



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**SHREWSBURY SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Shrewsbury School

Full Name of School	<b>Shrewsbury School</b>
DfE Number	<b>893/6009</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>528413</b>
Address	<b>Shrewsbury School The Schools Shrewsbury Shropshire SY3 7BA</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01743 280500</b>
Fax Number	<b>01743 243107</b>
Email Address	<b>reception@shrewsbury.org.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Mark Turner</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Matthew Collins</b>
Age Range	<b>12 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>766</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (617 boys; 149 girls;)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>11-18: 766</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>144</b>
Number of Boarders	<b>622</b>
Inspection dates	<b>11 Nov 2014 to 13 Nov 2014</b>

## PREFACE

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

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in November 2010 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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

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

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

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

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

### **Inspectors**

Mrs Colette Culligan

Reporting Inspector

Mr Stuart Corrie

Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, HMC school)

Mr Carl Bigham

Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, SBSA school)

Mr Alexander Tate

Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Shrewsbury School is a boarding and day school on the outskirts of Shrewsbury. It was founded by Royal Charter in 1552 and has occupied the same site since 1882. Originally established as a boys' school, girls were admitted to the sixth form in 2008. In September 2014, girls were admitted into Years 9 and 10. The school is overseen by a governing body, composed of appointed and co-opted members, which meets four times a year; in addition, there are six governors' committees, each of which meets at least twice a year.
- 1.2 The school is an Anglican foundation and welcomes pupils of all religious persuasions. It aims to provide a rigorous academic education and to ensure that pupils grow into well rounded individuals who are caring, thoughtful and confident; who are ambitious without arrogance, perceptive but not precocious, interesting, interested and able to get on with people of all backgrounds. It places a strong emphasis on pastoral care centred on the school's thirteen houses, of which eleven are for boarders, including three for girls. Each house sets out to encourage a sense of family and of house loyalty. In its boarding the school aims to nurture creativity, personal ambition and a sense of achievement along with intellectual independence and curiosity.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, there were 766 pupils enrolled at the school, 149 girls and 617 boys, of whom 622 are boarders. There are 382 pupils in the sixth form. Most pupils are from professional families based in the United Kingdom. A small proportion of pupils come from overseas, mostly from Hong Kong, China and Thailand. There are 164 pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) of whom 32 require and receive support for their English. There are 199 who have been identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Of these pupils, 54 are identified as needing specific help which is provided by the learning support department.
- 1.4 Since the previous inspection, two new boarding houses for girls have been opened and a rolling programme of refurbishment of houses has continued. Accommodation for staff within the houses has been renovated. The structure and staffing of the senior leadership has changed. Construction of a new classroom block is underway and the timetable has been revised to provide additional teaching time and to accommodate a revised activities programme.
- 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 National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

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

## **2. SUMMARY**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that systems for housestaff to report the sanctions they set are fully implemented, to facilitate monitoring by senior staff.
2. Ensure that communication with boarders enables them to understand that their views on whole-school issues are heard and considered by the school.
3. Clarify the specific duties and authorities of the staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in November 2010. It made a recommendation regarding the monitoring of pupils' health care including non-NHS records. The school has responded fully to this recommendation.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 The school has a suitable induction programme which boarders value and find helpful. They are provided with informative house handbooks. Boarders name several members of staff, including those on the school's listening team, to whom they would willingly go for help or advice. In addition, contact details of appropriate sources of outside help, including the school counsellor, independent listeners and the Children's Commissioner, are displayed in houses. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Comprehensive policies provide guidance for first aid, dealing with chronic conditions, administering homely remedies and medical emergencies. These are implemented effectively. The suitably equipped sanatorium makes separate provision for male and female boarders to rest during the day or to stay overnight if necessary. It is staffed by qualified nurses at all times and a doctor runs a surgery five days a week. Appointments are made with other nearby medical services as required. Any medication kept in the sanatorium or in houses is appropriately stored and prescription medication is given only to the named individuals. An electronic system ensures that information about boarders' health and any medication dispensed is shared between the sanatorium and houses. Boarders' competence to self-medicate is appropriately assessed and their rights and confidentiality are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders can contact home by telephone, email or electronic communication programs. The school has appropriate systems in place to ensure safe use of the internet. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All houses provide suitable sleeping accommodation, study spaces and common rooms for recreation. Washing and toilet facilities are appropriately private. Boarding houses are well maintained, suitably furnished, warm and ventilated. Bedding is clean and warm. Many boarders personalise their rooms, creating a homely atmosphere. Boarding accommodation is protected from access by unauthorized persons and security measures do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In the pre-inspection questionnaire the majority of boarders expressed discontent with the food. Inspection evidence in terms of meals sampled and menus seen demonstrates that the food is tasty, nutritious and adequate in choice, amount and variety. Conversations with boarders support this view. Specific dietary or religious needs are met. All kitchens, including those in houses, are clean and well maintained. Drinking water is readily available and boarders may prepare snacks in the evening. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Boarders are positive about the speed and efficiency of the school's laundry service. They may also launder their own clothes in the houses. Access to the town and to the school shop allows boarders to obtain personal items easily. All boarders have lockable storage spaces, although some choose not to use them. Valuables and large amounts of money are stored by the school. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 There is full programme of activities during the week and at weekends. All boarders are expected to choose to be involved in some activities but they also have appropriate free time. Houses and the extensive grounds provide a range of safe recreational areas and places for boarders to be alone if they wish. Boarders have

easy access to local facilities and information about the wider world through daily newspapers and television provided in houses, as well as assemblies which reflect contemporary issues and events. [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 written policies covering all areas of health and safety. These are consistently implemented, ensuring that the grounds and facilities are maintained to protect the safety and well-being of pupils as far as possible. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school's fire procedures and policies are suitable; the school responds swiftly to recommendations of the fire authority. Fire drills are carried out regularly, including during boarding time, and recorded appropriately. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The safeguarding policy and procedures follow current guidance and are implemented effectively. All school employees and governors have been trained appropriately. The four members of staff named as having responsibility for safeguarding are all suitably trained and understand their roles, which are appropriate. However, because they do not all have the same level of access to confidential safeguarding records some uncertainty exists about lines of responsibility, although boarders said they know whom to approach if necessary. Staff understand reporting lines and these operate effectively. The school has established relationships with the local children's safeguarding board; it initiates contact promptly when concerns arise and follows advice. Records are maintained and stored appropriately. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school's written policies on behaviour are understood by boarders, who see the rules as fair. In questionnaires a minority of boarders said they feel there is inconsistency between houses in setting sanctions. Inspectors judge that the oversight of serious sanctions is effectively centralized and that these are administered appropriately. House staff are allowed some discretion in setting sanctions for other misdemeanours and evidence indicates that on occasion there is some inconsistency in reporting these to senior leaders, which can impair monitoring. Boarders say that bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively through the school's anti-bullying measures. Policies on restraint and search are in place and implemented correctly should the occasion arise. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school ensures that safe recruitment procedures, including all required checks, are carried out and correctly recorded before individuals take up their posts at the school. All non-employees living on site are also subject to the required checks and have signed written agreements specifying the terms of their accommodation. There are satisfactory measures to ensure that visitors to the houses are supervised so as not to have inappropriate access to boarders or their accommodation. The school does not appoint guardians but provides clear guidance on what is expected of those appointed by parents. Where there are concerns that these are not being met, the school alerts parents so that the situation is rectified. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section
- 3.16 The school's statement of boarding principles and practice is published for parents, boarders and staff. Its implementation is evident in the atmosphere in the houses. [NMS 1]

- 3.17 In pre-inspection questionnaire responses a few parents expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership of the school. Evidence does not support this; there is clear management and leadership in boarding. Senior leadership and governance ensure that strategic planning includes boarding development. Houses undertake regular self-assessment and reviews of their boarding practice. Senior house staff, all of whom teach, meet regularly to discuss boarding and pastoral issues. Academic house tutors further extend the links between the pastoral and academic lives of the boarders. Senior boarding staff are experienced and trained. All required records are fully maintained and monitored. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff have job descriptions and receive induction training. A regular appraisal system further supports staff development and staff are encouraged to undertake external training. The role of spouses and partners within houses is made clear. Boarders are at all times supervised by sufficiently qualified and experienced staff. Staff know the whereabouts of boarders through a system of regular roll calls and monitored signing in and out books. They are confident in implementing the policy on missing pupils. At least two members of duty staff sleep in each house each night and boarders can make swift contact if necessary. Staff are provided with suitable accommodation. This is appropriately separated from boarders and their access to it is properly supervised. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination on any grounds. House communities are well integrated and the school is sensitive to individual requirements. Tolerance and acceptance between year groups and cultures characterise the boarding community. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 In the pre-inspection questionnaire the majority of boarders and a small number of parents felt that the boarders' views are not taken into consideration by the school. In interviews, boarders indicated that they do feel that the school listens to their views about house matters but less so on school-wide issues. Evidence shows that boarders' views are sought through house and school councils, questionnaires, suggestion boxes and more informally in conversations with house staff. Many reasonable suggestions or requests from boarders have been acted upon. Senior staff meet regularly with school prefects and heads of school to discuss issues.
- 3.21 The school implements its suitable complaints procedure when dealing with any concerns expressed by parents. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 There is a selection process for the appointment of school prefects. They are given training, appropriate responsibilities and meet regularly with senior staff. Prefects and house monitors contribute to the running of the houses and school, providing role models for other boarders. School prefects may issue sanctions but only with the approval of a senior member of staff to ensure fairness. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not use long-stay lodgings. [NMS 20]