



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

FRENSHAM HEIGHTS SCHOOL

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Frensham Heights School

Full Name of School	Frensham Heights School
DfE Number	936/6038
Registered Charity Number	312052
Address	Frensham Heights School Frensham Heights Road Rowledge Farnham Surrey GU10 4EA
Telephone Number	01252 792561
Fax Number	01252 794335
Email Address	admin@frensham-heights.org.uk
Head	Mr Andrew Fisher
Chair of Governors	Mr Michael Chadwick
Age Range	3 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	498
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (263 boys; 235 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 0 5-11: 89 3-5 (EYFS): 32 11-18: 377
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 416
Number of Boarders	Total: 82 Full: 44 Weekly: 38
Inspection dates	05 Mar 2013 to 07 Mar 2013

PREFACE

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

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in October 2009 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Ofsted monitors the work of independent inspectorates, including a sample of inspections, and you can find the latest evaluation of the work of ISI on the Ofsted website.

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 and a governor, 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 Maureen Bradley

Reporting Inspector

Mr Tim Dewes

Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Deputy Head, HMC)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Frensham Heights School is a co-educational, day and boarding school for pupils aged three to eighteen, which was established in 1925 on its existing site near Farnham in Surrey. The school is administered by a board of governors, which maintains the founders' vision of creating a liberal school which had developed from the progressive movement in education. Through its creative and innovative culture, the school aims to provide a focus on and tolerance of the individual and to encourage self expression. The liberal ethos is embodied through the lack of school uniform, lack of religious basis within the school, and the fact that teachers and students are on first-name terms. The school values all subjects as being of equal importance and strives to engage creatively with an ambitious curriculum which allows students to fulfil their academic potential whilst enjoying a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection in October 2009, the school has made general improvements to its boarding facilities, has continued investment in information and communications technology (ICT) and design and technology, and constructed new outdoor facilities including an all weather sports pitch and pavilion.
- 1.3 There are 498 pupils in the school of whom 82 are boarders; of these 44 are full boarders and 38 board weekly. These boarders include 49 girls and 33 boys. The majority of the boarders come from the UK and approximately a third come from a range of overseas countries. Day pupils travel to the school from the surrounding areas of Surrey. The pupils are from a range of professional family backgrounds. The school has identified 113 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and a range of support is offered to 53 pupils depending on their needs. There are 10 pupils who receive support for English as an additional language (EAL).
- 1.4 There are three boarding houses, one each for boys and girls and one sixth-form house which is co-educational. Each house has a housemistress or housemaster in charge, supported by a team of boarding tutors and day house parents. The school's deputy head (pastoral) is in charge of boarding.
- 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 does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011, and therefore it must:

- ensure that all new appointments are checked with the vetting and barring scheme when criminal record checks are delayed [National Minimum Standard 14.1, under Staff Recruitment and Checks on Other Adults].

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 In addition to the above regulatory action point, the school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Formalise the induction process for new boarders and for those who board on a casual basis.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in October 2009 and all the recommendations have been implemented. Medications administered in boarding houses are now promptly communicated to the medical centre, and fire doors are frequently reviewed to ensure they are not left open.

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 Before admittance to the school, all new pupils receive a welcome pack of information, which includes information for boarders. There is no specific booklet to offer boarders guidance on procedures in the different boarding houses. Casual boarders do not have a formal induction procedure. On arrival in school boarders are guided through the procedures by house staff, and the first weekend of term is an all-in boarding weekend when activities are organised to help them make friends and learn about the local area. Boarders say they have a choice of staff who they feel comfortable in approaching if they have a concern or require guidance. In addition, an independent listener and a school counsellor are available. Contact details are displayed for those who can offer advice outside school, and for a number of help-lines. [NMS2]
- 3.3 The health centre is adequately staffed and is run by a well-qualified team whose specialities complement each other. The school has effective policies for the care of boarders who are unwell which are implemented appropriately by the nursing staff. Two nurses are qualified to undertake the training of other staff on how to deal with any medical emergencies and the treatment of chronic conditions. The accommodation for those who are unwell is suitable and includes facilities for the disabled. A doctor visits the school twice a week, and boarders are able to receive orthodontic and other specialist services locally. Prescribed medicines are issued appropriately and carefully monitored, and self-medication is only allowed for boarders in the sixth-form who are assessed as being capable to do so. All medicines are securely stored. There are a number of staff who are qualified in first aid in the boarding houses and they are able to give household remedies which are recorded in the health centre. There is appropriate communication between nursing and house staff on both a formal and informal basis. The health centre staff ensure that the confidentiality of boarders is respected. [NMS3]
- 3.4 Boarders are free to contact their families through email, the internet and by use of mobile phones. House telephones are available if required. [NMS4]
- 3.5 Boarding accommodation is well maintained, clean, warm and comfortable and offers appropriate privacy. Accommodation ranges from single rooms to bedrooms sleeping three or four boarders, and all have access to suitable washroom and toilet facilities. Boarders are allowed to personalise their rooms and common areas. Each boarder has a desk for study purposes in their bedroom and computer facilities are also available within each house. The boarding house accommodation is for the sole use of the boarders during term time and is secure from unauthorised access. Security arrangements do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS5]
- 3.6 Food for boarders is nutritious and takes account of any dietary needs. The kitchens, including the house kitchens, are well equipped, clean and hygienic. The boarders have the opportunity to contribute their views on food through a food committee. A choice of meals of a sufficient quantity is prepared each day, including salad and fresh fruit. There is a suitable choice of drinks including drinking water, which is clearly labelled. Boarders are provided with a range of snacks and drinks in the house kitchens in the evening. In the pupils' pre-inspection questionnaire, a small number of boarders reported that the food was not good and they were not

satisfied with the snacks and drinks provided. The inspection team found no evidence to support these views. [NMS8]

- 3.7 Suitable laundry provision is made for clothing and bedding, and care is taken to ensure that boarders' own laundry is safely returned to them. Facilities are available in all three houses for boarders to do their own laundry and ironing. Opportunities are provided to enable boarders to purchase toiletries and stationery during shopping trips at weekends, and sixth-form boarders have access to local shops during the evenings. Lockable furniture in their bedrooms allows possessions to be kept safe and private although few boarders use the facility. Money and valuables can be looked after by senior staff and the accounts office. [NMS9]
- 3.8 Boarders take part in a range of suitable activities during the lunch hour and after school. Trips for shopping, recreation, the cinema and in-house entertainment are organised at weekends and occasionally at other times so that all boarders can participate. There is an expectation that boarders will participate in these activities especially in Years 7 to 9. Extensive recreational and leisure facilities, including the school grounds, also provide opportunities for relaxation, exercise and other interests to be pursued. There are many quiet areas where boarders can be alone if they wish. Television news programmes, newspapers and the internet enable boarders to keep up with events in the world outside. [NMS10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets does not meet one of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Attention is paid to keeping boarders safe and protecting them from harm through appropriate health and safety procedures and regular monitoring of them. Health and safety meetings are suitably documented and assessed by governors at their termly meetings. One governor has special responsibility for health and safety matters. Risk assessments are in place to ensure a safe school environment and for visits and trips further afield. The necessary records are kept and scrutinised to ensure that any deficiencies are remedied. Almost all boarders answering the pre-inspection questionnaire said they felt safe in school. [NMS6]
- 3.11 The school has appropriate arrangements in place for fire safety. Testing of fire equipment is frequent and the recommendations of the most recent fire report have been implemented. Clear instructions and signage, together with regular drills, enable all boarders to be fully aware of the procedures for evacuation; drills are conducted throughout a range of times during the day and night. Fire drills are logged and evaluated and where necessary improvements are made. [NMS7]
- 3.12 Due attention is paid to child protection. A designated person ensures that procedures are strictly adhered to. There are designated child protection officers for each section of the school. All staff have regular training and new staff are fully aware of child protection procedures through their induction training. The child protection policy is in line with that of the local safeguarding authority and is reviewed annually by the governing body. The governors' awareness is maintained through a governor responsible for child protection. [NMS11]
- 3.13 The school makes it clear to boarders through its behaviour management policy and school rules the standards of conduct that are expected of them. A culture of trust and individual responsibility is considered important in maintaining standards of behaviour in each house. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small number of boarders felt that the issuing of rewards and sanctions by staff was not always fair

but boarders, when interviewed, did not consider this to be a concern in the boarding environment. A suitable anti-bullying policy is understood by all members of the school community and is implemented when required. Boarders report that they are not aware of any bullying in the school. The suitable policy on the use of physical restraint is understood by the boarding staff. Arrangements for searching boarders and their possessions are clearly defined. [NMS12]

- 3.14 The school currently operates safe recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers. In the past, barred list checks were not always secured before appointments were taken up when criminal record checks were delayed. All the required checks are now in place and the central register of appointments is suitably maintained. Visitors are carefully supervised to ensure that they do not have unsupervised access to the boarding accommodation. Appropriate recruitment checks and written agreements are in place with all persons over the age of sixteen who reside in school. [NMS14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles is outlined in documents for pupils, parents, prospective parents and staff and is displayed in houses and is seen to work in practice. [NMS1]
- 3.17 A clear management structure for boarding staff has been established. Job descriptions define individual management responsibilities. A senior manager has overall responsibility for the line management of the boarding staff and the housemistresses and housemasters have appropriate responsibility for the day-to-day management of the three houses. Parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire express confidence in the management and organisation of boarding. Regular meetings enable matters concerned with pupil welfare to be discussed and effective links are made between boarding and academic staff. The governors and management team have recently undertaken a detailed evaluation of boarding provision and care to assess future needs. All the required records are maintained, kept securely and reviewed regularly. Day books are used effectively by staff to record daily concerns about boarders. [NMS13]
- 3.18 Supervision in the boarding houses is undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced staff. Levels of supervision are appropriate at all times including at night, and duty rotas are displayed which enable boarders to know who to contact when needed. Staff with boarding responsibilities have an appropriate induction and suitable job descriptions. The roles of other resident adults in staff households are clear. Staff accommodation is suitable and there are appropriate arrangements for access by boarders. All house staff are appraised and this process leads to continued professional development. Procedures are in place for boarders to sign in and out of houses during the day and evening, and throughout the week registration takes place every morning and afternoon. There is close liaison between boarding staff and those in the day school and communication of any concerns is efficient. There is a missing child policy which is known to staff. [NMS15]
- 3.19 In discussions, and in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, boarders reported that they are treated equally and that there is no inappropriate discrimination. Boarders who require extra help for SEND and EAL reported at interview that they are satisfied with the support they receive. Boarding staff ensure

that due attention is paid to the cultural needs and customs of boarders from varying ethnic backgrounds. [NMS16]

- 3.20 There is a range of opportunities provided for boarders to express their views, to make suggestions or to share their concerns. A small number of boarders reported in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they thought that the school does not seek their views or respond to them. Inspection evidence found that the boarders do not always take advantage of the opportunities available to them. A school council, food committee and house meetings are all available for pupils to formally express concerns. A culture of openness and tolerance within the school allows for informal expression of views across all age groups. The school undertook a survey in 2012 of boarders' views as part of an evaluation and review process. [NMS17]
- 3.21 A clear complaints procedure is available for all parents of pupils in the school and most parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire reported satisfaction in the way the school has handled their concerns. [NMS18]
- 3.22 Prefects are not appointed in the school. [NMS19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for any of its boarders. [NMS20]