



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**PINEWOOD SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Pinewood School

Full Name of School	<b>Pinewood School</b>
DfE Number	<b>931/6080</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>309642</b>
Address	<b>Pinewood School Bourton Swindon Wiltshire SN6 8HZ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01793 782205</b>
Fax Number	<b>01793 783476</b>
Email Address	<b>office@pinewoodschool.co.uk</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Philip Hoyland</b>
Chairman of Governors	<b>Mr David Williamson</b>
Age Range	<b>3 to 13</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>406</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (212 boys; 194 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>3-5 (EYFS): 52    5-11: 260 11-13: 94</b>
Number of Day Pupils	<b>Total: 282</b>
Number of Boarders	<b>Total: 124 Weekly: 54    Occasional: 70</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>17 March to 19 March 2015</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) 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.

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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended a registration session. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Robin Lewis

Reporting Inspector

Mrs Julie Jackson

Team Inspector for Boarding  
(Head of Pre-Prep, HMC/IAPS school)

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Pinewood School was first established in 1875 in East Berkshire. The school underwent a series of moves before becoming an educational trust, under a governing body, in 1938. In 1946 it moved to its present 84-acre site near Bourton, on the Oxfordshire and Wiltshire border. Since 1976, the school has been co-educational and now educates pupils from the ages of three to thirteen; weekly and regular overnight boarding is provided from Year 5. Boarders are accommodated in two separate areas of the main house: boys in top floor dormitories and girls in a separate wing. In both areas, pupils sleep in age-related groups.
- 1.2 The school states that it is quietly Christian in ethos, and aims to enable pupils to achieve high standards. It seeks to do this through creating an holistic atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, and an absence of the fear of failure, thereby encouraging pupils happily to begin to assume responsibility for their own development and to take full advantage of the breadth of opportunities offered both within and outside the classroom. Additionally, through this focus, the school aims to ensure its pupils imbibe the core values of decency, kindness, good manners, honesty, consideration, duty, compassion and tolerance.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection the school has built a sports hall, thereby completing a 15-year developmental vision. This included the strategic building of an all-weather sports pitch, new classrooms, changing rooms and a science block, amongst other developments. Full-time boarding was discontinued during the academic year 2013 to 2014; the boys' boarding accommodation was then refurbished and a new post of head of boarding was established at the start of the current academic year.
- 1.4 The school educates 406 pupils, including 52 in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 260 in Years 1 to 6, and 94 in Years 7 and 8. In all, there are 194 girls and 212 boys. The school accommodates 54 weekly boarders, and a further 70 pupils board regularly and frequently, usually for 1 or 2 nights each week. Overall, slightly more girls board than boys. The school has identified 55 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who require and receive support for their learning.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. SUMMARY**

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

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

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

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Complete the transfer of pupils' records, including those of boarders, to the new electronic tracking system.
2. Consider ways of increasing the variety and availability of roles of responsibility for boarders.

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

2.3 The previous inspection of boarding was undertaken by ISI in March 2012. No boarding recommendations were made.

### **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 New boarders are provided with a suitable and effective induction programme. Each new boarder receives guidance from a 'buddy' and older pupils are given responsibility for those younger. Families are provided with informative booklets that enable them to prepare their children for boarding. Each boarder is able to turn to a number of staff for personal guidance, whilst access to the support of an independent listener and other appropriate helplines are readily available should any pupil feel the need to make such contact. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Comprehensive and relevant policies enable effective care for boarders who may be unwell. They are accommodated in appropriate facilities, separate from the other pupils, until they can be taken home. Qualified nursing staff and competent boarding staff oversee medical matters, including first aid. Other medical services, such as dentistry or opticians, are arranged as necessary. All members of staff adhere strictly to appropriate procedures for the storage and administration of medicines, including accurate record keeping. After suitable assessment, older boarders may be allowed to self-medicate under supervision within the surgery. Boarders' confidentiality is respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders confirm that it is easy to contact their families or guardians, using a designated telephone box, a personal mobile telephone or email. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Suitable accommodation, including dormitories, facilities for study, bathrooms and lavatories, are available for boarders. These are appropriately maintained, clean and comfortable. Boarders may personalise their accommodation and many take full advantage of this opportunity. Boarding accommodation is secure from access by unauthorised persons. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 All boarders, including those with particular dietary requirements, are provided with choices at mealtimes which are nutritionally balanced. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and during formal and informal discussions, pupils commented especially on their enjoyment of the food. Meals are taken together in the dining hall, adjacent to which are suitably hygienic kitchen, servery and washing-up facilities. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of boarders questioned the availability of snacks outside mealtimes. However, inspectors observed that fresh fruit and drinking water are always available in the dining hall for all, and that snacks such as buns and biscuits are also on offer at breaktimes. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Suitable arrangements are made for boarders' laundry and its storage. Pupils can readily obtain any necessary personal or stationery items on request to staff. Boarders have their own cupboard and may, if they wish, bring their own lockable tuck box for further private storage. Valuable possessions may be deposited with staff. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 Boarders are able to choose from a wide range of appropriate activities each evening after supper. The school's indoor and outdoor facilities are used, and normally at least one physical and another quiet activity is on offer. Areas are available should a pupil wish to be on his or her own, or to be in a more quiet environment. All activities are overseen appropriately by staff and, as a result, pupils report that they feel safe. Boarders may learn about the outside world and



current events through the provision of daily newspapers, magazines, the internet and current affairs lessons. [NMS 10]

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

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school has an appropriate policy and clear procedures to promote the health and safety of all people on site. A health and safety committee monitors and addresses health and safety matters, reporting to the governing body. Activities on and off site are subject to effective risk assessments. The school's premises and estate are maintained and managed to ensure that, as far as practicable, the welfare, health and safety of all are ensured. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies with fire safety regulations. A comprehensive policy and precise procedures are well understood by the school community, including boarders. At least one evacuation drill during the day and the night is held each term, and recorded and reviewed. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school's safeguarding and welfare policies and procedures are appropriately implemented. Staff have received appropriate training in child protection. Governors are also suitably trained in safeguarding and are well aware of their responsibility to review annually the school's procedures: this is carried out with diligence. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Measures to promote positive behaviour and consideration for others and to combat bullying are clearly set out, well understood and implemented effectively. Boarders feel that the arrangements are fair. School rules, disciplinary sanctions and staff responses are equally clear. Systems for tracking and identifying patterns of behaviour are thorough and shared with relevant staff; should any matters of concern be identified, parents are informed and involved appropriately. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Safe recruitment procedures are efficient and operated with care. All required checks are carried out and recorded in the single central register. Currently, no persons aged sixteen or above live on the same premises as boarders. Temporary visitors such as maintenance staff who may need access to boarding accommodation are signed in and accompanied at all times by the estates manager. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is available to parents and staff, made known to boarders and seen to work in practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Leadership and management of boarding provide effective guidance for all areas of boarding and the development of practice. The team of boarding staff is suitably trained and has appropriate expertise. Specific boarding qualifications are updated as appropriate. Senior boarding staff use a wealth of experience to lead the boarding section. All required records are maintained accurately and monitored regularly. Effective links ensure liaison between boarding and academic staff to support boarders' development, progress and welfare. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils' records were being transferred to an electronic format to strengthen further the ability of staff to support their charges and inform parents. [NMS 13]

- 3.18 All boarding staff have appropriate induction training for their roles and these are clearly defined within their job descriptions. Their work is regularly reviewed so that any professional needs are identified and met. No family members are accommodated on site without their relationship to boarding being made clear. Staffing ratios, including overnight supervision in each boarding area, are generous, so that pupils receive appropriate attention from identified staff. Staff take all reasonable measures to ensure their knowledge of boarders' whereabouts, and are fully aware of the school's policy and procedures to follow should a pupil go missing. Pupils know where to find staff if they need help, both during the day or overnight. Residential staff have their own private accommodation, to which boarders do not have access. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 All boarders receive appropriate treatment according to their individual needs and have equal opportunities to explore and enjoy the events and activities on offer. They demonstrate mutual tolerance and respect for the individual needs and differences of others. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A boarders' council meets twice each term to consider the individual and corporate suggestions of boarders, and its comments or complaints are presented and considered by staff. Boarders' ideas are welcomed; they always receive a hearing and thoughtful attention from those in charge. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school attends diligently to the complaints of parents. An appropriate policy and procedures are used scrupulously to address such concerns and complaints with care. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 The school has no formal prefect system. Positions of responsibility are available, such as head of a particular sport, head of house or head of music. All Year 8 pupils receive a badge or a tie to mark their status. These senior pupils take on duties and responsibilities as needed and set an example to younger pupils. Limited positions of responsibility exist specifically for boarders, a factor which a few boarders remarked upon in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]