

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### Winchester College

Full Name of the School	<b>Winchester College</b>
DCSF Number	<b>850/6037</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>N/A</b>
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Chairman of Governors	<b>Sir David Clementi</b>
Age Range	<b>13 to 18</b>
Gender	<b>Boys</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009</b>

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005, May 2007 and February 2009.

The inspection was not carried out in conjunction with Ofsted, Children's Directorate, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Boarding Standards. 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 Ofsted report can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

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.

# CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Characteristics of the School .....	1
2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION .....	3
The Educational Experience Provided .....	3
Pupils' Learning and Achievements .....	4
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils .....	5
The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment) .....	6
3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS .....	9
The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils .....	9
The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community .....	10
The Quality of Boarding Education .....	11
4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT .....	13
The Quality of Governance .....	13
The Quality of Leadership and Management .....	13
5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS .....	15
Overall Conclusions .....	15
Next Steps .....	15
6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE .....	16
List of Inspectors .....	16

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Winchester College was founded in 1394 by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor to Richard the Second, to produce educated men dedicated to God and the public service. In essence this aim continues to sustain the work of the school which now takes pride in its unbroken tradition of learning, real enthusiasm for knowledge and a curiosity about the ways in which the world has developed. The school seeks to prepare pupils for life, not just for examination success and university entrance.
- 1.2 Since the last inspection in 2003, the organisation of the governing body and its committee structure has been completely revised to promote effective oversight of the school. A new chairman (The Warden) has taken up position and, with some other new members (Fellows), gives a clear sense of direction and purpose. Eight sub-committees have been established, and they undertake the main work of governance and provide advice at the full termly meetings of the governing body as a whole.
- 1.3 A new headmaster, who has just completed four years in post, has presided over restructuring of the senior management team and a curriculum review that has resulted, amongst many things, in the Cambridge Pre-U examination being introduced in Years 12 and 13.
- 1.4 This is a boys' boarding school, with 406 pupils in Years 9 to 11 and 268 in Years 12 and 13, all but one of whom are boarders. Boarding is central to the school's activity, with the main arrangements for tutoring and pastoral care being carried out through the houses. Over half the pupils come from London, the Home Counties and Hampshire and most join from a wide range of British preparatory schools. About a fifth come from families living overseas, of whom nearly half are foreign nationals. About thirty pupils are from families where English is not the first language.
- 1.5 Admission to the school is highly selective. After preliminary selection by a prospective housemaster, most boys enter the school as Commoners at 13+, having passed the Winchester Entrance Examination, which is similar in form and syllabus to Common Entrance. The 70 Scholars have been successful in the separate Scholarship Examination (Election). Entry to the sixth form is via a demanding sixth form examination that ensures that those admitted are of high calibre. The ability profile of pupils is far above that of the national average and if pupils are performing in line with their ability their performance in public examinations will be above the national average for maintained selective schools.
- 1.6 The school identifies a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and who require support to improve their language competence, sometimes in a separate group taught by an EAL specialist or through specific arrangements that are made for individuals. The school identifies about ten per cent of pupils who at some time need support for their learning, of whom a small number receive specialist assistance outside the classroom.

- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Junior Part/1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Year 9
Middle Part/2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Year 10
V Book/3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Year 11
VI Book 2/4 <sup>th</sup> Year	Year 12
VI Book 1/5 <sup>th</sup> Year	Year 13

## **2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **The Educational Experience Provided**

- 2.1 The curriculum is outstanding and is highly appropriate to the school's aims of developing boys who are achieving at the highest level, preparing for entry to top universities, and stimulating interest, curiosity and academic ambition. It has a positive effect in producing pupils who are highly articulate, reflective, cultured, and exhibit self-confidence largely without arrogance. Variety of provision and a concern to accommodate individuals are key principles. Since the arrival of the new headmaster, a curriculum review has ensured clearer oversight of the curriculum and a well-articulated rationale, both of which were advocated in the last inspection report of 2003.
- 2.2 The formal curriculum is highly appropriate for the pupils. It contributes fully to their linguistic, mathematical, scientific and technological development while ensuring that their human and social development is integral to all that is undertaken. Attention to creative and aesthetic aspects of pupils' experience is carefully fostered. A wide range of both ancient and modern languages is taught, including classical Greek, Russian, and Chinese. The expertise of the mathematics and science departments enables these subjects to be taught in sets which cater for all pupils, even those of the most exceptional abilities. Participation in national competitions and Olympiads provides a stimulus to able pupils, and a number of groups meet weekly to prepare for these events. There are many opportunities to excel in the performing and creative arts. The school has carefully chosen examinations which are appropriate to its pupils, using International GCSEs (IGCSEs) extensively and recently switching in virtually all areas of the curriculum in Years 12 and 13 to the Cambridge Pre-U Examination.
- 2.3 A particular feature of the provision is the emphasis on Division (Div), which, in most years, pupils study for six periods a week. These lessons aim to go beyond the narrow constraints of the syllabus, providing glimpses into civilization and engendering a life-long love of learning. The content follows the enthusiasms of teachers and stretches both pupils and teachers. The system is defended passionately by teaching staff and its rationale is understood and mainly supported by pupils, who sometimes find it a welcome relief from the requirements of examination study. The balance of content in the sixth form is sometimes too heavily historical and literary. The school recognises this and considers that some inclusion of aspects of scientific thought would be beneficial, but to date the constraints of the timetable have militated against this.
- 2.4 PSHE is largely delivered through the Div programme, the emphasis being on encouraging pupils to take a critical view of the information presented to them. A wealth of extra-curricular activities and societies, including bell-ringing, debating, illuminated manuscripts, and language clubs, further contributes to pupils' personal and social education, as well as developing a range of different skills and interests. Many orchestras, choirs and other musical groups exist, and a substantial number of boys have individual music lessons. Twenty-seven different sports are on offer, including judo, fencing, rowing, cross-country, multi-gym, squash and fives, as well as field sports like football. No one sport dominates. Pupils are encouraged to discover something they enjoy. There is a strong CCF, with Naval, Army, RAF and Marine sections. From Year 11, many boys do meaningful and valuable community service.
- 2.5 The school has considerable experience in advising pupils on careers, and particularly on entry to higher education. The careers library is well stocked and has sections on UK universities and colleges as well as American Ivy League universities. Boys are encouraged

to undertake work experience, and the school makes good use of its contacts with the local and national community to help to arrange placements.

- 2.6 The curriculum is effectively planned in line with a clear curriculum policy that allows scope for individual teachers to follow their own enthusiasms and use their own talents to the full, with the approval of their heads of subject department.
- 2.7 Pupils requiring learning support and those needing support for English as an additional language are helped individually or in small groups, and are thus given full access to the curriculum and co-curricular activities. The physical education curriculum in Year 9, for instance, is designed to make activities accessible to all pupils, whatever their abilities or perceptions. The co-ordinator for this support actively works with departments to offer help and advice support and, where necessary, makes planned visits to departments for meetings with individual staff. Pupils who have English as an additional language often benefit from dedicated teaching that takes account of their needs in Year 9 and later from individual support.
- 2.8 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

### **Pupils' Learning and Achievements**

- 2.9 The exceptional nature of pupils' learning and achievements has been sustained since the last inspection. The educational stamp of the school's motto 'Manners Makyth Man' is strongly evident: boys relish the breadth of learning opportunities offered and grasp them enthusiastically and with genuine curiosity.
- 2.10 Pupils demonstrate a high order of critical and creative thinking. They argue persuasively, analyse, synthesise and make connections from a range of disparate sources, especially evident from the application of the broad-ranging knowledge gained from Div lessons. Written work is often polished and sophisticated beyond expectations of age and ability with precise use of terminology. Equally, pupils display a very high mathematical and logical competence in the science subjects as well as in mathematics. In languages, they have an extensive vocabulary and a firm understanding of grammatical structures which they are able to apply in different situations. Boys display considerable artistic skill across the full range of media, applying their study of established artists in an innovative and thoughtful way. Musicians of all abilities enjoy many opportunities to perform and are eager to improve. They practise regularly, respond well to positive criticism and are sufficiently confident to take risks with style and interpretation and discuss technical difficulties.
- 2.11 Use of ICT is not uniform amongst pupils, although they are encouraged to exercise discernment as to its appropriate use to support their learning. As stated in the aims of the school, such an open-minded and reflective attitude to study is a hallmark of its pupils: most of whom are highly aware of their own learning needs and pursue their goals with purpose.
- 2.12 Throughout the ability range, pupils learn and achieve at a high level. The help offered to pupils requiring learning support and those who need English language support has a positive influence on their academic achievement and on their involvement with extra-curricular activities. Academic success for learners with difficulties or disabilities is strong, in line with that of other pupils. In a Year 10 lower ability mathematics group, pupils were seen to be using mathematical language, good numerical skills and were engaged in discussion with the teacher that promoted their learning successfully. Where there are difficulties, pupils are appreciative of the willingness and availability of teachers to support their learning outside lesson time. Pupils for whom English is an additional language often benefit from dedicated teaching that is adjusted to individual needs in Year 9 and later, from individual assistance.

This is rigorous yet sensitive and enables full access to academic subjects, especially in the sixth form. Help of this sort ensures that, where necessary, pupils gain the IELTS qualification instead of IGCSE English, to meet the entry requirements for UK universities.

- 2.13 Pupils' attainment in public examinations is high in relation to their abilities, and their performance in GCSE and A level over the past three years for which there are comparative data has been well above the national average for maintained selective schools. Approximately one third of leavers gain places at Oxbridge and the remainder achieves places at universities in Britain and America. Pupils are very successful in national and international Olympiads in mathematics and sciences, with large numbers gaining gold medals. Of those taking Associated Board and Trinity Guildhall music examinations, over half gain distinctions. Winchester's sportsmen achieve success at a regional and national level in a variety of individual and team sports. The first and second pairs in rackets have been public schools national champions for two successive years. With four Army Scholars currently in the school, and as national finalists in an electric car challenge, the breadth of achievement is outstanding.
- 2.14 The impetus to explore, experiment and achieve often comes from the boys themselves. High quality pupil-led publications such as *The Wykehamist*, *Quelle* and *The Spirit Lamp* clearly demonstrate the variety and maturity of the pupils' creative and journalistic skills. Many of the musical concerts are arranged by pupils. At least five plays a year are directed by boys and the numbers willing to participate in prizes such as the Kenneth Clark Prize are strong.
- 2.15 Excellence is prized across the intellectual, cultural and sporting life of the school, strongly enabled by the breadth of provision and the commitment of staff. Pupils spoke warmly of the opportunities offered and of the flexible approach that allows them to make choices, discover new interests and develop skills in a variety of areas.
- 2.16 Pupils take advantage of the opportunities the curriculum provides for independent research and will actively seek out their teachers for both help and further challenge outside lesson time. Although many choose not to use the library as a place to study, it is clear from observations in class and discussion with pupils that they read widely. They work attentively in the boarding houses and most organise their work effectively, although some pupils do not annotate or use handouts provided by their teachers. Work is generally well presented. The pupils apply themselves readily and pursue their studies with evident enjoyment and energy.

### **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils**

- 2.17 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. It clearly meets the aims of the school and sustains the quality of provision reported in the last inspection. Pupils develop very good self knowledge, self esteem and self confidence as they progress through the school. High moral standards are set and achieved, and positive and supportive relationships are evident between pupils of different nationalities. Pupils have a genuine sense of pride in belonging to the school.
- 2.18 The Christian ethos promoted by the chaplaincy creates a strong foundation enabling pupils of all faiths and none to develop their spiritual awareness. Pupils are attentive, reflective and respectful when attending chapel services. Individual pupils' faith is respected and supported. On Sundays Roman Catholics welcome the opportunity to attend mass and pupils whose faith background is non-Christian attend 'Faith Circles' for inter-faith study and reflection. Pupils display awareness of aesthetic qualities in art and music and, in the high quality *Spirit Lamp* publication, show considerable empathy in their creative writing of, and about, poetry. Discussions in subjects such as geography, English and Div, and the wide

ranging activities of the community service groups, illustrate pupils' sensitive understanding of the needs and feelings of others. In a Year 13 Div class the place of science within a religious context was debated, drawing on pupils' personal experience. A Year 12 pupil, inspired by his community service at school, organised a charity ball in his home town.

- 2.19 Pupils develop a strong moral sense. They display respect for traditional values and the school's code of conduct. High standards of courtesy and consideration for others prevail. Moral issues are debated in the classroom in a variety of subjects, such as the Year 12 lesson, where the moral issue presented by the headmaster in chapel was related to the book being studied in the class. Through a variety of subjects pupils develop a good awareness of environmental concerns and the impact of poverty. Their understanding of issues concerning lifestyle choices, drugs and alcohol are enhanced by the Div programme and visiting speakers.
- 2.20 Pupils learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. They develop good social skills and contribute willingly to community life. Older pupils help younger ones through the 'tege' scheme and through house activities. Prefects take their roles seriously and work well in teams. They demonstrate great commitment in helping to ensure the smooth running of the school supporting staff and caring for younger pupils. Recently, a consultation process has been created for pupils to express their views and put forward proposals. Their social awareness is enhanced by involvement in community service, the Combined Cadet Force and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.
- 2.21 Pupils relate very well to each other regardless of any cultural differences and show tolerance and respect for other cultural traditions. Living and working with pupils from overseas enriches the pupils' educational experience and they also benefit significantly from trips, for example to Barcelona, Colombia, Florence, Mongolia and New York, which provide first hand experience of different cultures. Within school pupils' understanding of British, European and other cultures and societies are well developed through the curriculum and the range of high quality societies, drama and musical activities.
- 2.22 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

### **The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)**

- 2.23 Most teaching is strong and is often outstanding and scholarly. It varies from the conventional to the charismatic, reflecting the personalities of the teachers, is usually appropriate to the needs of the pupils and continues to reflect the quality that was evident at the time of the last inspection. It is in line with the school's aim to make teaching interesting and effective for its pupils, as well as fulfilling for the teachers themselves. The teaching supports the school's aim to stimulate interest, curiosity and academic ambition among its pupils. Assessment of academic performance is thorough.
- 2.24 Teachers obviously relish teaching pupils of high intellectual calibre, and this leads to distinctive teaching that fosters the application of intellectual, creative and physical challenge in lessons and the many sporting and co-curricular activities offered by the school. In many academic areas, especially history, English and Div, teaching effectively managed challenging discussions, probed pupils' understanding and stimulated reflection. The teaching in Div lessons provides pupils with many opportunities to address areas and issues outside the examined curriculum and learn to think and write in an increasingly critical and creative way as they progress through the school. Creativity is stimulated in areas such as art and music where pupils are given opportunities to experiment and develop their own individual style. The teaching enables pupils to become exceptionally adept in discussion.

- They learn to listen to and treat each other with respect and to articulate their ideas with skill, fluency and maturity. One Year 11 pupil was able to make telling generalisations on Shakespeare's treatment of Richard II, through comparison with a number of Shakespeare's histories; a difficult task for some university undergraduates. Pupils study and work co-operatively with others and in teams.
- 2.25 Good use of ICT was seen in a project-based topic on alternative energy in a Year 11 physics lesson, and to edit informative writing in a Year 11 English lesson. High standards of behaviour, both in and outside the classroom, are expected and pupils arrive promptly and well prepared for their lessons. The excellent rapport between teachers and pupils makes for very enjoyable lessons which are often characterized by cheerful banter and good humour.
- 2.26 Teaching is marked by an individual approach and this usually facilitates the establishment of the good working relationships between teachers and pupils that characterised most lessons that were observed. In a Year 9 Div lesson, the obvious enthusiasm of the teacher engaged pupils in stories from the Odyssey and encouraged them to contribute observations, such as linking the Greek account with the work of a modern writer, and ask pertinent questions. A Year 11 chemistry lesson was marked by mutual good humour which contributed to the confident approach of pupils in talking to the teacher about their work. The needs of all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, are taken into account.
- 2.27 Teaching is usually well planned and generally includes an appropriate variety of activities. Lessons are designed to interest and challenge; even the most able pupils are encouraged to participate, to question and to extend their knowledge. The best lessons are very well paced and maintain pupils' interest throughout. In a Year 10 physics lesson, pupils were riveted by a lesson on cosmology, which clearly demonstrated the teacher's enthusiasm and passion for the subject. In a Year 9 French class, pupils were presented with a good range of activities which covered all the skill areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing in the one lesson.
- 2.28 Most teaching demonstrates excellent knowledge of the subjects being taught and much enthusiasm which is shared with the pupils, but the teaching in a few of the lessons did not always employ the most appropriate teaching techniques and classroom management skills. As a result, pupils were sometimes unable to engage fully with the material offered and make the progress of which they were capable.
- 2.29 The school is well resourced to support teaching and learning. Most classrooms are equipped with electronic whiteboards or multi-media projectors. Although not a common feature in all areas of the school, some good display provides interest related to a particular subject and examples of pupils' work. The libraries have been considerably improved with the appointment of a librarian who has worked hard to make them attractive to the pupils. The science department is well equipped and has good technical support and the design and technology, art and music departments enjoy excellent facilities which are supportive of the range of activities undertaken. The art department is able to accommodate large projects of an ambitious nature and its layout encourages group discussion and critical evaluation. Nevertheless, in some teaching areas, the nature of the accommodation and resources restricts the potential for group work.

- 2.30 Pupils settle quickly to their studies, applying themselves fully to their work and activities with evident enjoyment and energy. They study and work co-operatively with others and in teams. Effective group work was seen as part of experimental work in Year 11 physics and Year 13 chemistry lessons.
- 2.31 Pupils' work and progress is regularly and thoroughly assessed. The school creates its own baseline from national standardised tests and the marks from the entrance examination. The intermediate grades system, focusing on effort and attainment, is used to monitor pupil progress every three weeks and keeps parents well informed as the second set is sent home in the autumn term. A newly introduced assessment scheme provides very clear guidelines about how to judge pupil performance and effort. As appropriate, pupils whose work is giving cause for concern will be seen by a senior member of staff or the headmaster and letters are written to parents to express concerns. Full written reports to parents each term, with an additional one in the summer term, reflect good knowledge of their children. They give an honest and often witty account of their son's achievement and effort and offer detailed suggestions about how to progress. Much of the marking of pupils' work is very detailed and thorough, shows a genuine appreciation of the pupils' efforts and takes the form of discussion with the pupil to aid improvement.
- 2.32 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

### **3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils**

- 3.1 The quality of pastoral care, and the way in which it promotes pupils' welfare, well-being and personal development, reflect the school's desire to treat the boys in its care with kindness, sympathy and with 'as much tolerance as is consistent with good order'. The school's pastoral provision is highly effective and has improved on the very good provision that was noted at the time of the last inspection.
- 3.2 The school provides outstanding care for pupils throughout the school through an extensive system that ensures that they are well known and feel secure, and in the knowledge that they have a range of people to whom they can turn for support. The pastoral system is centred upon the boarding houses where each housemaster coordinates a team that includes a number of tutors and a resident matron or housekeeper. Beyond this, further assistance is provided by the chaplains, catering and domestic staff. Each pupil has a personal tutor who is charged with the responsibility of monitoring academic performance as well as the effective use of free time. The Div don (the equivalent of a form tutor) has an important role to play in the pupils' welfare, which extends beyond the purely academic, and through daily contact helps to develop a trusting relationship with each individual. Parents are happy with the care and guidance given to their sons. The pastoral structure provides strong support for staff through the second master and the housemasters and the level of communication between these staff is good. Issues are raised and discussed at regular meetings. This extends to the team of tutors in each house. Dialogue between the housemaster and the tutors is positively encouraged. By so doing, prompt and co-ordinated action can be taken when necessary. All members of the teaching staff, as well as those directly involved in pastoral care, share a significant measure of responsibility in the area of pupil well-being.
- 3.3 The high quality of the relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, undoubtedly contributes to the relaxed and friendly atmosphere around the school. Pupils of all ages are comfortable in each other's company. Respect and tolerance are discernible in every area of school life. Pupils declared a high level of mutual trust as prevalent within the community. The small class sizes enable the staff to know the pupils well and thereby cultivate productive staff-pupil relationships. The quality of written reports by subject teachers and housemasters reflects a real knowledge of pupils in their care. Sixth form pupils express considerable satisfaction with the guidance they receive when planning university applications.
- 3.4 Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour, including procedures to guard against harassment and bullying, are effective and deal constructively with unacceptable behaviour when it occurs. Pupils recognise that the system is fair. Bullying is considered always unacceptable and effective measures exist to safeguard against it. Instances of bullying are reported by pupils to be infrequent and when they do materialise they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Within the houses, a system whereby senior boys assist with the monitoring of younger boys serves as an additional way of identifying potential problems and achievements.
- 3.5 Measures to safeguard and promote pupils' health and well-being are successful. The school has well-considered child protection procedures and policy and practice is good. The designated person ensures that the staff has a good understanding of the relevant procedures and appropriate training sessions ensure that child protection awareness is maintained. The

school's admissions register is properly maintained using an electronic system that is regularly backed up.

- 3.6 The school's approach to ensure health and safety is thorough and comprehensive. As appropriate the school seeks guidance from outside agencies but overall the expertise of staff members ensures that policies and procedures are secure. Fire prevention measures are in place and regular fire evacuation practices are reviewed for their effectiveness. Health and safety procedures safeguard the school's wide range of activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Risk assessments are carried out and appropriate guidance is provided for staff organising activities outside the school. Proper routines have been established where necessary. A satisfactory number of staff hold a first aid certificate and these are kept updated. The medical centre is well maintained. It is staffed by appropriately qualified nurses and provides comfortable accommodation for pupils who are ill.
- 3.7 The quality of the food provided in the houses is generally good, although somewhat variable. The recent appointment of a catering manager is set to review the quality and nutritional value of meals across the school as a whole. Meals are important social occasions in the boarding houses. They reinforce the caring nature of the community and provide another opportunity for the boys to feel supported and secure. The extensive games and recreation programme ensures that the majority take regular exercise.
- 3.8 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

### **The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community**

- 3.9 In line with its aims, the school has established strong and effective links with its parents and promotes valuable links with the wider community. Since the last inspection both types of link have been improved and extended.
- 3.10 Parents express very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of education and support provided by the school; the promotion of worthwhile attitudes and values; and the high standards of behaviour.
- 3.11 The school has a useful range of methods through which it communicates with parents and keeps them informed about their sons' progress and the school's activities. Documents specific to particular year groups, a termly diary of events, college prospectus and other booklets provide an invaluable source of information. Publications such as *The Wykehamist* provide good insight into the activities of the term and the guide for parents of new men gives a thorough explanation of what to expect of the school. The quality and range of communication have been developed since the last inspection through the new school website and use of e-mail. As appropriate, the special needs coordinator communicates directly with parents.
- 3.12 Parents have many and varied opportunities to be involved in activities in the school and in the work and progress of their children. The introduction of social events enables parents to know one another and develop contacts. The Winchester College Society enables past and present parents to be involved in a broad range of experiences that include a social event in London for parents of Years 9 and 10; a garden party and chapel service for Years 11 and 12 and an end of year party for Year 13. The Winchester music club, summer ball, house concerts and prayer group all contribute to a rich and unique experience.

- 3.13 Parents are provided with wide ranging information and the headmaster develops a strong personal knowledge of all families prior to pupils joining the school. Full reports are provided at the end of each term for all year groups and this information demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the pupil with detailed suggestions for progress. The grading system is carefully monitored by the housemaster, tutor, director of studies and the headmaster. Special reports are written at half term for new pupils in Years 9 and 12 and this information is clearly structured. Parents' days provide an invaluable source of information and these take place once a year for all year groups. The careers department is actively involved with Years 11 and 12 at such events and there is a personal and ambitious approach to the development of each pupil. Parental concerns are speedily handled initially by the housemaster or director of studies, further reinforcing the quality of links between parents and the school.
- 3.14 The school promotes valuable links with the wider community. The community service programme is a particular strength and pupils describe a feeling of pride, commitment and immense enthusiasm. A Year 12 pupil, helping to prepare meals at the Winchester Night Shelter for the homeless, gained a sense of compassion. Through involvement in the Royal Hampshire County Hospital Radio, pupils acting as DJs give genuine service and value to the local community. A collaborative project with the Winchester College Friends Fund has seen art and DT pupils design and produce an excellent computer security guard hub, based on a reinterpretation of the Nativity. This is to be installed in Winchester Cathedral from the end of November to be enjoyed by the whole community throughout the festive period. The music department is committed to a community programme, working alongside schools in the maintained sector and providing opportunities for pupils from local primary schools to experience classical music in concert.
- 3.15 Pupils are keenly involved in the broad range of opportunities available and are sensitive to the needs of others. They develop a respect for the wider community and a confidence and cheerfulness that enhances their overall educational experience.
- 3.16 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

### **The Quality of Boarding Education**

- 3.17 The quality of boarding education is outstanding. Boarding is at the heart of what the school stands for. The school's aims, to maintain a full boarding culture and a boarding experience that fully supports pupils' education and development, are fully met.
- 3.18 All the recommendations contained in the Ofsted report (March 2009) have been met, apart from the recommendation to ensure that all meals provided to boarders are adequate in quality and quantity. The school has taken steps to remedy this through the new appointment of a catering manager but at the time of this inspection it was too early to judge whether the recommendation had been fully met.
- 3.19 In the houses, pupils' relationships within and across age groups are excellent, and between pupils and staff they are warm, friendly, caring and supportive.
- 3.20 Pupils have a full curriculum and co-curriculum on six days of the week and chapel on Sundays. In view of this very packed schedule, they say that they do not feel the need for additional activities on a Sunday and the inspection team would support this view. Pupils welcome 'task time', time that is set aside for individual tuition and advice, in Years 12 and 13 to discuss UCAS applications and seek academic support. Pupils are encouraged to

participate in a wide range of activities in the boarding houses, notably music, drama and sport and this contributes to an excellent all-round educational experience.

- 3.21 Much of the accommodation has been recently refurbished and is comfortable and appropriate. It combines a sense of community living with a degree of privacy and the provision of individual study booths enhances private study. Standards of accommodation have improved considerably since the last inspection and a rolling programme of refurbishment is in place. Accommodation is now generally of a good quality, although there is some variation between houses. A good range of recreational facilities is available to the pupils including rooms for ICT, TV, games and music, libraries, and kitchens with basic cooking facilities. Bathrooms and toilets are clean.

## **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **The Quality of Governance**

- 4.1 The quality of governance of the school is good and the governing body takes proper responsibility for oversight and guidance of the school. In all, it shows considerable improvement since the last inspection when a main recommendation was for the school to improve the effectiveness of its governance.
- 4.2 The structure and management arrangements related to the governing body are now well defined and have effective oversight of the school. Since the last inspection there has been a clear determination to improve through complete restructuring of the governing body. The new chairman (The Warden) has taken up position and, with some other new members (Fellows), gives a clear sense of direction and purpose. Greater efficiency and effectiveness have been achieved through the establishment of the eight sub-committees that undertake the main work of the governing body and provide advice at the full termly meetings of the body as a whole.
- 4.3 The governing body is well aware of its responsibilities and is considerably stronger and more active than it used to be. The board as a whole has taken part in governors' 'away-day' meetings to discuss finance and is fully part of development planning. The chairman and several other governors have a good insight into the working of the school through regular visits and phone calls. All achieve a well-informed view of the school in action through the provision of a good range of material, such as the headmaster's reports and financial statements prepared by the bursar, and visits to the Chapel, performances and exhibitions. Before each of the full governors' meetings, a view of the various areas of the school is developed through visits to the subject departments. Meetings and meals taken with members of staff ensure that some of the governors are known to an increasing number of staff, who thus come to know and understand the governors' role and responsibilities.
- 4.4 In recognition of governors' responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils, one nominated governor has oversight of these matters and visits the school regularly to review practice and report to governors. Health and safety matters, including child protection and bullying, are dealt with as standing items on full board meetings.

### **The Quality of Leadership and Management**

- 4.5 The remarkable quality of the headmaster's leadership has enabled the school to achieve its ambitious aims and to accomplish much that was recommended in the last inspection report, by bringing about an effective fusion of individual liberty and shared responsibility. Management throughout the school is generally good, although oversight and monitoring of departments by senior managers is not yet fully effective.
- 4.6 A complete revision of the school curriculum was conducted during 2005 and 2006. Through involvement of staff at different points in the process, this has enabled a series of initiatives, such as the move to Cambridge Pre-U, which have been established across the whole school, while at the same time accommodating differences within individual departments. Re-structuring of the senior management team has created a strong cross-disciplinary group that provides the valuable weekly opportunity for members from both academic and non-academic areas of the school to represent their contribution to its running and organisation and to hear the implications of actions for areas other than their own. Various other committees associated with key areas of the school meet on a regular basis. All meetings are minuted and provide the opportunity to understand what is happening and to

express a view. In all, a lot of activity has made for joint decision making and college-wide understanding of management issues. Heads of department and housemasters still have oversight of their domains but within a framework of common understanding and much supportive documentation, such as the Dons' Handbook, that effectively helps all to know what is expected. Management of the school is now reasonable and orderly and has created a happy working atmosphere. The clear educational direction and leadership is reflected in the quality of education, the care of pupils and the fulfilment of the school's aims.

- 4.7 Middle management, particularly by housemasters and heads of department, is effective in drawing up and implementing appropriate procedures and policies within their area of influence. Nevertheless, senior managers do not yet provide sufficient overall leadership to departments, or monitor and review their effectiveness.
- 4.8 At all levels, the school successfully recruits staff, including peripatetic staff and sports coaches of high calibre and ensures that their suitability to work with children is thoroughly checked and recorded. The school participates in the national scheme for newly qualified teachers (NQTs), who undergo a well-conceived and supportive induction programme. Induction for newly appointed teachers is carefully defined and includes a suitable programme of support activities from which heads of department and staff may choose. It is not sufficient, however, to help teachers new to the school who arrive with no previous experience of teaching. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the new annual professional development review, which has the good potential to support individual teachers and identify professional development needs, but in the meantime a few members of staff, both new and experienced, do not receive consistent support and training in teaching techniques to motivate and enthuse their pupils.
- 4.9 Financial management of the school is strong and well managed by the bursar. Suitable policies and controls are in place to ensure financial stability and to enable maintenance of buildings, such as the rolling programme associated with maintenance of the houses, and sustain the range and quality of the resources that contribute so effectively to teaching and learning.
- 4.10 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.11 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

### Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 Winchester College is highly effective in meeting its aims. The outstanding curriculum is highly appropriate to the school's aims of developing boys who are achieving at the highest level. Variety of provision and a concern to accommodate individuals are key principles. The exceptional nature of learning and achievements has been sustained since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Most teaching is strong, often outstanding and scholarly, and assessment of academic performance is good. A small amount of teaching showed the need for support and training of teachers to motivate and enthuse pupils more effectively. Pupils are exceptionally well known and cared for, and the quality of pastoral care reflects the school's desire to treat the boys with kindness, sympathy and with as much tolerance as is consistent with good order. Boarding is at the heart of what the school stands for and the boarding culture makes a significant contribution to pastoral care and pupils' educational experience. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are remarkable for the respect that is shown and mutual enjoyment of one another's company. Pupils are confident and rarely arrogant. In line with its aims, the school has established strong and effective links with its parents and promotes valuable links with the wider community. The governing body takes proper responsibility for oversight and guidance of the school. The quality of the headmaster's leadership and management, supported by the senior management team, has enabled the school to achieve its ambitious aims and to accomplish much that was recommended in the last inspection. Middle management, particularly by housemasters and heads of department, is effective but senior managers do not yet consistently provide sufficient overall leadership to departments, or monitor and review the quality of their performance.
- 5.2 The school has made several improvements that were called for in the last inspection. Improvement in the effectiveness of the governance of the school and management at all levels has largely been achieved. The governance has been completely restructured and the governing body now operates efficiently and effectively. Strong leadership has enabled considerable improvement in the management of the school, and brought about an effective fusion of individual liberty and shared responsibility. A school librarian has been appointed and worked hard to make the libraries attractive to boys. Provision for ICT has continued to be upgraded and is effective for administrative purposes.
- 5.3 The school now meets all the regulatory requirements.

### Next Steps

- 5.4 The school has made significant progress since the last inspection and the following would make for continued development:
1. ensure that the excellent performance of many teachers is shared and becomes the norm, through effective oversight and monitoring;
  2. strengthen the professional review process to link targets and professional development to a more comprehensive school development plan.
- 5.5 No action is required in respect of regulatory requirements.

## 6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, 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 medical centre. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

### List of Inspectors

Mrs Beryl Fawcett	Reporting Inspector
Mr Christopher Alcock	Headmaster, HMC school
Mr David Forster	Director of Studies, HMC school
Mr Michael Holder-Williams	Head of Senior School, SHMIS school
Mrs Sue Lucas	Professional Coordinating Mentor, SHMIS school
Mrs Janet Mark	Former Headmistress, GSA school
Mr Martin Reader	Headmaster, HMC school
Mrs Alison Rhodes	Director of Art, HMC school