



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

SEDBERGH SCHOOL

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Sedbergh School

Full Name of School	Sedbergh School
DfE Number	909/6026
Registered Charity Number	1080672
Address	Sedbergh School Headmaster's Office Sedbergh School Sedbergh Cumbria LA10 5HG
Telephone Number	01539 620535
Fax Number	01539 621301
Email Address	hm@sedberghschool.org
Head	Mr Andrew Fleck
Chair of Governors	Mr Hugh Blair
Age Range	13 to 19
Total Number of Pupils	489
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (314 boys; 175 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 18
Number of Boarders	Total: 471 Full: 471
Inspection dates	02 Dec 2014 to 04 Dec 2014

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 November 2007 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
Mrs Diane Riley	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Welfare and Boarding, ISA school)
Mr Michael Tonks	Team Inspector for Boarding (Second Master, HMC school)
Mr George Walsh	Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, Society of Heads school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Founded in 1525 by Roger Lupton, the Provost of Eton, Sedbergh School is situated in Cumbria among the Howgill Fells. The school is a charity overseen by a board of governors who also oversee Casterton, Sedbergh Preparatory School. The school welcomes pupils of all faiths or of none.
- 1.2 The school seeks to inspire its pupils to achieve more than they imagine is possible. It aims to develop in its pupils all the skills they will need to face the challenges and responsibilities of the modern world, as confident adults. In boarding, the school aims to provide an environment in which boarders receive daily encouragement and where they feel safe and valued. The nine single sex boarding houses provide the base for pupils throughout their time at the school. Each house offers boarding across all age groups and boarders take all their meals in their own houses.
- 1.3 Since the previous Ofsted boarding inspection, the school has merged with Casterton School which has provided a new site for Sedbergh Preparatory School and released space for the growth of the senior school. Recent developments include the construction of a new girls' boarding house, a new music school performance studio and the refurbishment of the swimming pool and associated facilities. Considerable changes to the structure of the school day, curriculum and the academic provision of the school have also taken place.
- 1.4 The school has 489 pupils now enrolled at the school, 314 boys and 175 girls, including 18 day pupils who live locally.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) 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 There are no recommendations arising from this inspection.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in November 2007. There were no recommendations.

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 Boarders receive comprehensive induction material and are well supported through their induction by staff, senior boarders and a 'buddy'. A number of staff are available to give help or guidance; boarders know who they are and how to contact them. Contact details for outside agencies and the Independent Listener are displayed on house notice boards and in boarders' 'brown books'. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The school has effective policies, procedures and accommodation for the care of boarders who are unwell. Medicines are securely stored and appropriate records of their administration are kept. Boarders are registered with a doctor at the local medical centre which has a dedicated staff and facilities for school use. Boarders have access to other health care services as needed. The rights of boarders as patients are respected. The detailed first aid policy has comprehensive guidance for staff and boarders undertaking challenging activities. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders are able to contact parents, carers and friends without difficulty by telephone and email. A reconstruction of the network is underway to further improve connectivity. Houses have pay phones which may be used privately. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarding houses are well-maintained, clean and comfortably furnished. The houses have suitable and sufficient washing facilities, and shower rooms provide privacy. Older boarders have single rooms. All boarders have study desks. Younger boarders have supervised prep sessions. Boarders may personalise their areas with posters and photographs. All houses have a kitchen for the use of boarders, common rooms with facilities for recreation and socialising and small well-stocked libraries. Access is suitably restricted and the boarders feel safe. Any CCTV used is non-intrusive. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 A small minority of boarders responding to the questionnaire said that they are not happy with the quality of food provided or the availability of snacks and drinks. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Four week rotational menus provide plentiful and nutritious meals using locally sourced produce where available. There is a wide choice available for boarders and all dietary needs are fully met. Fruit and an appropriate range of snacks are always available. Boarders have access to drinking water at all time. Each house has its own dining room and meals are prepared in houses, to a consistent standard. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry facilities are managed in a central school laundry, with personal items laundered within each house by staff. Each boarder has access to a lockable cupboard and staff will store money and passports as requested. Boarders may purchase small items in house tuck shops or can use local shops. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 All parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated their satisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The programme offers a wide variety of indoor and outdoor events arranged by staff. A small minority of boarders in the questionnaire said they are unhappy with the balance of free time and activities in the evenings and at weekends. Appropriate, optional activities are provided and staff ensure boarders have sufficient quiet time in the evenings and at weekends. Boarders may visit the nearby town, relax in house common rooms or enjoy the school grounds in the evenings and at weekends.

There are areas for quiet reflection in houses. Boarders are aware of events in the outside world through the internet, television and daily newspapers. [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 makes appropriate arrangements for health and safety. Risk assessments are carried out for every area of the school, for on-site activities, trips and visits. Termly health and safety committee meetings with governor participation, enable suitable monitoring. Records of tests and checks are kept and are up-to-date. School facilities and accommodation are properly maintained to ensure a safe and secure environment. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school ensures the safety of its boarders through appropriate fire risk assessments. Regular checks on fire prevention systems are undertaken and fire-fighting equipment is serviced regularly. The fire safety policy and practice protects boarders from potential harm caused by fire. Termly fire drills are held in boarding time and records are properly kept. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Suitable child protection procedures operate effectively with appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders. All staff have received safeguarding training and there are regular refresher sessions. Designated staff receive training at the appropriate level and there is a thorough induction for new staff. The school has established links with local agencies and appropriate records are kept of any concerns. Governors with responsibility for safeguarding work with senior managers to produce an annual safeguarding analysis of policy and procedures, the implementation of which is reviewed by all governors. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school promotes positive behaviour and relationships by clear expectations of behaviour and through effective implementation of its discipline policies. The system of rules, sanctions and rewards is clear and is understood by staff and boarders. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders indicated that they did not think staff are consistently fair operating this system. Inspection evidence does not support this. Minor house sanctions are recorded in houses while more serious incidents are recorded centrally. All records are monitored regularly to ensure consistency and fairness. The school has an anti-bullying policy which is made available to all pupils in the 'brown book'. Boarders say that any incidents of bullying are tackled immediately. They appreciate the value the school places on developing positive relationships and say that friendships within houses are central to their enjoyment of school life. Parents, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, expressed themselves as highly satisfied with the care their children receive. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure that all required checks on new staff and governors are carried out and correctly recorded in the central register of appointments. Residents in boarding accommodation who are aged over 16 but are not employed by the school, are appropriately checked and sign an agreement clarifying their responsibilities. Visitors to boarding houses are properly supervised. The school does not make arrangements for the appointment of 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 statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is available on the website, in parental handbooks and is published in the school's 'brown book'. The statement closely reflects the ethos of the school and its aims for the boarding community and it is realised in boarding practice. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 A suitable management structure for boarding is effectively supported by governors and senior leaders. Detailed handbooks ensure consistency of practice. Development planning follows effective self-evaluation in regular meetings of residential and senior staff. These facilitate the sharing of good practice and provide stimulus for future improvements. Daybooks ensure an appropriate transfer of information between boarding staff. Effective links between boarding and academic staff are maintained through daily interaction between residential staff and tutors. Required records are maintained and monitored by the school with action taken as appropriate. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All members of staff with boarding duties have clear job descriptions and handbooks give further guidance. Newly appointed staff receive suitable induction training in boarding. All staff have access to a broad range of training courses and continued professional development which meets the professional development needs identified through appraisal. Roles of spouses are clearly defined. At all times boarders are under the responsibility of an appropriate member of staff and all houses have sufficient staff to supervise activities on or off site. Regular checks ensure that staff know the whereabouts of boarders throughout the day. A comprehensive missing pupil policy is published and understood by boarding staff. Boarders have a choice of adults whom they may contact at night should they need help or assistance. Staff are provided with suitable accommodation, appropriately separate from boarders. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders from a variety of nationalities say they do not experience discrimination for differences of any kind. Tolerance and respect are values which are actively promoted in all houses and across the school community and boarders say their houses are harmonious and welcoming. Boarders, including those with special education needs or for whom English is an additional language, enjoy their boarding experience and feel well looked after and cared for as individuals. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A small minority of boarders commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire, that they do not feel their views are always taken into consideration. Inspection evidence shows that boarders may express their opinions in many ways, through regular house forums, by talking to prefects and in daily informal communication with staff. In discussions during the inspection, boarders reported that their views are listened to and that they are able to express their opinions, leading to positive outcomes. They felt that existing forums are effective and were confident in the efficacy of both formal and informal communication with the staff who look after them. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 A clear and appropriate complaints policy is available on the school's website and to parents on request. No formal complaints have been made during the year preceding the inspection visit. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Prefects undertake a thorough induction programme which includes training in safeguarding and leadership skills. They value the significance of their leadership

roles and the responsibilities that accompany these. Staff monitor their performance to ensure positive fulfilment of their roles. [NMS 19]

3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]