high quality staff and that teaching is well resourced. The chair of the governing body has an office in the school and offers support on matters of safeguarding as well as being available to the head teacher. The governors are keen to learn and to understand how they should govern the school successfully.
- 5.3 At present, the governing body has insufficient monitoring and reporting systems in place to assist it in reviewing the success of the school. Governing body meetings do not include the head teacher. There is insufficient challenge or stimulus for growth because school leadership is not held to account. Governors have not ensured continuity of leadership in the school through lack of adequate succession planning. Direction has been lacking in ensuring that regulatory standards are met.
- 5.4 The governing body has not ensured an annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures. Nor have governors satisfied themselves that vetting checks are rigorously carried out and recorded appropriately in the single central register of appointments. Oversight of boarding has not paid sufficient heed to meeting the majority of the required standards for boarding. Policies do not make it clear that ultimate responsibility for health and safety and fire safety lies with the governing body.

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 unsatisfactory.
- 5.6 The school has recently undergone key changes to its leadership structure and has experienced a lack of continuity. Those with management responsibilities promote the aims of the school. The academic leadership is effective in realising the school's main educational objectives. There are academic and pastoral meetings for key personnel every three weeks, action points from which contribute to school improvement. The current leadership offers clear educational direction and is beginning to establish a culture of self-evaluation which management understands and fully supports. Future planning is characterised by an understanding of strengths and areas for development, together with an effective setting of priorities.
- 5.7 All staff have recently been involved in the formation of a school improvement plan that evolved from a series of working parties. The plan sets out key strategies in academic, pastoral and enrichment areas but there is no reference to robust oversight, designed to ensure that policies are consistently implemented. There is no indication that reports are made to the governing body nor that it is provided with necessary information to ensure that regulatory compliance is consistently maintained. There is also no reference to boarding, although all pupils in the school are boarders. The liaison between boarding house staff and teaching staff is not managed or developed satisfactorily.

- 5.8 Leadership and management understand their roles in the safeguarding of pupils but have not fully met their delegated responsibility for welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding. They have not provided parents with all the required information or informed them of what is available. For example, before the inspection the safeguarding policy was not on the school website. School leaders have not demonstrated the skills and understanding to know what is required or to ensure that legal standards are met consistently.
- 5.9 Senior management has good oversight of all academic responsibilities. There are systems in place to ensure smooth day-to-day running of the school, with leaders delegating to middle management so that communication across the school, both formal and informal, is effective. Guidance counsellors play a vital role in ensuring that pupils' personal development is paramount. This does not extend to full understanding of responsibilities for boarding. For all areas of the school there is no formal monitoring of academic standards and pastoral matters, including welfare, health and safety.
- 5.10 The school has been successful in recruiting and retaining high calibre staff. Appointment procedures have not always been followed in full and the process of carrying out proper checks is not sufficiently rigorous. Newly appointed teachers receive a good induction programme and are suitably trained in child protection and welfare, health and safety matters. An appraisal system is in place, identifying training needs that are met and monitored through a sound system of staff development. In addition, each member of staff is encouraged to review and evaluate his or her own professional work. Lesson observations and subsequent feedback serve to set appropriate priorities for the coming year. These procedures have led to an improvement in the quality of education inside the classroom, including the pastoral care shown to pupils. The teaching staff receive strong support from many non-teaching colleagues.
- 5.11 The school maintains a constructive link with parents. Most communication is managed by guidance counsellors and there is little or no contact with house parents. Responses to pre-inspection questionnaires show that an overwhelming majority of parents are satisfied that the school achieves high standards of behaviour and that it deals well with any cases of bullying. Most parents also suggest that they would recommend the school to another parent. A minority of parents said that the school does not encourage them to be involved. The school acknowledges that it is difficult for parents to be actively involved in the progress of their children because of language difficulties and geographical distance, but use of electronic communication assists quick and efficient access to academic matters, including attendance. The school is currently considering ways in which it can more fully involve parents.
- 5.12 Parents of current and prospective pupils receive much helpful documentation although they have not received all the required information. Documentation includes a parents' welcome letter, an induction programme for their children, a parents' handbook and a parent agreement form. There is also a comprehensive transport handbook which identifies the roles and responsibilities of staff. Further advice on school related matters is relayed to all parents through a comprehensive series of letters.
- 5.13 Parents are sent clear and useful academic reports that contain information on attainment and effort. They also include comments on how the pupil can improve.

Parents are able to access their children's reports electronically. The school handles any concerns with care, in line with recently published procedures.

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