



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**RADLEY COLLEGE**

**BOARDING WELFARE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Radley College

Full Name of School	<b>Radley College</b>	
DfE Number	<b>931/6079</b>	
Registered Charity Number	<b>309243</b>	
Address	<b>Radley College Radley Abingdon Oxfordshire OX14 2HR England</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>01235 543000</b>	
Fax Number	<b>01235 543106</b>	
Email Address	<b>warden@radley.org.uk</b>	
Warden (Headmaster)	<b>Mr John Moule</b>	
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Michael Hodgson</b>	
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>686</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Boys</b>	
Numbers by Age	13-16:	<b>402</b>
	16-18:	<b>284</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>2</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>684</b>
	Full:	<b>684</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>9 Feb 2016 to 11 Feb 2016</b>	

## 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 a representative of the governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, attended social (house) prayers and chapel services, and took meals in hall with the boarders. Inspectors visited each of the socials 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 Rodney Fox	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Nichola Haworth	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Boarding, HMC school)
Mr Michael Tonks	Team Inspector for Boarding (Second Master, HMC school)
Mr William Yates	Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head, HMC school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Radley College aims to enable, guide and inspire boys to become outstanding young men. Each boy is encouraged, challenged and expected to become self-aware, confident, caring and independent so that, when he leaves, he will be ready for the world beyond school, able to engage, lead, and shape his own future. A Christian ethos underpins what the school is and does, emphasizing humility, kindness, responsibility and duty, within a community that aims to set itself the highest standards. The school is an educational charity, whose trustees are the governors.
- 1.2 Founded in 1847 by William Sewell, an Anglican priest, to provide an education in accordance with the traditions and values of the Church of England, the school is a full-boarding school for boys between the ages of 13 and 18, although occasionally the daughters of members of the school staff are admitted to the sixth form. It occupies an extensive site, four miles from the university city of Oxford. At the heart of the school lie the Georgian mansion and the Victorian buildings in which it was founded. Successive generations up to the present time have continued to develop the buildings and facilities. The boys are accommodated in one of ten boarding houses, known as 'socials', each of which has its own building, house staff and distinctive ethos.
- 1.3 The present warden (headmaster) has been in post since September 2014. Since the previous inspection the programme of refurbishment to bring all the socials up to the standard of the newest has been completed, and the new 'Clocktower Court' has been created as a hub for school activity, providing a coffee salon and lecture area, connected to an art gallery and classrooms.
- 1.4 Of the 686 pupils in the school at the time of the inspection, 284 are in Years 12 and 13. No pupil has an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs. The school has identified 101 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mostly mild dyslexia, all of whom receive specialist support; 18 pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), whose English language needs are supported in lessons by their teachers. Most pupils come from white British professional and business families; a few pupils come from minority ethnic families. The very small minority of overseas pupils come from a wide variety of different countries.
- 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
Shell	Year 9
Remove	Year 10
Fifth	Year 11
6.1	Year 12
6.2	Year 13

## **2. SUMMARY**

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

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

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

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Reinforce the expectation that, on being admitted, visitors to socials are conducted to the adult on duty.
2. Ensure that the minutes of governors' meetings properly reflect the care with which governors exercise their responsibilities with regard to health and safety and the oversight of boarding.

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

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was an integrated inspection undertaken by ISI in March 2013. That inspection found that the school met all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011. The one recommendation for improvement made in that report, that the school should bring into effect a new programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), has now been implemented.

### **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 New boarders receive appropriate induction, beginning for entrants to Year 9 with an informal visit before they join. A particular feature is the pairing of new boarders with mentors in Year 12. Weekly meetings with pupil mentors are recorded and monitored by staff. A carousel arrangement introduces new boarders to the many activities available. A very large majority of boarders responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed their confidence in the wide range of adults to whom they can turn for help and guidance. Details of independent helplines, the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the school counsellor are clearly posted on noticeboards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Boarders who are unwell are cared for by suitably qualified staff in the medical centre, which offers a 24-hour service. The accommodation in the centre is suitable, with sufficient toilet and washing facilities. Occasionally, when the centre is full, pupils are looked after in their socials. The centre includes facilities for the doctor's surgeries and a physiotherapist's clinic. Other specialist services are readily available. A specialist first-aid practitioner is available for pitch-side support during school matches. Appropriate policies govern the care of boarders, the management of medicines and the training and deployment of first aiders. Over-the-counter remedies are dispensed by either the medical centre staff or the trained pastoral housemistresses, who communicate effectively via an online record. Boarders may self-medicate following suitable risk assessment and authorisation from nursing staff. Medicines are securely stored. Confidentiality and the rights of boarders as patients are appropriately respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 During their first few weeks, new boarders in Year 9 are allowed only limited access to their phones. This was not considered unreasonable by those boarders interviewed. Generally, boarders report that it is easy to contact parents and friends. Appropriate safeguards are in place to detect online bullying or abuse. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All sleeping accommodation is suitable. Socials have been recently refurbished and all are of a similar standard. Toilet and washing facilities are sufficient and afford adequate privacy, although a few boarders commented negatively about water pressure in showers and duration of push-button timers. Socials are clean, suitably furnished and appropriately lit, heated and ventilated. Two socials include accommodation for pupils with disabilities. Year 9 pupils are accommodated in single cubicles, within a larger dormitory, with separate shared workspace. After Year 9, boarders almost always have their own study bedroom. Boarders may personalise their areas if they wish. Suitable measures are taken to ensure that unauthorised persons do not have unsupervised access to boarders or their socials. Boarders and their parents in their questionnaire responses overwhelmingly affirm that pupils feel safe in their houses. Security cameras do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 All meals are prepared and served in a hygienic environment adjacent to a central dining area. In their questionnaire responses, a minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food. During interviews no particular cause for this was identified, other than individual preferences. Inspectors found that the meals are healthy, nutritious, varied and meet boarders' needs appropriately, including those



with specific dietary requirements. Boarders have access to kitchen facilities in socials that allow for the hygienic preparation of food and snacks at reasonable times. Cocoa and biscuits are provided in socials in the evenings. Boarders have suitable access to drinking water. (NMS 8)

- 3.7 The frequency and quality of the laundry service for clothes and bedding is appropriate. Boarders are able to purchase stationery items from the school shop or alternatively from outlets in Oxford. Valuables can be securely stored in boarders' rooms or with the house staff. The school has a suitable policy for searching boarders' personal belongings, which has regard to official guidance. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 Boarders and their parents responding to their questionnaires appreciated the wide, varied and effectively co-ordinated range of activities that are available throughout the week. Suitable risk assessments are in place for potentially risky activities. Academic subjects are complemented by a comprehensive programme of lectures and talks. Boarders have access to a number of safe recreational areas and are able to find a place to be alone on the spacious campus if they so wish. The school does not place unusually onerous demands on boarders. Through the use of various printed and digital media, as well as the programme of visiting speakers, boarders have suitable access to information about national and international events. [NMS 10]

### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 A detailed health and safety policy and clear procedures are rigorously implemented so as to ensure that the school's buildings and facilities are regularly checked and serviced, and that, so far as is practicable, the health and safety of pupils are protected. A suitable risk assessment policy governs when risk assessment should be conducted and by whom, and appropriate risk assessments are carried out in all areas of the school's activity. Termly health and safety reports are carefully reviewed by the governors. Their care is not fully reflected in the minutes of their meetings. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school takes all necessary measures to comply with fire regulations. Fire evacuation practices are conducted regularly, including during evening and night-time hours in the socials. A productive relationship has been established with the local fire authority. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 An appropriate policy for the safeguarding of pupils is meticulously implemented. Close liaison with the local safeguarding children's board ensures that all staff are suitably trained in safeguarding procedures and that the school has ready access to expert advice and support if needed. Staff have received suitable training in awareness of the danger of pupils being drawn into extremism. Governors regularly discuss and review the safeguarding policy and its implementation. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Appropriate policies to promote good behaviour and to counter bullying are implemented effectively. Very large majorities of the parents and pupils responding to the questionnaires believe that bullying is well managed should it occur. A minority of pupils in their questionnaire responses indicated that the way in which some staff use sanctions is unfair. Inspectors found, through interviews with pupils and scrutiny of school records, that sanctions are used sparingly and carefully recorded and monitored so as to prevent unfairness. Arrangements for using force

to restrain pupils and for conducting searches of pupils and their possessions are in accordance with official guidance. [NMS 12]

- 3.14 Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment of suitable staff. All the required checks are scrupulously conducted and accurately recorded in the recruitment register. All persons over 16, living on the school premises, who are not employees or pupils, are required to undergo checks of their suitability. Any such person living in the same premises as boarders is also required to enter into a written agreement with the school which specifies the terms of their accommodation and sets out expectations of their own conduct, and that of any guests that they have, with respect to the safeguarding of pupils. Visitors to boarding houses cannot gain access without being invited in: the expectation is that they should then be taken to the adult on duty and suitably supervised. This expectation is not always understood. The school does not appoint guardians on behalf of the parents. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A statement of the school's boarding aims is readily available to all boarders, parents and staff. Its impact on practice in the socials is evident. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The governors exercise appropriate and effective oversight of the leadership and management of boarding and welfare. This is not always made apparent in their minutes. Clear leadership and management of boarding are provided by appropriately experienced and expert senior staff, who meet regularly with social tutors to promote consistent practice. Senior managers are fully involved in the annual reviews of tutors to ensure that the school aims and the national standards are being met. Sub-tutors in socials oversee the pastoral and academic welfare of boarders up to the end of Year 11, thereby ensuring that effective links are made between the academic and pastoral aspects of the boarders' development. The school's leadership and management actively promote the wellbeing of boarders, including by conducting an annual whole-school survey of wellbeing. Boarding staff are suitably experienced and knowledgeable for their roles. All the required records are properly maintained and monitored, and prompt action is taken to improve where necessary. In the questionnaire, parents were overwhelmingly of the view that boarding is well organised and managed, whilst a very large majority of the boarders said that they enjoy boarding and like being at the school. [NMS13]
- 3.18 All staff working in the socials are provided with clear job descriptions and suitable induction. Staff are appropriately trained and undergo regular reviews of their practice. They are encouraged to participate in continuous professional development. The role of spouses and other adults within boarding houses is made clear, with appropriate guidance provided. All socials are staffed by a sufficient number of suitably experienced and expert staff. Boarders are supervised by appropriately experienced staff and always know who is responsible for them. Routines for signing in and out in all the socials ensure that staff know where boarders are, or how to find them. Staff know the procedures to follow should a boarder be missing. At least one member of staff, and usually more, sleeps in each social overnight and boarders are easily able to contact them during the night should the need arise. Accommodation for residential staff is suitably separated from the boarders' facilities. Appropriate guidelines govern the circumstances under which boarders should be allowed access to staff accommodation. [NMS 15]

- 3.19 The school has suitable policies to protect pupils against unfair discrimination and an appropriate disability access plan. These are effective in ensuring that the school's care for pupils is matched appropriately to their differing needs. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A minority of pupils responding to the questionnaire felt that the school does not sufficiently seek or heed their views. Inspectors found that there are numerous ways in which pupils can express their views, including surveys, social councils, informal talks over cocoa, meals taken with senior staff and prefects' meetings. In interviews, pupils were able to identify changes that had come about through such avenues. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school has a suitable complaints policy for parents. School records reveal that complaints are carefully considered and that all recent complaints have been resolved informally. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Office as a prefect at either school or social level is sought after. Those appointed are appropriately trained for their roles, including in child protection. Any use of sanctions is carefully monitored and authorised by staff. Senior pupils are also selected and trained to act as mentors for younger pupils. Their role is respected and appreciated. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings on behalf of parents. [NMS 20]