



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

FRAMLINGHAM COLLEGE

STANDARD INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Framlingham College

The preparatory school was inspected at the same time and a separate report published.

Full Name of School	Framlingham College
DCSF Number	935/6046
Registered Charity Number	1114383
Address	Framlingham College Framlingham Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 9EY
Telephone Number	01728 723789
Fax Number	01728 724546
Email Address	headmaster@framcollege.co.uk
Head	Mr P B Taylor
Chair of Governors	Mr A W M Fane
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	417
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (231 boys; 186 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	166
Number of Boarders	Total: 251 Full: 186 Weekly: 65
Inspection date	26 Jan 2010 to 27 Jan 2010
Final (team) visit	22 Feb 2010 to 24 Feb 2010

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the STANDARD *ISI schedule*. It consists of two parts: an INITIAL two-day inspection of regulatory requirements followed by a three-day FINAL (team) inspection of the school's broader educational provision. The previous ISI inspection was in April 2004.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Government 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 2003 as subsequently amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009. The range of these Regulations is as follows.

- (a) The quality of education provided (Curriculum)
- (b) The quality of education provided (Teaching)
- (c) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
- (d) The welfare, health and safety of pupils
- (e) The suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors
- (f) The premises and accommodation
- (g) The provision of information
- (h) The manner in which complaints are to be handled

Legislation additional to the welfare, health and safety Standard is as follows.

- (i) The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA).
- (ii) Race, gender and sexual discrimination legislation.
- (iii) Corporal punishment.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

The inspection of boarding was not carried out in conjunction with the Children's Directorate of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), and the report does not contain specific judgements on 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 and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) report can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection.

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. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Framlingham College was founded by Royal Charter in 1864 as a memorial to Prince Albert, initially as “a middle-class college for boys”. In 1948, junior pupils moved a few miles away to what is now the preparatory school, Brandeston Hall. The preparatory and senior schools share a common governing body. A pre-preparatory department was established in 1992. The school became fully co-educational in 1987, and occupies a spacious site overlooking the small town of Framlingham in Suffolk. Since the last inspection, the proportion of girls in the school has increased, and a new headmaster has very recently taken up post.
- 1.2 The school is committed to providing a first-class, holistic education in a safe and supportive environment, accessible to a broad range of boys and girls, with Christian principles at its heart. Among its key aims are the inculcation of tolerance and respect, care for others, both within school and the wider community, honesty and integrity, and the development of responsibility and self-discipline.
- 1.3 The school currently educates 231 boys and 186 girls between the ages of 13 and 18, of whom 251 are boarders (65 are weekly boarders) and 192 are in the sixth form. Approximately 50 pupils (all boarders) come from overseas, most notably Germany and Hong Kong/China and, of these, 47 receive support for English as an additional language (EAL). One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, and the school has identified a further 106 with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD). Of these, 33 receive additional specialist learning support.
- 1.4 Most pupils live in East Anglia, and are normally admitted at the age of 13, many transferring from Brandeston Hall. Around 40 pupils each year enter directly into the sixth form. Pupils take a range of standardised aptitude and ability tests soon after arrival in the school. These indicate that their average ability is above the national average in Year 9, and in line with the national average in Year 12.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL AND ACTION POINTS

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in meeting its stated aims and mission. Pupils of all ages are very well educated and show good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they study. They make particularly good progress over time in line with their abilities. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic in their endeavours in and out of the classroom. The taught curriculum and extra-curricular programme make an excellent contribution to the success enjoyed by pupils, and are particularly well suited to their needs and abilities. Well-planned and effective teaching, employing a wide range of methods and approaches, is a significant factor in the pupils' success.
- 2.2 The personal development of the pupils is excellent, and they show strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The school provides good support for the pupils' welfare and this contributes significantly to the pupils' development and sense of well-being. The tutorial system lies at the heart of the school's strong pastoral care, and enables pupils to feel well supported. However, some inconsistencies in its organisation and implementation restrict its potential to be improved further. Strongly supportive relationships and a sense of mutual respect prevail throughout the school, and arrangements for countering bullying and safeguarding the pupils' welfare are well established. The boarding experience brings many social and academic benefits to pupils, although the quality of accommodation varies between houses.
- 2.3 Governors have a good insight into the workings of the school. They are aware of their role as proprietors to ensure regulatory compliance, although they have not yet carried out the required annual review of the school's welfare arrangements. Leadership and management throughout the school are very effective and those with management responsibilities discharge their duties conscientiously in support of the school's aims. The school has identified clear priorities and strategies for the future, and systems for evaluating progress and implementing change are effective, and improving further. Thorough recruitment checks for the suitability of staff are all in place. The school has made a very good response to the recommendations of the last inspection. Parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the school and particularly approved of the good quality of teaching, the range and quality of academic and extra-curricular opportunities, and the quality of pastoral care. A small minority did not feel that they had good opportunities to be actively involved in the work of the school and in the progress of their children.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

(The range of the Independent School Standards Regulations is given in the Preface)

- 2.4 At the time of the initial visit, the school did not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2003, as subsequently amended, and therefore it was required to:
- ensure that the governing body undertakes and formally approves an annual review of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures [Regulation 3(2)b, under Welfare, Health and Safety].
- 2.5 At the time of the final team visit, the school had appointed a governor who will initiate the review of welfare arrangements.

(ii) Recommended action

- 2.6 In addition to rectifying the weaknesses in meeting regulatory requirements, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. In order to enhance the tutorial system still further, the school should clarify tutors' responsibilities and accountability, and ensure more consistent interpretation and implementation of their roles.
 2. The school is advised, at the earliest opportunity, to review the accommodation provided for boarders, to ensure greater parity of facilities between houses.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 Standards over the last three years at both GCSE and A level are high when compared with the national average for all maintained schools. Over 40 per cent of grades achieved at GCSE have been at A and A* and, at A level, 70 per cent have been the top A and B grades. Pupils of all abilities throughout the school make particularly good long term progress in relation to their ability. Pupils are very well educated in accordance with the school's aims to provide a first-class, holistic education, through which pupils can develop their academic potential. The good standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and, in some respects, enhanced.
- 3.2 Pupils have a strong grasp of necessary subject-specific knowledge and skills, and apply these to new situations as they arise. They demonstrate good skills in writing of different types, and construct and develop arguments in essays and other creative writing. Pupils show skills of interpretation and evaluation, for example in considering different source material in history, and in analysing each other's performances in drama. They use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively when given the opportunity using, for example, the intranet and the school's virtual learning environment confidently as well as subject-specific software. Strong numeracy skills, including the analysis of numerical data, are evident in many subjects, including science, geography, history and design technology as well as mathematics.
- 3.3 Pupils work productively and co-operatively, and are active participants in the learning process. They respond with vigour when invited to speak and make interesting and pertinent comments which encourage further debate. Pupils listen well and value the contributions of their peers. They ask perceptive questions and answer those posed to them thoughtfully. Pupils think for themselves and learn independently in many subjects, especially in English, physical education and art, and take these opportunities with willingness and enthusiasm. Many pupils show a well-developed ability to make predictions based on their previous knowledge, and link cause and effect well.
- 3.4 A notable feature of the school is the considerable success enjoyed by pupils in a wide range of endeavours. These range from Himalayan treks and impressive results in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (D of E) scheme, to the distinction earned by pupils in many academic and intellectual competitions and events in, for example, mathematics, history, music, chemistry and engineering. Many pupils have achieved county, national or international recognition in a wide variety of sports.
- 3.5 Boys and girls have positive attitudes towards learning with high levels of class participation and interaction. Many test their thinking and conclusions with each other and, as a result, enhance their learning and progress. Pupils are confident, courteous and helpful both in and out of class. The vast majority of pupils are very enthusiastic about the school and have enjoyed their overall learning experience. Most pupils derive considerable satisfaction from their success and usually need little encouragement to work hard.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)

- 3.6 The contribution of the curriculum and the extra-curricular programme to the success enjoyed by the pupils and their academic achievements is excellent. The curriculum is very suitable for all ages and abilities and highly responsive to the pupils' needs. It supports strongly the school's aim of providing an education that is accessible to a broad range of boys and girls and develops their talents. The curriculum has been enhanced in many ways since the last inspection.
- 3.7 The curriculum provides a well-balanced and comprehensive academic and educational experience for pupils, and ensures good coverage of all the requisite areas of learning. Three modern foreign languages, plus the option of Latin, are available in Year 9, and appropriate choice is given when selecting GCSE subjects. At A level, an impressive menu of 22 subjects is offered to satisfy the most fastidious academic palate. Choices include psychology, history of art, further mathematics, and both economics and business studies.
- 3.8 The school provides highly effective support for pupils with LDD and those with EAL, and the curriculum and subject plans ensure appropriate challenge for the most able. This contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils. Effective careers advice ensures that pupils are well prepared for subject choices and life beyond school.
- 3.9 Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is well planned for Years 9 to 11 and covers a wide range of life skills, general knowledge and health education topics. No similar course is provided to sixth-form pupils, although some tutors implement an effective informal programme through discussions in tutor periods. Good links between different subject areas were seen in a number of lessons.
- 3.10 The provision of extra-curricular activities has been enhanced since the last inspection and is a major strength of the school. The programme is comprehensive and eclectic, and highly effective in supporting the school's aim to provide a holistic education. An impressive and diverse range of 65 after-school clubs and activities are on offer in the course of the year, with strong support for sport, music and the dramatic arts. Many pupils participate in the D of E scheme and the combined cadet force (CCF). Activities and initiatives to broaden, enrich and expand pupils' education are well planned and include many learned societies, enrichment activities and challenging lectures and intellectual discussions. Pupils benefit from many links with the local community through the D of E scheme and the school's community service programme, as well as joint initiatives and activities.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching.

- 3.11 The teaching is good in promoting pupils' progress and achievement, and much is outstanding. Excellent pupil-teacher relationships and carefully planned learning tasks help to achieve the school's aim to stretch and support pupils, and develop their academic potential. The school has made good progress in meeting the recommendations from the last inspection, achieving greater consistency and depth in assessment and marking, and enabling better use of ICT by teachers.
- 3.12 Teachers know their pupils well and adapt lessons to their needs imaginatively. They provide extension opportunities for the most able, and sensitive support and encouragement for weaker pupils. They understand the right level of direct encouragement and support required to achieve the most effective response from each pupil. Pupils very much appreciate the individual attention and support that are readily given within lessons, and generously and informally provided out of lesson time. The teaching uses time well during lessons, which start and end promptly and efficiently. The very good planning of teaching incorporates a wide variety of learning tasks that stimulate and maintain interest and foster independent thinking, initiative and self-motivation. Teachers generally demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and skills, making good use in most cases of ICT equipment in classrooms and laboratories, as well as other resources to develop pupils' understanding.
- 3.13 Teaching methods are very well matched to the academic and learning needs of pupils. Suitable open-ended tasks, and encouragement to carry out extensive individual research as preparation for lessons are frequently used. For example, a geography class prepared very well for a debate on the advantages and disadvantages of constructing an oil refinery in the Shetlands. Links between subjects are also used skilfully by teachers to extend the scope of lessons and stimulate the pupils' thinking. A history lesson on disease challenged pupils to relate the historical consequences of epidemics to their knowledge of biology, and draw on their mathematical skills to analyse statistical data. Such methods enable all pupils, especially the most able, to take responsibility for their own learning and stretch themselves academically.
- 3.14 Marking and assessment are dominated understandably by examination criteria and requirements. Nevertheless, these are used creatively by most teachers to enable pupils to assess their progress, and written and verbal feedback and advice foster improvement and confidence. At its best, marking provides extensive annotation and detailed comments on how pupils can improve their performance. The school effort and achievement grading system enables pupils to understand their level of progress.
- 3.15 In a very small number of lessons, teaching was less effective, and employed a limited range of methods and activities. As a consequence, opportunities for pupils to take an active part in their learning and achievement were reduced, and progress slowed.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

- 4.1 The quality of pupils' personal development is excellent and strongly supports the school's aim to promote the important principles and core values of care, respect, tolerance, integrity and responsibility. The school has enhanced the quality of pupils' development since the last inspection by the introduction of a peer mentoring scheme, and the increased opportunities for community service and charity work.
- 4.2 The pupils' strong spiritual awareness is enhanced by the central place of the chapel within the school. Chapel services led by the chaplain, but regularly involving pupils as well, provide a special focus for the whole school community to come together to reflect and explore their own spiritual values and beliefs. The chapel is always open and pupils light candles and leave prayer pebbles on the altar. Pupils become aware of the role of the chaplaincy through their induction in Year 9, and through PSHE and religious education (RE) lessons. Pupils contemplate spiritual themes through English, drama and art. The choir appreciated the opportunity to perform in the inspiring environment of Ely Cathedral.
- 4.3 Pupils demonstrate very good moral awareness, and school and house prefects help to establish good standards of behaviour and act as role models for younger pupils. Pupils describe the school as being a place built on trust and the importance of getting on with others, and they feel that the school is strongly inclusive of different types of people. Behaviour observed both in lessons and around the campus was very good, and the school is not shirking opportunities to ensure that clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour and conduct towards others are upheld. House assemblies, tutors and house staff all play a prominent role in setting a clear moral tone which is understood and respected by pupils.
- 4.4 Central to the pupils' outstanding social development are the excellent relationships that exist between pupils and their peers and between pupils and staff. These relationships are built around mutual respect which is particularly evident in lessons and in the boarding houses. Pupils demonstrate their concern for those less fortunate and regularly initiate charity events themselves for local, national and international charities. Community awareness and involvement are key features of the pupils' social development, and the D of E scheme, the CCF and the school's own community service programme are enthusiastically embraced by them. Opportunities exist for both day and boarding pupils to hold posts of responsibility and demonstrate initiative.
- 4.5 Many departments make valuable contributions to enable pupils to show good cultural awareness and appreciation. For example, pupils create Batik designs from Africa in art; they gain an understanding of other faiths in RE, and appreciate the challenges faced by third-world countries in geography. The school has built up a tradition for journeys of self-discovery, providing excellent opportunities for cultural experience, and the pupils acknowledge the benefits they have derived from visiting places like Namibia, Peru and Nepal. Pupils show sensitivity towards boarders from overseas, and during lessons, lunchtimes and in the boarding houses all were seen to integrate happily together. However, opportunities to celebrate the cultural diversity within the school through, for example, the use of displays, language and international events, are sometimes missed.

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

- 4.6 The school's arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, and the high quality of pastoral care noted at the last inspection has been maintained. This makes a strong and positive contribution to the school's aim to create a safe, caring and supportive environment in which individuals feel valued and able to grow in confidence. One regulatory failure in implementing a part of the safeguarding policy was identified during the initial visit.
- 4.7 The provision of high quality pastoral care is very much a team effort, with teachers, non-teaching staff, housemasters and housemistresses, the teams of tutors, and senior staff all playing crucial roles, within a generally well-coordinated framework. This is supplemented by the chaplaincy, medical staff and the school counsellor. Senior pupils themselves provide a 'listening ear' for other pupils through the peer mentoring system. The teams of house-based tutors undoubtedly provide strong support for pupils, and monitor their academic progress effectively through the academic grade cards. However, some inconsistencies are evident in terms of the focus and purpose of the formal tutorial sessions, between the academic and pastoral dimensions of the role, and there is some lack of clarity in lines of accountability.
- 4.8 Staff are approachable, friendly and fair; and the relationships between pupils and staff, and among the pupils themselves, are excellent. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying, are well established and clearly understood. Little evidence of bullying was found, and unacceptable behaviour is dealt with firmly and decisively. Parents feel that good behaviour is well promoted. The safeguarding policy document complies with regulations and it is implemented successfully, apart from the annual review by the governors. Training for the new child protection officer (and her deputy) is well organised, and all staff have received both internal and external training in safeguarding pupils' welfare.
- 4.9 Measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards, and arrangements to ensure health and safety and medical care are thoroughly organised, effective and comprehensively documented. The health and safety steering group and committee monitor both the policy and practice very closely. The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with disabilities, particularly detailed and effective in the case of pupils with LDD, and admissions and attendance registers are properly maintained.
- 4.10 Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise and to develop healthy eating habits. Although improvement in the quality of meals has occurred since the last inspection, some boarders still report variability in the quality of the evening meal. Sex and relationships education occurs only in Year 10, and this represents a rather narrow approach to supporting the changing developmental needs of adolescents.

4.(c) The quality of boarding education

- 4.11 The boarding experience makes a strong and valuable contribution to the education and personal development of those pupils living in school. It comprehensively fulfils the school's aims to produce a caring and supportive environment which encourages a sense of belonging to a community, and the development of independence and tolerance. Many of the boarding advantages benefit day pupils as well, as they are well integrated into the life of the houses. The school has responded positively and efficiently to all the recommendations made during the last boarding welfare inspection carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection.
- 4.12 Relationships are excellent, both between boarders and with the boarding staff. The strong community spirit fosters in the pupils a considerable loyalty and pride in their houses. Boarders are co-operative and supportive of each other, and respect and value the care and support provided by house staff and their tutor teams. Boarders are relaxed, welcoming to visitors, and good-humoured. Older boarders willingly accept responsibility, both as house prefects and senior members of the community. Many act as peer mentors and show appropriate concern for the welfare of younger pupils. Others help to organise house activities, sporting teams and coach their houses, for example, in preparation for the house singing competition. Pupils feel that the boarding experience gives them a sharper academic focus in their work, provides them with strong friendships, and increases their confidence, independence and self-reliance.
- 4.13 A wide and varied range of weekend activities is much enjoyed by the boarders. These range from trips to Norwich or Cambridge, to outings for bowling and paintballing. Weekend activities also take place in school, and many of the school's facilities are available to pupils. House competitions, such as team sports and quizzes, occur periodically, as well as more imaginative events such as the inter-house paper dart competition, and crab catching at the seaside. With morning lessons and sport for many on Saturdays, boarders have a busy life and many older pupils appreciate the opportunity on Sundays to relax and unwind, or catch up with work.
- 4.14 Boarding accommodation is generally comfortable, and pupils enjoy the opportunity to personalise their own rooms, which all have networked computer connections. There is a considerable disparity in the quality of boarding accommodation between different houses, and the school is aware of the need to continue its refurbishment programme robustly.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The governance of the school is good and provides effective support for its leaders and managers. Governors provide a valuable blend of experience and expertise, and have a good insight into the workings of the school. They achieve an appropriate balance between adherence to the school's founding principles and providing the stimulus and resources to achieve a modern, forward-looking education in line with the pupils' needs and the school's aims. Their focus on strategy and future priorities is now much stronger, and new terms of reference and job descriptions enable a clearer definition of their responsibilities and lines of accountability.
- 5.2 Governors exert tight and prudent financial control, and resources are targeted very effectively to meet current needs and plan for future educational priorities and provision. The finance and general purposes committee meets six times each year, and considers reports from both the senior and preparatory schools, and seeks further information as needed. Governors are not afraid to ask difficult questions. Other senior staff report directly at various times of year.
- 5.3 Governors are aware of their role as proprietors to ensure regulatory compliance, although they have not yet carried out the required annual review of the school's arrangements for safeguarding the pupils' welfare. They are in the process of strengthening their systems to monitor welfare and health and safety matters, and have already appointed governors to oversee these key areas. Governors have not yet fully established robust systems for regular and routine monitoring and maintaining of the school's compliance with regulations, and the effective implementation of key policies.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management

- 5.4 Leadership and management at all levels in the school are very effective with many strong features. The leadership of the new head has quickly established a clear sense of corporate responsibility and commitment to provide a high quality education in line with the school's aims. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in widening and strengthening the educational provision, particularly for more able pupils, and developing the leadership role of heads of department and housemasters/housemistresses. The school recognises the need to strengthen and refine some of its management systems to provide more efficient oversight of some pastoral and academic practices, and it has already made progress in this area. The recommendations made at the last inspection have all been well met.
- 5.5 Heads of department have much responsibility for running their departments, and some have very much embraced their roles as subject leaders. Housemasters/mistresses have significant autonomy in running their houses, although continual dialogue and reflection among them, and co-ordinated training across boarding throughout the school, are not yet strongly evident. A suitable balance between appropriate autonomy and individuality within houses on the one hand, and consistency of approach on the other, has not been fully achieved. Specifically, a lack of clarity in the academic and pastoral roles of tutors, who are simultaneously accountable to several different people, has resulted in variation of practice between houses. The new head has brought fresh stimulus and momentum

to the life of the school, and his leadership has brought a tangible sense of sharper educational direction and purpose. The imminent creation of a new senior academic team provides the opportunity to sharpen academic monitoring and leadership.

- 5.6 A culture of self-evaluation and improvement is starting to be more clearly evident throughout the school. Senior staff are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Little planned and co-ordinated lesson monitoring and sharing of good practice takes place, other than through the formal appraisal process. However, things are clearly moving forward rapidly, and expectations raised, and there is a sense that this is now a school where 'good' is no longer good enough. Very thorough short- and medium-term development plans for many different areas of school life help to deploy resources efficiently and prudently. These plans enable a sharper focus on enhancing the learning experience for pupils, and reflect a strong sense of educational purpose.
- 5.7 Staff show strong commitment to the school, and are well suited to the roles they have, although some have heavy loads. The appraisal system operates on an ambitious annual cycle, and is the primary mechanism by which heads of department and housemasters/mistresses evaluate the work of their teams and identify training needs. Staff have received appropriate child protection training, and are aware of health and safety requirements. A thorough staff recruitment policy and efficient procedures are in place and all required recruitment checks have been carried out and recorded.

5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.8 The school maintains a strong relationship with its parents and has forged a constructive partnership with them to achieve high standards for their children. This supports the school's aim to encourage parental support. Since the last inspection, informative twice-termly letters to all parents as well as regular newsletters have been introduced, and these have been well received by parents. The school is already working on initiatives to improve this partnership still further.
- 5.9 Those parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the school. They particularly approved of the good quality of teaching, the range and quality of academic and extra-curricular opportunities available, the pastoral care, the worthwhile attitudes and values promoted by the school, and the effective communication between school and parents. One parent wrote: "The College has been and continues to be a special part of our lives". A small minority did not feel that they had good opportunities to be actively involved in the work of the school and in the progress of their children.
- 5.10 Parents feel that communication with the school and the wealth of information provided are helpful and constructive. They have ready access to a wide range of school policies and procedures on the website and this will soon be developed to provide more efficient electronic communication. The interim grade sheets (providing parents with information about their children's effort and achievement in each subject) and full reports sent to parents are clear and helpful. The full reports frequently contain specific targets to enhance pupils' progress.
- 5.11 The school strongly encourages parents to be involved in its life and work, and the progress of their children. Many support sports fixtures, as well as music and drama performances. Several parents have attended the programme of special lectures for the sixth form. Some parents of boarders are not always able to make use of these

opportunities and the school is aware of the need to review the format and timings of parents' meetings. Support for the creation of *FramSoc* has already been fostered, and this society will provide parents and former parents with opportunities to meet each other and the wider community at cultural, educational and social events. The school handles concerns and complaints from parents with care and sensitivity.

What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.

6. INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting inspector
Miss Jenny Butler	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA)
Mr Gary Moss	Senior Team Inspector (Houseparent, HMC)
Mr Julian Thomas	Senior Team Inspector (Head, HMC)
Mrs Janet Tomlinson	Senior Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA)