

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Sunningdale School

Full Name of the School	Sunningdale School
DCSF Number	868/6007
Early Years Number	N/A
Registered Charity Number	N/A
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Headmaster	Mr Tom Dawson
Proprietors	Mr Tim Dawson and Mr Nick Dawson
Age Range	7 to 13
Gender	Boys
Inspection Dates	10th to 13th November 2008

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005 and May 2007.

The inspection was not carried out in conjunction with Ofsted, Children's Directorate, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Boarding Standards. 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 and development in general. The full Ofsted report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Sunningdale, founded in 1874, is a family-owned boarding preparatory school for boys between seven and thirteen years of age, occupying a twenty-six acre site with extensive playing fields and sports facilities. The current headmaster took over the headship four years ago from his father and uncle. They bought the school and became the joint headmasters in 1967, and remain the school's proprietors.
- 1.2 The school currently has 80 pupils, including twelve day boys and four boys from abroad who are spending one term at the school. The school largely provides full boarding but some younger boys board on a weekly basis.
- 1.3 The school defines itself as a traditional boys' boarding prep school. It aims for success at Common Entrance or in scholarship examinations to independent senior schools by making the most of different levels of intellect. The school aims to offer a wide range of opportunities, academic and sporting, musical and artistic, while cultivating confidence, good manners, respect for others and enjoyment of life and learning. The previous inspection by ISI was carried out in November 2002. A boarding inspection by Ofsted took place in June 2008.
- 1.4 The school is non-selective and boys may join the school in any year. Overall, the ability profile of boys at the school is above the national average, and the range is wide. A quarter receive additional learning support. One in eight speaks a first language other than English, and six boys have extra help in learning English. The majority of boys are white British, but a variety of ethnic backgrounds is represented.
- 1.5 Boys are placed in forms, and progress through the school in accordance with their prior attainment as well as their ages, so that they can be promoted when they are ready. As a result, each form spans more than one year group, although the range of age in any one form rarely spans more than two years. The school's nomenclature is used throughout the report. The nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	National Curriculum Years
Form I	Mainly Years 3 and 4
Form II	Mainly Years 4 and 5
Form III	Mainly Years 5 and 6
Form IV	Mainly Years 6 and 7
Form V	Mainly Year 7
Form VA	Mainly Years 7 and 8
Form VI	Mainly Year 8

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The school provides a good quality educational experience in ways that are consistent with its aims. It continues to provide the broad, all-round education and thorough preparation for entrance to senior schools that was noted at the last inspection. Since then, it has improved the management, planning and documentation of the curriculum.
- 2.2 Boys gain experience and skills in all areas of the curriculum in a well-planned way that ensures good progress. Linguistic skills are particularly strongly developed, and all boys learn French and Latin throughout the school, as well as English. The school makes good provision for scientific and mathematical learning.
- 2.3 History, geography and religious studies extend the boys' human and social understanding. Physical exercise is given high priority. All boys regularly play the major sport of the term, and have opportunities in a range of other sports. Creative and aesthetic skills are nurtured well in art. Since the last inspection, design and technology has been extended to include the pupils in older forms, adding continuity and balance to their learning, though time is limited to a single weekly lesson. Music is a significant strength of the school. As well as the weekly form music lesson, three quarters of the boys learn a musical instrument and frequently take part in performances.
- 2.4 As well as timetabled lessons, the school provides an excellent range of evening and weekend activities. These range from gardening and chess to wood turning and clay pigeon shooting, fencing and golf. All boys take part in at least three activities a week and these nurture interests and build skills, adding to the breadth of educational opportunity and experience. Boys appreciate the school's openness to suggestions from them about activities they would like added to the list.
- 2.5 Since the last inspection, the school has developed subject handbooks and schemes of work, though these vary in quality. While some focus narrowly on curriculum content, the best also consider methods and resources, the application of whole-school policies such as marking, and planning for the future development of the subject. Personal, social and health education is woven successfully through the curriculum and wider aspects of school life, even though the work covered through the school is not recorded to ensure progress and to identify any gaps.
- 2.6 Boys are prepared well for the next stage of their education. They gain skills, academically and socially, that lay good foundations for later life. The school pays close attention to the needs of individuals. It challenges those who are gifted and talented. Boys who find learning difficult are given excellent support through additional teaching that is tailored to their individual needs, and effective liaison between staff. The school ensures that those learning English as an additional language are helped to learn quickly, providing boys with extra teaching where needed and involving them fully in school life from the start.
- 2.7 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.8 The boys achieve well in gaining knowledge, understanding and skills in the subjects they study. They become good learners in most respects. As at the last inspection, boys achieve a good level of success in examinations, whatever their ability, fulfilling the school's aim in this regard. They enjoy learning and the school's 'work hard, play hard' ethos leads to significant achievement within and beyond the classroom.
- 2.9 Boys' speaking and listening and literacy skills are well developed. Boys become avid readers, immersing themselves in a book when they have minutes to spare. They write fluently, and their creative writing often shows depth and imagination, reflecting the breadth of their reading. Boys are effectively grounded in mathematical skills, though their experience of data handling and practical mathematics is still somewhat limited, as noted in the last inspection report. Boys develop and use a limited range of skills in information and communications technology (ICT), mainly in word processing and finding information. The school development plan recognises the need to extend the skills taught in ICT and the breadth of their application within subjects.
- 2.10 Boys respond well when challenged to think independently and logically, as when a boy in Form VA posed the question and then worked out why a bowl pushed upside down into water remains dry inside. They develop their capacity for critical and creative thinking. This was evident, for example, when boys in Form VI discussed W B Yeats' poem 'An Irish Airman Foresees his Death', exploring complex ideas about human motivation without fear of a wrong answer.
- 2.11 Achievement is particularly high in French and boys apply their skills confidently, as in the recent French plays devised and performed by each form. Regular visits to the school's house in Normandy extend boys' grasp of the language and contribute to their enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject. Boys also achieve high standards in music. They sing, in chapel and in the school choir, with tuneful enthusiasm. They do well in music examinations; all those who took a grade exam recently gained merit or distinction. Music performances are of high quality, frequent and varied, and boys have many opportunities to participate.
- 2.12 The school does not participate in national tests, or track boys' progress from their baseline on entry. However, annual standardised tests in reading, spelling and numeracy indicate that boys generally do well in relation to their age and ability. Results in Common Entrance vary between subjects and years but are generally good, enabling boys to gain entry to a school of their choice.
- 2.13 Individual and group success is encouraged and celebrated and boys speak proudly of the achievements of their friends. In 2008, two boys were awarded a scholarship to their senior schools, and another reached the finals of a national history competition. Teams are successful in a wide range of sports, often against significantly larger schools. Sporting success is matched by breadth of participation as every boy is given the chance to represent the school.
- 2.14 Teamwork is strongly emphasised and boys are keenly conscious of contributing to their form and their house, for example in the accumulation of 'work stars'. Individuals also take great pride in 'show ups' when a good piece of work is shown to the headmaster.
- 2.15 Boys are hungry for success against external measures, and keen to know exactly what is expected of them. They also enjoy learning for its own sake, whether in art or science. Boys develop good work habits, applying themselves to the task in hand and persevering when

they find work difficult. They cooperate within a group, study independently when required and organise their work well.

- 2.16 The quality of handwriting is good and boys who have difficulty are given extra help with this in an evening activity. They take care to present their work well and to be accurate, for example in mathematics. Boys learn to make notes, though they are sometimes given information, or asked to copy it, without being required to think it through for themselves. They are competent in carrying out their own research, and enjoy the chance to do this, as when boys in Form IV each chose a topic that interested them to study for a geography project.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.17 The quality of boys' all-round personal development is outstanding, reflecting the clarity and consistency with which the school pursues its aims in this regard. The school has maintained and built on the strengths identified in this area at the time of the last inspection.
- 2.18 Regular chapel services provide a strong spiritual focus that is shaped by the school's Christian ethos and its declared traditional values. For example, the moving Remembrance Day service united the whole school community in remembering thoughtfully those who served or are currently serving in the armed forces. In religious studies, boys gain a good knowledge of Christianity and are also introduced to other world religions. With the school's help boys gain a sense of identity and self-worth with respect for others.
- 2.19 Boys develop extremely well socially and morally. This is because the school sets clear boundaries and has high expectations of behaviour while also fostering confidence, consideration and good manners. The boys understand the rules and why they are necessary. They relate them to overarching principles such as kindness and respect for people and property that are discussed and demonstrated on an everyday basis. The system of rewards and sanctions is considered fair. 'Complaints and compliments' are logged for each boy so that he receives feedback on his behaviour. All this contributes to the growth of self-discipline and a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- 2.20 The boys have an excellent understanding of the importance of getting on well together, of including everyone and of accepting others as they are. They say that bullying is almost unheard of, and that any unkindness such as name-calling would be quickly dealt with by staff. New boys are allocated a 'guardian' to help them, and they say that it is easy to settle in and make friends. Older boys are appointed as monitors and are carefully trained to take on responsibilities such as looking after a dormitory of younger boys.
- 2.21 The boys have an exceptionally strong sense of ownership and loyalty to the school because they have many opportunities to talk with adults about how the school works, why things are as they are and what might be changed. Members of the food committee and the school council bring forward views from each form that are important to the boys. This generates lively debate across the school, for example, about what type of meal should be provided before a school match. Boys learn to weigh pros and cons and the variety of factors that may need to be taken into account when decisions are made about school life.
- 2.22 Boys look outwards to the wider world, for instance running their own lively election for the American Presidency. A trip is planned for next term to the House of Commons. Boys gain a good understanding of how a democracy works and the responsibilities of citizenship. They are active in raising money for charity, and they learn about the needs this helps to meet. Some of the senior boys recently organised a collection of provisions to send to troops in Afghanistan.

- 2.23 The school fosters broad cultural awareness and appreciation through a diversity of experience in art and music, and through visits and performances. Many different cultural traditions are represented in the school. The boys are interested in each other's experiences, and awareness is broadened when, at times, these are drawn upon in lessons to illuminate discussion of languages, religions and places. Regular visits to France also build awareness of the richness and variety of different cultural traditions.
- 2.24 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.25 The boys benefit from good teaching that is knowledgeable, vigorous and thorough. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, and there is now greater consistency in planning and marking. Teaching reflects the school's aims in laying foundations for success in Common Entrance and fostering enjoyment of learning.
- 2.26 Teachers have a good understanding of boys' individual abilities and aptitudes. They go the extra mile to help boys succeed while also requiring them to work hard and to do their best. Boys are taught with careful attention to their particular needs, enabling them to make good progress whatever their starting point. Careful consideration is given to placing boys in forms, which are all small in size, and ensuring that each is able to keep up with the work while being appropriately challenged. Boys with learning difficulties have individual education plans and are skilfully supported in lessons and in individual sessions by the learning support teacher. Teachers adapt work for those who are learning English as an additional language, for example, by using pictures to help the learning of vocabulary in Latin.
- 2.27 Teachers have a precise understanding of the demands of examinations, and build learning sequentially and systematically to this end. The content of teaching is clearly planned, though teaching methods are not always as thoughtfully considered. In a minority of lessons, teaching provides information but does not focus enough on helping boys to understand and use it. At times, the scope of teaching is limited by practice for examinations. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and a variety of tasks reinforces understanding and keeps boys involved and thinking for themselves. For example, fast-paced teaching in a French lesson made use of a range of activities to help boys master noun/adjective agreement, when describing clothing.
- 2.28 Assessment on entry to the school helps to identify individual learning needs. Annual standardised tests in reading, spelling and numeracy are being used increasingly to take stock of the progress pupils are making in these core areas. The spelling test, for example, has pinpointed the need for a more consistent focus on spelling in all subjects and this is being implemented throughout the school. Teachers often use questions well to assess pupils' learning. Weekly effort grades, fortnightly form orders and termly exams help to identify, for staff and the boys themselves, where more work is needed.
- 2.29 The boys are taught by a form teacher for most subjects in Form I and by subject specialists from Form II onwards. Teachers are highly knowledgeable and demonstrate an infectious enthusiasm for their subject. Many combine this with a good understanding of how to make the subject accessible and interesting for boys of all abilities, as seen when the boys in Form I were helped to see the link between Latin and English in words such as 'dormitory'.
- 2.30 Teachers have adequate resources to support their teaching. Teachers vary in their use of technology to extend learning, but interactive whiteboards have been installed in some

classrooms and are being used to good effect, particularly for language teaching. Boys have good access to books and, at times when they can be supervised, to the ICT suite.

- 2.31 Work is marked thoroughly, frequently with helpful comments. The process is particularly effective where teachers, for example in English, moderate their marking by working together. Marking often identifies points that require further practice. Form tutors and subject teachers regularly discuss with boys how well they are doing and this continuous feedback encourages boys to set their sights high.
- 2.32 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

- 3.1 The quality of pastoral care is outstanding. The excellent relationships and strong sense of community that stem from this have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school makes appropriate arrangements in most respects to secure the welfare, health and safety of pupils and is continuing to improve its procedures, some of which are still fairly new.
- 3.2 Staff and boys know each other extremely well. The boys are treated as individuals. They are encouraged to do their best, whatever their ability or natural aptitude, and they grow in confidence as a result. Different gifts are recognised; as one parent put it, “Everyone has the chance to shine their light”.
- 3.3 Expectations of work and behaviour are high, but boys appreciate that the staff have their interest at heart and are concerned for them as individuals. One boy summed it up: “It’s a lovely school that cares for its pupils”. Staff are accessible to boys throughout the day and into the evening. Frequent conversations between boys and adults help boys to develop maturity of outlook. The staff also transmit a zest for life and learning that is reflected in imaginative activities and a host of special events, from boys cooking supper for the staff to the devising of an exciting leavers’ programme.
- 3.4 The school has many ways of ensuring that no boy falls through the net. The new house system is being embraced with enthusiasm. In houses, forms and dormitories boys mix with different groups. The deputy headmaster monitors the ‘complaints and compliments’ received by each boy and teachers and form tutors talk frequently with boys about their progress. Matrons are always available. They make a major contribution to the pastoral process and attend effectively to boys’ medical needs. The school keeps a suitable admissions register. The attendance of day boys is checked and any absence is quickly followed up.
- 3.5 The boys are well disciplined and accept the clear boundaries that are set for them. The school has highly effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, for guarding against bullying and for dealing with any misdemeanours.
- 3.6 The school has an appropriate child protection policy. The headmaster is the designated officer and all staff have received training. The school takes appropriate steps to ensure the suitability of staff. The school is alert to health and safety hazards and risk assessments are carried out for all activities.
- 3.7 The school has improved its fire safety procedures and taken action on recommendations from a fire inspection in 2004. Fire extinguishers are tested annually. Fire alarms are tested regularly and, because of recurrent problems, a new fire alarm system is now being fitted as a matter of urgency. The school organises twice termly fire practices, though day and night practices are not always logged centrally to monitor coverage of different times and places.
- 3.8 Swimming is supervised by a qualified lifeguard. The school recognises that it needs more staff to qualify in order to sustain the required level of supervision of swimming sessions, and training is being arranged.

- 3.9 Maintenance of the school's health and safety arrangements is heavily dependent on the direct involvement of the headmaster. A health and safety committee has been set up to help with routine monitoring, though this is not yet meeting and reporting on a regular basis.
- 3.10 Boys enjoy nourishing and well-balanced meals. They are concerned to eat healthily, often discussing, for example, whether they eat too much fried food, or have pasta too often for tea. Healthy exercise forms a substantial part of each day. Boys are encouraged to be sensibly adventurous and they learn how to keep themselves and others safe. They enjoy the freedom of playing in many parts of the school's large grounds and recognise that this privilege carries the responsibility of keeping to the rules and staying safely within bounds.
- 3.11 The school meets most of the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3]. In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:
- (a) make sure that the school has a fully functioning fire alarm system [Regulation 3.(5)].

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

- 3.12 The school has good links with parents and the community. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire parents were strongly positive, as at the last inspection, about the attitudes and values that the school stands for, the high standards of behaviour that result, the quality of teaching, the progress made, and their sons' enjoyment of an action-packed boarding life.
- 3.13 Parents valued highly the school's family atmosphere and the many occasions, including chapel services, concerts, musical drama productions and sporting events, which parents, staff and boys enjoy together. The leavers' supper, cooked for the parents by the boys, is one such highlight.
- 3.14 Parents appreciated the accessibility of the staff and the sensitivity shown in dealing with any concerns. However, a few parents found that routine communication between home and school did not always run smoothly. The school is improving its administrative arrangements by setting up a school office with a full-time secretary, ensuring that the phone is properly manned, and increasing use of the website and of email. These initiatives, although not yet fully embedded, are helping to improve the two-way flow of information and most parents are well satisfied.
- 3.15 Prospective and current parents have good access to background information about the school in the prospectus, the informative DVD and the regular 'Sunningdalian'. The website contains recent school news, and the headmaster writes an informative termly newsletter. A parents' handbook, introduced this year, contains useful explanatory information. Parents have a formal meeting with staff each year and termly reports keep them well informed about their son's progress. Reports generally contain detailed and perceptive comments, helpful advice and targets for improvement.
- 3.16 The school has some good links with the wider community. Members of the local community are welcome to attend the Charity Day and the Summer Fair, which raise money for charity. They are also invited to visit the summer art exhibition held at the school. The excellent school choir sings during services at the parish church, and in the village streets at Christmas. Boys often raise money for local causes. For example, the whole school community has been involved over the past two years in fundraising for a local children's hospice. Boys visited the hospice to present a cheque, and subsequently returned for a follow-up visit.

- 3.17 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

The Quality of Boarding Education

- 3.18 The quality of the boarding experience is outstanding, contributing much to boys' all-round education and the fulfilment of the school's aims. Boys greatly enjoy boarding, as noted in the recent boarding inspection. The school has made good progress in addressing the recommendations made by that inspection, for example, by improving risk assessments and staff induction.
- 3.19 Relationships amongst the boys and with staff are warm and open and boys are encouraged to share their views and to voice any worries. The headmaster and his family live in the building and, with the resident matrons, maintain a homely atmosphere while ensuring effective supervision. Evening duties are shared by the headmaster, the deputy headmaster and the head of boarding. The boys say that they feel secure and well supported and they speak highly of the personalised care that the matrons provide.
- 3.20 The school offers an extensive range of evening and weekend activities, offering a full boarding experience that is supported by the tireless enthusiasm of staff. There is something for everyone and a great deal of thought goes into ensuring that there is plenty for boys to do at the weekend. Recent activities have included go-karting, sledging at the SnowDome and ten-pin bowling.
- 3.21 The boarding ethos permeates school life. All staff contribute to the activities programme and the respect and rapport between boys and staff are underpinned by the time spent together in shared interests outside the classroom.
- 3.22 Junior boys are accommodated in bright, airy dormitories and senior pupils have their own cubicles within a large room, giving them privacy while surrounded by friends. The accommodation has improved significantly since the last ISI inspection and there is an ongoing system of refurbishment. There is plenty of room for rest and recreation. A new cinema room is much enjoyed for Saturday night treats. Boys benefit greatly from the school's sporting facilities and extensive opportunities for play in the spacious grounds.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The school's governance arrangements are satisfactory, though informal. The school does not have a governing body because it is a limited company owned by one family. Since the last inspection the role of the two proprietors, the former headmasters, has been successfully separated from the educational management of the school. The senior generation continues to maintain the school's grounds, to oversee domestic arrangements within the school and to host groups on visits to the house which the school owns in Normandy. Full responsibility for the school's educational provision has been handed over to the current headmaster.
- 4.2 The proprietors have a deep knowledge of the school. They maintain effective financial oversight and have an annual financial meeting with the headmaster, deputy headmaster and accountant. Plans for the school's development are discussed informally and the proprietors provide advice and support as the need arises. There are no formal procedures for reviewing policies and checking that legal obligations are met, or arrangements for the appraisal of the headmaster.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.3 The quality of leadership and management is good overall and highly effective in achieving the school's aims, although management responsibilities are not always clearly defined. Since the last inspection in 2002, the school's leadership has maintained the school's traditions and family atmosphere, while updating its practice and looking to the future. Significant progress has been made since the last inspection in documenting the curriculum, and in establishing policies and procedures to guide the school's practice.
- 4.4 The headmaster leads from the front, providing clear educational direction, and he is highly respected by staff and boys. He and the deputy headmaster make up the senior management team and work extremely well together, leading by example in their teaching and care for the boys. The school's leadership recognises that too little is delegated, to make the most of the abilities of the whole staff team, to ease the headmaster's workload and to ensure that management time is used to maximum effect. A head of boarding has been appointed and is sharing evening supervision duties, though his role has yet to be fully formulated.
- 4.5 The leadership has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school development plan provides a clear agenda for action. However, staff are not yet fully involved in or accountable for considering how its priorities will be achieved, or in drawing up their own subject plans and budgeting for them.
- 4.6 The school's leadership has been effective in recruiting a strong staff team that is united in its support for each other and for the school's ethos. The headmaster reviews teachers' planning and provides useful feedback on teaching. The school effectively supports the continuing professional development of staff and newly qualified teachers are mentored well by senior management. A staff appraisal scheme is in place and staff are encouraged to observe others teach and to share their ideas, though there is not sufficient discussion, across all subjects, of methods of teaching and their impact on learning.
- 4.7 A wide range of administrative functions fall to the school's senior management. They turn their hand to whatever needs to be done, immersing themselves in all aspects of school life. Because it is a small school, this approach is often effective, but attention to administrative

matters is not always sufficiently prompt. The role of school secretary is being developed to good effect, but there is not yet sufficient clarity about who is expected to do what, and when.

- 4.8 Regular briefings keep staff informed and school life runs smoothly for the boys. The school has sufficient resources to achieve its educational aims and finances are managed well to improve the school's facilities. The school has a financial secretary, and the use of technology is being extended in dealing with the school's finances and its academic and pastoral administration.
- 4.9 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.10 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The boys of Sunningdale School work hard and play hard, enjoy wide opportunities for learning, achieve their potential academically and show respect and consideration for others, in full accord with the school's aims. The school has a good understanding of what it does well and how it could improve further. It provides a good, broad education that is much enriched by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Boys' personal development is extremely good. They learn and achieve well, whatever their ability, because of good teaching that is enthusiastic and thorough. However, there is not always enough thought about which teaching methods and activities would best help boys to understand and to think for themselves. The quality of pastoral care is outstanding. Appropriate policies and procedures to secure boys' health and safety are in place and being implemented. Boarding makes an excellent contribution to boys' education and social development. Boys thrive in the school's family atmosphere and enjoy all that it offers. This reflects good leadership and management that has the boys' well-being at heart, though responsibilities are not clearly defined or delegated. The school recognises that stronger administrative systems are needed to support the headmaster in keeping the school's policies and procedures under review and ensuring timely action.
- 5.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress, maintaining its strengths while updating its practice. It now documents its policies and procedures more effectively. The provision of learning support has improved and is now a strength of the school. Progress has been made in developing administrative support, including the use of ICT, although more remains to be done. Library provision has been enhanced and plans are in hand for a new library. The school now has an effective development plan, though this is not yet widely shared to harness the efforts of the whole staff team in working to achieve it.
- 5.3 The school complies with most of the regulatory requirements, but does not at present meet Standard 3 (welfare health and safety).

Next Steps

- 5.4 In order to build further on its strengths, the school should:
1. strengthen administrative systems for reviewing implementation of the school's policies and procedures, and for securing coordinated action to a clear timescale;
 2. ensure that subject and lesson planning give due attention to teaching methods as well as the content to be covered, to ensure high quality learning;
 3. clarify management roles and lines of delegated responsibility in academic and pastoral areas of the school's work;
 4. involve the staff team more widely in formulating and reviewing the school's development plan, relating this to subject plans, and working towards agreed priorities.
- 5.5 In order to meet all the regulatory requirements the school must:
- (1) make sure that the school has a fully functioning fire alarm system [Regulation 3.(5)].

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 10th to 13th November 2008. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with the proprietors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended chapel services and form tutor periods. Inspectors visited the boarding house. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Mrs Joy Richardson	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Hilary Betty	Former Senior Mistress, IAPS School
Mr Jeremy Gear	Headmaster, IAPS School
Mr Geoff Lee-Gallon	Headmaster, IAPS School