



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**OCKBROOK SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Ockbrook School

Full Name of School	<b>Ockbrook School</b>		
DfE Number	<b>830/6002</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>251211</b>		
Address	<b>The Settlement Ockbrook Derby Derbyshire DE72 3RJ</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>01332 673532</b>		
Fax number	<b>01332 665184</b>		
Email address	<b>enquiries@ockbrookscho.co.uk</b>		
Head	<b>Mr Tom Brooksby</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Amanda Redgate</b>		
Age Range	<b>2 to 18</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>362</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>15</b>	5-11: <b>139</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>39</b>	11-18: <b>169</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>334</b>	
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>28</b>	
	Full:	<b>27</b>	Weekly: <b>1</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>13 to 15 Jan 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 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 Pamela Leech      Reporting Inspector

Miss Kathryn Tipton      Team Inspector for Boarding (Deputy Head Pastoral, IAPS school)

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

- 1.1 Ockbrook School has a Christian ethos, which is derived from its foundation by the Moravian Church in 1799. Trustees of the Moravian Church hold ultimate responsibility for the school as the proprietors and oversight of the school's educational provision is the remit of the governing body. Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes in the senior management of the school and in the governing body.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to prepare pupils for the challenges they will face in their future lives through encouraging stimulating and positive relationships to develop individual potential and self-worth, supported by a clear understanding of Christian values. The school aims to inspire pupils in the pursuit of academic excellence within a caring and supportive environment.
- 1.3 The school is situated in large grounds in the Derbyshire countryside and caters for girls aged from two to eighteen years old and boys aged two to fourteen years old. The school will be fully co-educational in September 2016. The primary section of the school is divided into two sections: the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) together with Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6. The secondary part of the school comprises Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form. Pupils may board from Year 7 to Year 13. All current boarders are girls.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection 362 pupils were on roll. Of these, 28 were boarders accommodated in two boarding houses on the campus, Broadstairs and Liley House. Mews Cottage, a third boarding house, is currently undergoing refurbishment. Broadstairs caters for mixed age ranges while Year 13 boarders live in Liley House.
- 1.5 The majority of boarders are international students and 11 pupils receive support for English as an additional language (EAL). The school has identified 49 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); very few of these are boarders. There are two pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- 1.6 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 2015.

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

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Develop more consistent opportunities to involve boarding staff in continuing professional development and school self-evaluation.
2. Respond in a timely way to any concerns raised by boarders.
3. Ensure that the provision for boarders' evening meal is of the same high standard as that for breakfast and lunch.
4. Make sure that all extension leads used in boarding houses are properly and safely secured.

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

2.3 The previous integrated inspection was undertaken by ISI in February 2013. There were no recommendations in relation to boarding.

### **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 Induction literature and guidance is provided for boarders in a comprehensive boarders' handbook. Boarders are also supported by an induction programme which is implemented by staff, peers and 'buddies'. Most boarders said in response to the questionnaire that they know whom to approach for help and guidance and how to contact them. Contact details for national agencies and the independent listener are clearly displayed on noticeboards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Appropriate medical policies are consistently applied with suitable accommodation, including toilet and washing facilities, provided for boarders who are unwell. An appropriate number of staff are qualified in first aid. All medication is securely stored in the medical centre and in the boarding houses and the administration of medication is correctly recorded. The medical centre is staffed during the day by a qualified nurse. Boarders are registered with a local doctor who holds regular clinics at the nearby surgery. Boarders have access to dental, optometric and other specialist services as required. Prescribed medicines are given only to the named boarder. Boarders deemed sufficiently responsible are allowed to self-medicate. Confidentiality and rights of boarders as patients are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 A small minority of boarders stated in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire that it is not always easy to keep in contact with family and friends. In discussions with boarders and staff, and examination of internet signal booster systems in the houses, inspectors found that although the wireless signal fluctuates in strength, boarders are always able to keep in touch with family and friends through the internet, house landlines and mobile phones. Appropriate safeguards exist to monitor the use of electronic communications in line with school policies. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarding accommodation is reserved for the sole use of the boarders, and is suitably protected from access by unauthorised persons. The CCTV system on site does not intrude on the privacy of the pupils. Boarders are provided with appropriate accommodation in which to sleep and spend free time in their houses. Areas for private study in the house are limited; formal study sessions take place after school in the main school building. Boarding accommodation is suitably heated, ventilated, lit and cleaned. Risk assessments for the houses are regularly updated, and maintenance issues are addressed in a timely manner. Washing and toilet facilities provide appropriate privacy for the boarders. In discussions with inspectors, almost all boarders in Broadstairs said that the shower provision and water flow was inadequate. Inspectors agree that the number of showers, although meeting minimum requirements, do not always provide a sufficiency of hot water with suitable pressure. In one boarding house, bunk-beds are used in some rooms, and while National Minimum Standards are met, inspectors agree that the accommodation can feel crowded. Boarders are able to display pictures and other items to personalise their rooms. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 The quality of food was raised as a concern by a large majority of the boarders. All meals provided cater for boarders with special dietary needs. Breakfasts and lunches are varied, well-cooked, plentiful and nutritious. Through examination of the menu cycle, and observation, inspectors found evening meals to be less appealing and varied. Meals are suitably prepared in a hygienic kitchen and served in the



adjoining dining room. A minority of boarders stated that they were unhappy with the availability of snacks and drinking water outside meal times. Drinking water is always available and the school makes a plentiful daily provision of varied snacks including bread, eggs, fresh fruit and yoghurts to the houses. Well-equipped boarding house kitchen areas allow boarders to prepare meals in the evenings and at weekends if they wish. There are no pupils with disabilities who require assistance with eating. [NMS 8]

- 3.7 Pocket money and passports are looked after by the school and appropriate facilities are offered in houses to protect boarders' personal possessions. Adequate laundry provision is made for clothing and bedding. Boarders are able to obtain personal and stationery items from local shops, a short walk from the boarding houses. A policy on searching pupils' possessions forms part of the handbook for boarding staff. This has due regard to official guidance and is known to staff. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 In their responses to the questionnaire, a minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the balance of free time and extra-curricular activities available. Inspectors observed the programme and concluded that there is an appropriate balance between the activities provided and free time. There is a planned trip each weekend for all boarders, with an option for those in Year 11 and above to join if they wish, and a range of activities throughout the week which are shared with day pupils. Boarders may spend personal time relaxing or reflecting in their houses, or in outdoor spaces nearby. They may follow events in the outside world through television and the internet. Newspapers are supplied in the library and sixth-form centre. [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 and effectively implements appropriate written policies and procedures for health and safety. Risk assessments are completed for all areas of the school, including boarding houses, and there are suitable risk assessments for on-site activities, off-site visits and trips. All risk assessments are frequently reviewed and effectively monitored through regular health and safety committee meetings with governor oversight. Appropriate tests and checks are undertaken with records correctly kept. Buildings, facilities and accommodation are properly maintained to ensure a safe and secure environment. However, in Broadstairs boarders make extensive use of personal extension leads which are not always positioned safely. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 Appropriate fire safety policies and procedures are effectively implemented to ensure the safety of boarders. Fire prevention equipment is regularly tested and checked with records correctly maintained and stored. A suitable number of staff receive training in fire safety procedures. Fire drills take place each term in boarding time and are properly logged. Emergency exits from boarding houses and outside lighting are sufficient and routinely maintained. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy which is effectively implemented. All staff receive safeguarding training with annual refresher sessions, including a session every two years with an external provider. Designated staff receive training at the appropriate level and there is a thorough induction programme for new staff which includes child protection training based on current official guidance. The school maintains positive links with local agencies and all records are correctly stored. Older boarders with positions of responsibility receive safeguarding and

leadership training. Senior managers liaise with the governing body, including trustees from the Moravian church, to produce an annual safeguarding analysis of policy and procedures. The review and implementation of the policy is undertaken by all governors and trustees forming the governing body. [NMS 11]

- 3.13 The school has suitably high expectations for behaviour and implements appropriate policies and procedures to promote good behaviour. Whole school and house records show that good behaviour is recognised in line with the school policy of earned privileges and rewards. Sanctions are appropriate, consistently applied and carefully recorded and monitored. The school has a suitable anti-bullying policy which includes cyber-bullying, and examination of bullying logs and records demonstrates that instances of any form of bullying are extremely rare and are dealt with appropriately. All pupils responding to the inspection questionnaire felt that the school handles bullying effectively. Suitable policies for searching boarders and their possessions are available with clear guidance as to when restraint may be used. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Safe recruitment procedures are effectively implemented. Thorough checks are carried out and properly recorded on a central register of appointments. There are no spouses, partners or other member of staff households resident in boarding houses. Visitors do not have unsupervised access to boarding houses. The school does not appoint guardians. Every parent responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that the school keeps their child safe. [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 statement of the school's aims and boarding principles and practice is published on the website and in boarding handbooks. This accurately reflects current practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The management structure for boarding complies with the requirements and is supported by senior managers and governors who monitor its effectiveness. Senior leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge and take appropriate action as necessary to successfully meet the needs of boarders, promote their well-being and ensure that all the standards are met. A termly meeting for all house staff provides an opportunity for discussion, but housemothers are not sufficiently involved in the evaluation of boarding practices or the determination of future planning. Staff receive basic training and have a sufficient level of experience. House log books ensure appropriate communication between residential staff, and senior managers provide an effective link with academic staff. Required records and policies are correctly maintained and checked with appropriate action taken by senior staff. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff receive induction training, have job descriptions reflecting their roles and receive reviews of their boarding practice. Staff receive child protection and first aid training, although further opportunities for professional development are not yet routinely offered to all residential staff. Supervision arrangements for the boarders outside of teaching time are appropriate. Boarders are at all times under the responsibility of an identified member of staff, and staff know the whereabouts of the boarders in their care. Staff are aware of the procedure to follow in the unlikely event that a boarder goes missing. Housemothers sleep in the houses overnight, and are easily contactable should the need arise. These overnight rooms are

- suitably separated from those for boarders and have en suite facilities. Boarders do not have access to staff accommodation. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders do not encounter discrimination for any reason. Care is taken to ensure that the needs of every individual, including those with EAL or SEND, are met. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 The majority of boarders stated that the school does not listen or respond to their views. Boarders may voice their opinions through the regular school council, boarding meetings and through daily informal communication with house-staff. They are able to request specific trips and activities, as well as raise concerns and complaints. In discussions with inspectors, boarders gave specific positive examples, such as requesting a special Christmas lunch and a trip to Blackpool. Certain ongoing issues such as the wireless internet provision and the hot water pressure in the showers have been addressed as far as possible by the school. However, inspectors agree that in many instances the school has been slow to respond to concerns and requests, for example, a delay in deep cleaning a common room carpet and in responding to requests made in the boarders' meal feedback diary. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school follows an appropriate written complaints procedure that meets all requirements and correctly identifies any complaints specific to boarding. [NMS18]
- 3.22 The role and duties of the prefects are clearly stated in the information given to the pupils. Prefects are supervised and supported by staff, and younger boarders in particular are happy to approach them for help when needed. Staff oversight of prefects counters any possible abuse of their roles. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]