



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

FARRINGTONS SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Farringtons School

Full Name of School	Farringtons School
DfE Number	305/6007
Registered Charity Number	307916
Address	Farringtons School Perry Street Chislehurst Kent BR7 6LR
Telephone Number	020 8467 0256
Fax Number	020 8295 1575
Email Address	head@farringtons.kent.sch.uk
Head	Mrs Dorothy Nancekievill
Chair of Governors	Mr David Chaundler
Age Range	3 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	669
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (348 boys; 321 girls)
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS): 49 5-11: 223 11-18: 397
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 602
Number of Boarders	Total: 67 Full: 67 Weekly: 0
Inspection Dates	30 Nov 2015 to 02 Dec 2015

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, as amended. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Martin Bussey

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Diane Riley

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

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Farringtons School is a co-educational day school for pupils aged three to eighteen, with boarding for those aged eleven to eighteen. It is situated in the town of Chislehurst, Kent amidst spacious grounds. It was founded in 1911 as a boarding school for the daughters of Methodist missionaries. It maintains its Christian ethos through membership of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust, which carries primary trustee responsibility, although almost all aspects of governance, with the exception of overarching financial decisions, are delegated to the school's governing body. Since the previous inspection, a new head has been appointed, commencing work in January 2015. A new head of boarding was appointed in September 2014.
- 1.2 The school aims: to ensure that boarding provides a rich and fulfilling experience, where the growth and development of the individual are fostered in a secure and happy environment; to promote community living, where relationships are based on the values of trust and respect; and to ensure that boarders from different traditions are encouraged to fulfil their personal potential through a tangible experience of cosmopolitan community.
- 1.3 Pupils are drawn from professional families. They are mostly of white British origin, while some come from a wide range of other ethnicities. Most boarders are from overseas, the largest contingent being from China; others come from countries including Poland, Germany, Ukraine and Spain. A few boarders join the sixth form for three years of study in order to gain a grounding in English.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, the school had a total of 669 pupils. Of these, 67 were boarders, accommodated in 3 boarding houses. West House, for girls aged 11 to 18, is situated in the main school building, together with East House, which accommodates some boys in Year 13. Boys aged 11 to 17 live in a wing of South House. Of the fifty-five pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, one boards, on an occasional basis. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs, but none is a boarder. There are 74 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), of whom 55 are boarders.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that assessments of risk in welfare include sufficient detail to inform comprehensive and well-focused policy making that reflects monitoring.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by ISI in December 2012; no recommendations were made for boarding.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 Boarders receive suitable induction that includes informative documentation about a range of relevant topics and support from older pupils who board. Boarders have a number of people to whom they can turn, including an independent listener, and counselling, medical, chaplaincy and pastoral staff; information about national help-lines is posted in all houses. In response to pre-inspection questionnaires, a very large majority of boarders confirmed that they know what to do if they are unhappy or worried about something. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Care for boarders is provided by the medical centre, which is staffed throughout the day, and by house staff at night. The boarders' physical and mental health and their emotional well-being are promoted. Different medical conditions are the focus of a suitable first-aid policy and associated documents. These are appropriately implemented, and suitable accommodation is available for those who are ill. Boarders have access to optometry and other specialist health services. Prescribed medicines are held in locked facilities in houses. Administration by house staff is logged through effective online records and tallies of stocks of medication are now suitably kept. Assessment of those competent to self-medicate is appropriate and medicines for these boarders are kept securely locked in houses. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders contact their families with ease, most by visual communication links at weekends. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarding accommodation consists of small dormitories, ensuring that no more than four boarders share. Ventilation, heating and lighting are appropriate and all houses are kept clean. The school has suitable risk assessments for the boarding accommodation. All sleeping areas can be decorated by individual boarders. Houses include social areas equipped with television and computer games. Younger boarders undertake prep in classrooms and all boarders can study in their rooms. Governors ensure suitable renovation and refurbishment. Washroom facilities and sufficient private showers are provided. Access to the boarding houses is controlled appropriately. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 All boarders eat together in a central dining hall. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food provided. Through sampling meals, including breakfast and dinner, and reviewing menus, inspectors found food to be of suitable quantity and that it provides choice and variety. Many boarders expressed similar views at mealtimes and stated that catering staff are open to hearing their views and suggestions for improvement. Specialist dietary requirements are catered for. Snacks are provided regularly within houses and drinking water is easily available. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry is efficient, overseen by house matrons. All boarders have access to nearby shops at some point during the week to purchase everyday items. Lockable storage is provided for boarders. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 Boarders participate in and enjoy the school's programme of daily activities, including drama, music and many sports. In response to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the range of activities provided in the evenings and at weekends. Inspection evidence did not support this. In the evenings boarders have regular use of school sports facilities, in addition to leisure

facilities in houses. Opportunities for quiet time or to be alone are provided. Many boarders go home or to guardians appointed by their parents at weekends. The activities arranged for those who remain are interesting and stimulating, and in discussions boarders supported this view. Activities include theatre and rock-climbing trips, and visits to places of interest in London and other cities such as Cambridge and Brighton. Boarders maintain an interest in the outside world through varied media. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school has an effective health and safety policy and procedures, which are reviewed regularly. Risk assessments for the premises, accommodation and facilities are appropriately focused to show awareness of potential hazards, and the boarders' welfare is safeguarded on residential trips and adventurous activities. The school has a written risk assessment policy that includes boarders' welfare in its provisions. Suitable assessments of risk are undertaken in this area. Some were limited in scope before the inspection, for example regarding the administration of homely remedies, and the policy created after appropriate review sometimes lacks focus or precision. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 Fire risk assessment covers all areas of the school, including boarding, and any identified necessary actions are carried out appropriately. Fire drills are held both in and out of regular school hours. Appliance and alarm checks are appropriate. All records are kept centrally, monitored and reviewed. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school's child protection policy and procedures now reflect the most recent statutory guidance and are implemented effectively. Required information is made available to all staff. Named, designated individuals are suitably trained, including in inter-agency working, and ensure appropriate training for all other staff. The school has instituted suitable measures to guard against radicalisation. Filtering of the internet supports this, including monitoring of the boarders' own equipment. A minuted annual review of child protection measures is undertaken by all governors. Contact with external agencies is prompt and their advice is followed. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school implements appropriate policies to promote good behaviour and guard against bullying. In its approach to behaviour management, it has recognised that the houses are the boarders' home in term time by adding an effective, additional boarding dimension to whole-school policy, relevant to small-scale behavioural issues. Records confirm that bullying is rare, and boarders agreed this to be so during discussion; they consider the school to be prompt in dealing with any that occurs. In response to questionnaires, a small minority of boarders disagreed that sanctions are used fairly. Inspection evidence from records of sanctions and discussion showed that sanctions are employed impartially, suitably recorded and reviewed by senior staff. Arrangements for searching boarders and their possessions and for applying physical restraint are appropriate but used rarely. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school's system for the recruitment of governors, staff and volunteers ensures that criminal record checks are seen before appointment in most cases, and these and other checks are now recorded appropriately. In a very few historical cases, identified by the school before the inspection visit, and remedied as far as practicable, checks against the barred list were not recorded as having been made before work began when criminal record checks were not received in time. In the recent past and currently, such checking has been, and is, consistently undertaken;

associated assessments of risk are comprehensive and supervision is instigated and recorded in staff files. Visitors to boarding areas are carefully supervised. All those over the age of 16 who live in boarding areas but are not employed by the school have a criminal record check; they sign appropriate written agreements with the school and affirm their understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders but monitors the boarders' welfare in this context. [NMS 14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A statement of the school's boarding principles is published widely and is reflected in boarding provision and practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Structures in boarding management have been reviewed following recent changes to senior management. These appointments were made with due regard to the appropriate levels of skills and knowledge required. All staff understand and implement their respective roles and responsibilities, and demonstrate that they have the required levels of experience to do so. Procedures, and the implementation of boarding policies, are monitored by senior managers, although resulting policy does not always fully reflect the outcomes of this process. Effective self-evaluation informs whole-school development planning. This provides for the future improvement of boarding, including the refurbishment of houses. Governors maintain appropriate oversight of boarding and, together with senior managers, promote the well-being of boarders. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire considered that the school keeps their children safe. Links between boarding, academic and pastoral staff are maintained through regular meetings and electronic communication. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Supervision arrangements ensure that sufficient staff are always on duty, including overnight. Those who are resident have accommodation suitably separate from that of the boarders. This is not accessed by boarders. Boarders know where and how to obtain help at all times. Arrangements for the boarders' registration, and to sign in and out, ensure that their whereabouts are known. Staff understand the procedures to be followed in the event that a boarder should go missing. Induction and appraisal procedures are suitable. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders are integrated into school life. They are valued within the school for the varied cultural experiences they contribute. Provision for boarders with EAL, the majority, ensures that they are effectively supported in their academic and boarding lives. It enables and encourages them to aspire to higher education at ambitious levels, suited to their potential. All boarders, including those with particular needs, are enabled to participate equally in school life. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders' views are heard frequently within the school; many boarders hold responsible posts, including as representatives on the school council. In addition, boarders confirmed that communication is easy and open between themselves and house staff. The school responds effectively to suggestions made. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were extremely positive. All concurred that the school achieves high standards of behaviour and that boarding helps their children's progress and development. Inspection evidence supports these views. The school has a suitable complaints policy that is implemented effectively. [NMS 18]

- 3.22 Prefects fulfil responsibility roles and help in the running of their houses with appropriate guidance. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for any of its boarders. [NMS 20 not applicable]