



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED INSPECTION

DURHAM SCHOOL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Durham School

Full Name of School	Durham School		
DfE Number	840/6000		
Registered Charity Number	1023407		
Address	Durham School Durham County Durham DH1 4SZ England		
Telephone Number	0191 3864783		
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Email Address	hmsec@durhamschool.co.uk		
Head	Mr Kieran McLaughlin		
Chair of Governors	Mr Alasdair MacConachie		
Age Range	3 to 18		
Total Number of Pupils	558		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (375 boys; 183 girls)		
Numbers by Age	3-5 (EYFS):	37	5-11: 106
	11-18	415	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	458	
Number of Boarders	Total:	100	
	Full:	61	Weekly: 39
EYFS Gender	Boys and Girls		
Inspection Dates	13 Oct 2015 to 16 Oct 2015		

PREFACE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The range of these Regulations can be viewed on the website www.legislation.gov.uk. Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*. The inspection on which the report is based took place over a period of four continuous days in the school.

The previous ISI intermediate boarding inspection was in November 2012. The previous ISI integrated inspection of the preparatory school (Bow) was in March 2011, and of the senior school was in October 2009.

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

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

This inspection contains 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, personal development and welfare.

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 judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI**

descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade. Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for children aged under two), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

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 governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions, chapel and an assembly. 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

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Mrs Marie Bush	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, GSA school)
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Mr David Holland	Team Inspector (Headmaster, Society of Heads school)
Mr Andrew Johnson	Team Inspector Headmaster, HMC school)
Mr John Preston	Team Inspector (Senior Master, IAPS school)
Mr Tony Halliwell	Co-ordinating Inspector for Boarding
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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Durham School, in Durham, is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils from three to eighteen years of age. The senior school occupies a 45-acre site. Less than a mile away is Bow, accommodating pupils aged from three to eleven.
- 1.2 The school was founded as a secondary school in 1414, moved to its current location in 1844, admitted girls for the first time in 1985, and became fully co-educational in 2006. It is a charitable foundation managed by a governing body. In 2014, a new headmaster for the whole school was appointed. More recently, leadership and management posts were restructured in both sections of the school.
- 1.3 The school aims to provide an environment where pupils can explore, make mistakes, learn and grow, and to give them academic challenge and a lifelong appetite for learning. It aims to provide pastoral care that enables pupils to develop emotional, moral and spiritual strength, and curricular opportunities that enrich and develop the individual and foster leadership, collaboration and teamwork. It further aims for its pupils to become thinkers who are emotionally resilient and effective communicators who act with responsibility, humility and kindness, ready to make a positive contribution to society.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, there were 558 pupils: 375 boys and 183 girls. In Bow, 37 children were in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and a further 106 pupils (64 boys and 42 girls) were in Years 1 to 6. Of the 415 pupils in the senior school (286 boys and 129 girls), 150 (99 boys and 51 girls) were in the sixth form (Years 12 and 13). Boarding is available from Year 7. Boarders currently number 100 (61 boys and 39 girls). They are accommodated in three boarding houses, one for girls and two for boys. Of the entrants to the senior school at age eleven, approximately half are from Bow, the remainder being drawn from local state maintained primary and independent schools.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a variety of ethnic and economic backgrounds, and parents are predominantly professional or self-employed. Many pupils live close to the school, but others travel in from neighbouring cities. Approximately half of the full-time boarders come from overseas.
- 1.6 The ability profile is above average in Bow and on entry to the senior school. The ability profile for the sixth form is in line with the national average. Fifty-eight pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) four of whom have an education, health and care plan (EHC). Twenty pupils receive specialist learning support. Fifty-four pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) of whom 34 receive additional support.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

2.(a) Main findings

- 2.1 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, in boarding and in the sixth form, pupils of all abilities achieve well and enjoy their education. They make good progress in response to the good teaching and a broad and effective curriculum. In the Nursery and the sixth form, teaching is particularly strong, but some teaching, throughout the school, and aspects of timetabling in Bow, do not make the most of pupils' learning opportunities and potential. The extra-curricular programme in the senior school is a significant strength. As a result of effective provision, pupils attain results in GCSE and A-level examinations which are good for their levels of ability. The most recent A-level results show that standards are rising further. At all ages, pupils are receptive and attentive learners, keen to participate and willing to explore ideas.
- 2.2 The excellent pastoral care provided, based upon strong and supportive learning relationships throughout the school, enables pupils to grow in confidence and thrive, in a warm and caring environment. Pupils' personal development is good. Planning ensures that fundamental British values are actively promoted. The quality of boarding, and attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety, are good overall. The school recognises the need for refurbishment, to refresh tired areas, including the boys' boarding accommodation. Adjustments to statutory policies during the inspection have ensured that these now meet the latest requirements.
- 2.3 Governance is sound. There are a number of recent appointments to ensure that governors can offer the school a broad range of experience and expertise of benefit to its future. Governors' monitoring lacks rigour, including of the EYFS and boarding, and in ensuring that statutory policies are fully up-to-date. Leadership and management of the whole school are good overall, maintaining a strong and successful focus on achieving the school's aims. This enables pupils to achieve well in their learning and personal development. Communication between Bow and the senior school is not yet fully effective. Throughout the school, the staff leadership team is largely recently appointed. While strongly committed to the school's success, aspects of their work are embryonic and new line-management arrangements are not always clear. Overall, self-evaluation is weak which limits its impact on the school's development. Department development planning is not fully developed in the EYFS and for boarding. Good progress has been made on most of the recommendations of the previous inspections. Consequently, in the senior school, careers education is strong and the tracking of pupils' progress has improved significantly. However, in Bow, the systems to use data, which recently began to be collected, remain too informal for effective use to check pupils' progress. Parents are strongly supportive of all aspects of the school.

2.(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

- 2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- 2.5 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.6 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Throughout the school, ensure teaching offers sufficient pace and challenge for all pupils' abilities in lessons.
 2. Ensure self-evaluation is more widely shared and underpins development planning, including for the EYFS and boarding.
 3. In Bow, devise and implement more rigorous ways to monitor and track pupils' progress and improve timetabling there to maximise the pupils' learning opportunities.
 4. Clarify line-management arrangements throughout the school and enhance communication between Bow and the senior school
 5. Improve the standard of the boys' accommodation to match that of the girls' house.
 6. Introduce more rigour and frequency to governors' monitoring activities, including for boarding and for the EYFS.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils throughout the school are well educated and achieve well. They reflect the school's aims to enable pupils to explore, make mistakes, learn and grow, and develop a lifelong appetite for learning.
- 3.3 In the EYFS, children enjoy learning and achieve well, including those with SEND and EAL, and the most able. For example, all learned happily in the garden: a rich environment for discovery, investigating 'mini beasts' and creating and making in the 'mud kitchen'. They used little wheelbarrows to collect treasures such as conkers acorns and logs, naming and sharing their hoard with staff and visitors. In Nursery, children count and recognise numbers to 10, and in Reception they can count backwards and forwards to twenty and understand simple addition and subtraction. Reception children can blend three-letter words phonetically. A higher proportion of children, than nationally, achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception.
- 3.4 As pupils progress from the EYFS and through the entire school, they successfully develop their skills, knowledge, understanding and application of ideas in their academic work and in extra-curricular activities. They speak clearly, are articulate and confident at reading and are attentive listeners. Pupils express themselves confidently and clearly both orally and in their written work. They develop good reasoning skills and think logically and increasingly independently. They show good mathematical, scientific and technological skills. The pupils' work in humanities and creative subjects such as art, music, drama, and physical education, is good.
- 3.5 Senior school pupils show particularly high levels of achievement in their extra-curricular programme, with wins at regional events and in national competitions in rugby, hockey and rowing. A number of pupils have secured professional rugby contracts. A good number of pupils have gained gold and silver awards in The Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) Award scheme. In music, significant numbers of pupils attain high grades in national examinations.
- 3.6 Bow pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 6 cannot be measured in relation to performance against a fixed national average, but from learning observed, workbooks and discussions, it is judged that pupils make good progress and achieve well across a wide range of subjects, from their individual starting points.
- 3.7 The following analysis of senior school attainment uses the national data for the years 2012 to 2014. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE have been above the national average for maintained schools. A higher proportion of pupils than average achieved a minimum of 5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C, and more than average achieved grade A* or A. Results in IGCSE English Literature in 2014 were higher than worldwide norms.
- 3.8 A Level results, until recently, have been similar to the national average for maintained schools. Results in 2014 were higher than in 2012 to 13, being above the national average for maintained schools, and similar to the national average for

maintained selective schools. A-level results in 2015 strongly continued this upward trend, and results in the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) were strong.

- 3.9 The level of attainment at GCSE and A Level, and standardised measures of progress that are available, confirm inspection evidence and show that pupils make progress that is good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. This supports the views of parents and pupils in response to the pre-inspection questionnaire. On completing their examinations in the senior school and leaving the school at 18, the majority of pupils are successful in achieving places at their first choice of university.
- 3.10 Across the school, pupils with SEND and EAL achieve and develop well, particularly in the senior school, where records are meticulous. This is as a result of their own motivation, a reflection of their enjoyment of school, and the school's careful monitoring of pupils' progress, which is a strength in the senior school. This monitoring ensures that additional support is available for every pupil who needs it. Pupils identified as being the most able make good progress, especially when given the opportunity to extend their learning to the full in lessons.
- 3.11 Through the entire school, pupils are attentive, keen and motivated to achieve academically and in extra-curricular activities. They work well in groups as well as independently. These positive attitudes to learning enable them to contribute fully to a culture that promotes honest endeavour and enjoyment and prepares them well for their future lives.

3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

- 3.12 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.13 Through the school, the curriculum fulfils its aims to provide a full and rounded curriculum that nurtures aspiration for achievement, a respect for others and a confidence for life. When political issues are presented, there is balanced presentation of opposing views in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Throughout the curriculum, opportunities are taken to prepare pupils thoroughly for life in modern Britain.
- 3.14 In the EYFS, the educational programme has depth and breadth across the seven areas of learning. It responds carefully to children's needs and helps them to reach the expected levels of development. The provision in Nursery and the shared outdoor area is excellent, meeting the recommendation from the previous inspection regarding the outside area. In Reception, and also in Years 1 and 2, timetabling does not make the most of the available time for learning. There are unnecessarily over-long periods for snacks and breaks.
- 3.15 The curriculum through the rest of the school promotes pupils' speaking, listening, problem-solving, investigative and thinking skills well through a range of subjects. The Years 1 to 6 curriculum is broad. A good personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is taught in lessons, tutor group meetings and assemblies. Good curriculum planning enables pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to benefit from specialist teaching in a number of subjects including science, mathematics and English. Curriculum planning for different abilities, including the most able and those with SEND, is less well developed. In response to a recommendation of the previous inspection, systems for tracking progress and ensuring pupils are challenged sufficiently have begun, but are not yet fully effective. The range of extra-curricular

activities in Bow is developing. Among clubs put on for them are sporting and musical activities as well as a knitting club and a science club.

- 3.16 The senior school curriculum is well-planned and suited to all ages, abilities and needs. The excellent PSHE programme is enriched to include a worthwhile certificate course in Year 10. Literacy and mathematics provision is strong. Technology provision includes design technology as well as information and communication technology (ICT). Grouping pupils according to ability, to help the teaching meet the needs of pupils, increases as pupils move up into different year groups and includes mathematics, English and French. Later on, linguistic skills are expanded to include Latin and a choice of German, Spanish and, occasionally, Greek. Separate sciences are available from Year 9. Humanities, including religious education, and aesthetic and creative subjects, and physical education and sports, complete the range of subjects offered. A good range of choice is available for GCSE and appropriate IGCSE courses.
- 3.17 In the sixth-form curriculum, the range of subjects provides breadth of opportunity with a good range of subjects from which to choose. General studies courses are optional, and good advice and guidance are given to help pupils make an appropriate choice. Programmes are individually suited to pupils' capabilities and interest. The EPQ, a recent addition to the sixth-form choice, is well-subscribed and successful.
- 3.18 Pupils identified as the most able benefit from extension work in some classes and further opportunities include subjects such as 'Future Business Magnates' and thought-provoking lectures by visiting speakers arranged through the academic societies. The provision for pupils with SEND in the senior school is strong and features prompt identification, 'pupil profiles' to help staff in helping pupils learn and individual support sessions with specialist staff. Pupils with EAL receive good support and opportunities to enter public examinations in their first language.
- 3.19 Careers guidance is much improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are positive about the assistance they receive for their progression into higher education and career pathways which includes mock interviews in Year 12. Pupils are well prepared for transition from year to year, and for life beyond school.
- 3.20 In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents and pupils praised the senior school extra-curricular programme. It is a particular strength and is a key factor in helping pupils to develop strong personal skills. Staff monitor the needs and wishes of pupils through regular checks that maintain a healthy balance of what activity is used, needed and wanted by them. Outdoor pursuits, The DofE award scheme and Combined Cadet Force activities are popular, and a large number of pupils participate in World Challenge expeditions. There are numerous opportunities for all academic abilities to seek further help with their work in departmental workshops. Educational visits are varied, well managed and popular and cover a wide range of cultural, sporting, academic and adventurous pursuits. Of particular note is the exchange school visit programme to China.
- 3.21 Local links with the community enrich the curriculum for pupils, for example in sports and for business. The university allows senior school pupils to use its Bill Bryson library which is adjacent to the school. This is of benefit to pupils because the senior school has no library. School musicals enhance pupils' performing arts, spiritual and cultural skills and are much enjoyed by participants and audience. A production of

Grease is to be performed in a local theatre to enable the Durham community to attend along with parents.

3.(c) The contribution of teaching

3.22 The contribution of teaching is good.

3.23 Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and strongly supports the aims of the school to give pupils academic challenge and a lifelong appetite for learning. The teaching promotes tolerance and respect. Where political issues are covered, these are presented in an unbiased and non-partisan manner, evident through workbooks checked, through discussion with pupils and observation of a sixth-form politics examination course. The impact of teaching, over the whole school, is in pupils' good levels of progress. Some teaching, in both sections of the school, is excellent.

3.24 The enthusiasm evident in the children in class shows that teaching in the EYFS is good and children are highly motivated to learn. The setting is well resourced, especially in the Nursery where teaching is especially successful and expectations are high. In Reception, the pace is sometimes too slow to maintain the momentum of learning. Throughout the EYFS, planning covers the prescribed seven areas of learning in an appropriate mix of activities the children choose for themselves as well as in the adult-led sessions. Children are assessed appropriately on entry and ongoing. Those with EAL or SEND, and the most able, receive regular specialist help.

3.25 In Years 1 to 6, lessons are well planned and meet pupils' needs, supporting those with SEND, EAL and the most able, to make good progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent and their passion for their subject inspires pupils to be involved in the topic. Teaching methods are chosen that ensure that pupils consolidate their knowledge and understanding. In a few lessons teaching can be rather prescriptive, and the accompanying material can limit opportunities for pupils to extend their learning through challenge or explore learning independently. Marking is regular and supportive. Guidance in some books refer to pupils' targets which help children to improve their work but this is not consistent. The excellent rapport between staff, pupils and teaching assistants ensures pupils readily ask for help when necessary. Progress is particularly good when pupils are given the opportunity to work independently and co-operatively. This was the case when older pupils were observed being encouraged to think critically about the effects of flooding and how it has affected people's lives.

3.26 Teaching in the senior school is also well planned and assessment processes are highly effective. Staff are well aware of pupils' needs in their learning. Teaching supports pupils well with SEND and EAL, and makes the provision set out in EHC plans, which are well-known to staff. The well-established comprehensive system in the senior school for academic tracking is highly successful in spotting any pupils falling behind, and includes arrangements for regular tests, indicators of performance against a baseline, and an underperformance register. Much of teachers' marking is thorough and gives helpful comment indicating to pupils the steps they need to take to make progress. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and make good use of the resources available to them. Behaviour is managed well. The strength of the relationships between pupils and staff is excellent, and pupils are keen to respond positively in class.

- 3.27 In the best teaching, pace and energy create an effervescent atmosphere that fully engages the pupils' attention and their desire to learn, allowing them to take risks and explore new ideas. A minority of the teaching lacks this pace and level of challenge to fully extend pupils' learning. In a majority of lessons, pupils are successfully encouraged to work well in small groups, such as in a sixth form session preparing for biology fieldwork. In a few lessons, an over-reliance on the teacher slows pupils' progress as they are not given enough opportunities to think for themselves and develop independent learning skills.
- 3.28 In the sixth form, teaching is good and pays explicit attention to marking criteria for examinations, providing pupils with instructive feedback that helps them often to make rapid progress. Excellent independent work was seen in a number of sixth form lessons. One example, among others, was in a history session, where pupils were fully involved and challenged by the subject of the conquest of Jerusalem.

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.
- 4.2 The school meets its aim to enable pupils to develop emotional, moral and spiritual strength and to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 4.3 In the EYFS, children are confident and polite. They contribute well to class activities. They enjoy sharing and make relationships easily with adults and their peers, talking to visitors enthusiastically about their activities. They are beginning to respond to the school's promotion of fundamental British values through the ready respect they show for each other and for adults, tolerating differences with confidence. They are well prepared to move to their next class.
- 4.4 Throughout the school, pupils have good spiritual awareness. They are self-aware and conduct themselves in an assured manner. They have a good appreciation of music and the visual arts. They know about different faiths and fostering mutual respect and tolerance. Bow pupils responded knowledgeably in an assembly observed during the inspection, led by pupils, which focused on Judaism. Senior school pupils gain spiritual impact from the regular chapel services.
- 4.5 The moral development of the pupils in all parts of the school is good and manifests itself not only in the way pupils conduct themselves, but also in discussions in class. Pupils show a clear understanding of what is right and wrong, framed by the school's discipline system. They are polite, well-mannered and helpful young people who clearly take great pride in their school. Pupils discuss, with increasing maturity, moral dilemmas and ethical values. For example, during a senior school physics lesson discussing links between cancer and mobile phone usage.
- 4.6 The pupils' social development is good. Pupils of all ages show they have understood what they have been taught about equality and the avoidance of any kind of discrimination. There is mutual respect amongst pupils, and between pupils and staff in lessons and beyond the classroom. Pupils through the school develop a good understanding of British institutions and services. International students benefit from their integration programme which includes an introduction to British history. Senior pupils take responsibility in a variety of ways including as monitors, members of the school council and through organising events. In Bow, pupils show initiative and contribute positively to the wider community by manning stalls at fund-raising fairs. Pupils throughout both sections of the school show awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves, for example, through charitable giving, which is frequent throughout the school. Inspection evidence did not support the small minority of pupils who, in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, felt they were not given the chance to take on a position of responsibility. Opportunities are provided, for example, as members of the various councils or as monitors.
- 4.7 The pupils' cultural development is good. In Bow, pupils appreciate the range of different cultures in the school and take an interest in visits some of their peers have made to foreign countries. They are eager to learn French and enjoy using their knowledge. In the senior school, pupils' broadening understanding of western and other world cultures is evident through work in art and their participation in music and drama. This is further evident in the understanding drawn from a programme of

visiting speakers on topics such as 'Spanish Art in County Durham' and 'Molière', and the school's 'Global Awareness Week'.

- 4.8 The impact of the work to actively promote British values is beginning to emerge, especially in the senior school. In Bow, pupils demonstrated their ability to apply British democratic principles by pamphleteering and mock-voting for 'fictional Heads of School' during the recent general election campaign. In the senior school, pupils develop a political and economic awareness through the PSHE programme particularly through topics such as 'The Structure of British Society' and 'Civil Liberties'. Senior school pupils discuss the complex issues relating to diversity and national identity. They acquire a deepening understanding of democracy, individual liberty and respect for the civil and criminal law of England from their regular discussion and experiences, for example, the topic 'Caring for Others' in Year 7. The school has hosted parliamentary candidates' debates, ending in a mock election. The house system relies on each individual's ability to respect one another. In politics, students learn about democracy, legislation and develop an awareness of political issues.
- 4.9 By the time they leave the school, all aspects of pupils' personal development including that of boarders, are of a good standard. Typically, pupils are confident, capable and caring members of the school community. One senior pupil, echoed by others, reflected on her education at Durham School, saying, 'This is a great school – I've loved it.'

4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

- 4.10 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.11 The pastoral care provided serves fully to meet the school aims of developing pupils' emotional, moral and spiritual strength and resilience so they are prepared to act responsibly, with humility and kindness, thus making a positive contribution to society.
- 4.12 Key people in the EYFS enable children to feel very safe and secure so that they develop highly positive relationships with their peers and adults in school. Staff liaise effectively with parents and ensure that each child's needs are well met. Relationships are warm and friendly so that children thrive and behave well in a caring community. There is a focus on healthy activity and healthy food to help children lead healthy lifestyles.
- 4.13 Throughout the school, highly-effective procedures are in place to support pupils under the strong direction of the senior leadership. Pupils recognise, and are very appreciative of the support that teachers, tutors and house staff provide inside and outside lessons.
- 4.14 Strong relationships, founded on mutual respect, are evident. In interviews, most pupils struggled to come up with suggestions on what the school could do better. Inspection evidence did not support the small minority of pupils who, in the pre-inspection questionnaire, felt that teachers were not fair in the way they gave rewards and sanctions in school. There have been recent adjustments to ensure this is also the case in boarding.
- 4.15 Pupils appreciate the wide range of physical exercise opportunities available to them. Training has been provided for staff and awareness sessions for pupils that promote healthy lifestyles. The range of food is varied and includes healthy options.

The school has an adequate plan for improving educational access for pupils with SEND.

- 4.16 Effective measures are in place to promote positive behaviour and guard against bullying, taking into account any difficulty such as those presented by SEND pupils. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few pupils and parents, felt that the school did not deal effectively with bullying that occurs. Inspectors checked records and discussed this with pupils and staff and could find no evidence to confirm this view. Pastoral staff are pro-active in minimizing bullying and a termly questionnaire serves to inform the school of incidents and emerging trends such as cyberbullying.
- 4.17 The school seeks pupils' views through a variety of channels, although a minority of pupils in the questionnaire felt their views were not listened to. The school consults pupils in regular surveys, house councils, through the food committee and through suggestions boxes. Consultation has led to change, for example adding another serving station at breakfast to reduce queuing.

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

- 4.18 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety of pupils is good.
- 4.19 Throughout the school, including in the EYFS, safeguarding procedures are thorough and effective and include good links with external agencies. The school encourages and monitors children's attendance. It is just beginning to consider how best to ensure it prevents radicalisation and extremism.
- 4.20 Records and staff files show that the school operates safe recruitment procedures. Staff training for safeguarding children is sufficiently frequent, is up-to-date and well documented, and includes training for those who lead this aspect. A governor has designated responsibility for safeguarding and ensures that other governors are kept appropriately informed. The school took prompt action to add the latest requirements to the safeguarding policy during the inspection.
- 4.21 A comprehensive risk assessment policy ensures that risks from fire are assessed and any necessary steps promptly taken. Regular fire drills are conducted across the school. All staff have received training in fire safety and designated staff are trained to a specialist level. Suitable risk assessments for facilities and for activities off-site have been drawn up, and for on-site hazards, such as those that might be encountered in a science area. The school recognises that it has not been rigorous in ensuring all staff are aware of, and take heed of, the detailed risk assessments that are provided in the science department, and this was quickly put right during the inspection. The school is persistent and diligent in its efforts to ensure the safety of pupils when they need to cross the public road that runs between school premises.
- 4.22 An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid. First aid supplies and equipment are placed strategically around school and are provided for school trips and the many off-site activities. Pupils who are ill or injured are very well cared for during the school day by qualified staff. In addition to caring for those who are unwell, the staff in the medical centre play a prominent role in promoting healthy lifestyles among the pupils.
- 4.23 The admission and attendance registers are appropriately maintained and backed up regularly. Any unexplained absences are diligently followed up.

4.(d) The quality of boarding

- 4.24 The quality of boarding is good.
- 4.25 Outcomes for boarders are good. The school is successful in providing a supportive and caring environment which encourages growth of self-confidence, self-reliance and tolerance. Relationships between boarders are excellent, with friendships extending across the year groups. International boarders are welcomed into the houses and quickly integrated into the friendly community. Pupils are well behaved and are able to contribute positively to the boarding community, contributing their views in various ways including through house council meetings. EAL and SEND pupils are well supported as boarding staff understand their particular needs. The role of house monitors enables senior boarders to develop leadership skills and younger pupils aspire to this role. Senior and junior boarders mix with each other with ease. Boarders show considerable loyalty to their house, and to the school as a whole.
- 4.26 The quality of the boarding provision and care is good overall. House staff know the boarders well and boarders confirm that they have access to a range of appropriate adults with whom to discuss personal issues. All boarding pupils have access to an independent listener. The chaplaincy provides additional pastoral support. The standard of boarding accommodation varies. Refurbishment has taken place to improve facilities for girl boarders. Where renovation has taken place, the physical environment is well decorated and furnished, but in the boys' houses this is not the case, although they meet the National Minimum Standards. Washing and sleeping facilities are appropriate and social areas are available in all houses. The new café adjacent to the dining hall has increased the provision for senior boarding pupils, in response to a recommendation of the previous inspection. A small minority of pupils in their questionnaires commented that they were unhappy with the activities on offer during the evenings and weekends. However, a check of the varied range of activities and free time provided for boarders did not support this view. Policies relating to boarders' health and welfare are clearly documented and implemented across the houses. The medical centre provides excellent day-time care and effective arrangements are in place for evening and weekend cover. Boarders have good access to male and female doctors in the local surgery and have suitable access to dental, optometric and other specialist services when necessary. Fire drills are carried out sufficiently regularly during the sleeping hours and records kept. Boarders can communicate with their friends and parents via mobile phones or laptops. A small minority of pupils in the questionnaire and in interviews commented that internet connections were intermittent. Inspectors agree with this view. All boarders have suitable lockable space. Security measures are not obtrusive. A member of the governing board has recently been appointed with a boarding remit.
- 4.27 The school has good arrangements for welfare and safeguarding. The procedures for safe recruitment of staff are thorough and cover all boarding staff and their families. All staff receive appropriate child protection training which is updated regularly. Appropriate levels of supervision are provided in all houses. Boarders are appointed as monitors in the houses following an application process. They receive appropriate training. Risk assessments are carried out effectively. Boarders are alerted to potential safety risks in boarding, such as crossing the roads between school buildings, and are made aware of the necessary safety procedures. Records are kept in the houses of all minor offences, and any more serious matters are referred to senior staff. School policies for countering bullying are clear, and boarders in their interviews confirmed that any bullying incident is dealt with swiftly

and effectively. Good behaviour is encouraged and a system of sanctions and rewards operates. Effective measures ensure that staff and parents communicate clearly, ensuring the safety and welfare of boarders.

- 4.28 The leadership and management of boarding are good. The school's boarding principles and practices are clearly stated and available on the school's website. They are reflected in practice. Senior house staff have contributed to a recent audit of the National Minimum Standards for boarding and have regular meetings with senior leadership. The culture of self-evaluation, however, is not fully embedded throughout the boarding staff community, and policies, although compliant, are not always consistently applied across all three boarding houses. The school has recently introduced new procedures to assure consistency, for example, in its rewards and sanctions policy. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, both boarders and their parents expressed their confidence that boarders are safe and well cared for in their houses. The parents had no significant criticisms of the boarding and said that they considered the boarding to be well organised and managed. A minority of pupils in their questionnaire said that their main source of dissatisfaction was with the food and provision of snacks outside meal times. Inspectors checked the provision of food and menus and noted that its quantity, quality, nutrition and choice are good. In discussion with boarders, the inspectors found that most pupils were content with the current provision and a very large majority expressed overall enjoyment of boarding.
- 4.29 The school has responded positively to the recommendations of the previous boarding report, in providing a social area for senior pupils and in ensuring that sanctions and rewards are consistently applied across all houses.

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.(a) The quality of governance

- 5.1 The quality of governance is sound.
- 5.2 There is an effective range of governors' committees, under experienced leadership, that provides satisfactory oversight of the school and helps it meet its aims. Scrutiny of governors' meeting minutes reveal a significant focus upon finance, and less emphasis on educational oversight and appropriate investment in staff and resources.
- 5.3 The governing body take care to get to know pupils and staff. For example, several governors undertook an observation day during the inspection visit, across Bow and the senior school. However, governors' monitoring of the work of the school is not fully effective. Monitoring of the EYFS and boarding is limited and has not fully discharged governors' responsibilities in these areas of the school. Governors have recently completed a skills audit to identify where greater expertise is needed so that it can take steps to increase its support and challenge to the school. New governors have recently joined the board to begin this work.
- 5.4 A number of school policies for which governors are responsible required amendment during the inspection in order for them to be fully effective. Despite this, governors take seriously their important role in overseeing health and safety, risk and safeguarding. They undertake an annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 The leadership at all levels ensures that the school strongly fulfils its aim to provide an environment where pupils can explore, make mistakes, learn and grow so that they leave the school ready to make a positive contribution to society. The school's values encourage respect for others and a democratic way of life. Policies are implemented conscientiously, whether academic or pastoral, and including those for safeguarding and welfare, health and safety. New, clear direction is moving the school forward and is already making an impact on standards and on the high levels of pastoral care.
- 5.7 Leadership in Bow, including in the EYFS, has ensured that pupils achieve well, that pastoral care is excellent and that pupils have good standards of personal development. In the EYFS, leadership ensures that the required processes for staff supervision are in place, that staff provide appropriate interventions for children, and that equality, diversity are promoted. However, there are some elements that are less strong in the EYFS and the rest of Bow. The impact of the work to actively promote fundamental British values is not fully evident. The channels of communication between Bow and the senior school are not as strong as necessary to fully promote the drive to become 'one school'. Parents report that some events clash so that they cannot attend them in both schools. Policies are sometimes unnecessarily different. For the EYFS, Years 1 and 2, too-lengthy periods of time are

allocated for snacks and breaks, reducing time for lessons and activities. The overall division of responsibilities for managing the EYFS is unclear. Self-evaluation is not well-shared, limiting its impact, for example, on EYFS development planning, which itself is not linked to the whole school plan. Some areas for EYFS development have been identified, however, meeting a recommendation of the previous inspection. Effective systems ensure the needs of children are well met regarding resources, planning and assessment. New academic and pastoral middle-leadership posts, created in the term of the inspection, have been filled by staff from the senior school. Training for the new roles is at an early stage, for example, in managing appropriate interventions according to pupils' needs in this age group. The use of data in Bow, to ensure pupils make their best progress, a recommendation of the previous inspection, is still at an early stage of development and limits the effectiveness with which Bow staff can ensure pupils' progress is as good as it can be.

- 5.8 Leadership at all levels in the senior school is strong. Restructuring has strengthened its effectiveness. Responsibilities are discharged successfully by a committed, enthusiastic and skilled senior team. Senior leaders articulate the school's aims well. Middle leaders are effective in their oversight of academic departments, though there is lack of clarity in reporting lines for heads of departments due to recent changes in structure.
- 5.9 Enhanced rigour in the monitoring of standards through comprehensive regular checks on pupils' progress has secured improvements in pupils' levels of progress and attainment in the senior school. This is especially evident in the 2015 examination results for the sixth form.
- 5.10 Aspects of senior school self-evaluation and development planning are not fully effective. The whole school development plan is not linked to other plans, and lacks a clear strategy to enhance boarding.
- 5.11 The school is successful in recruiting high-quality teaching staff, reflected in some excellent teaching. The single central register, that records staff checks before appointment, has recently been given a complete overhaul and fully meets requirements. It is meticulous and comprehensive and includes optional additional details. The administrative, maintenance and grounds staff support the school well. Extensive induction and mentoring processes give all new staff a good start. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been developed well, as recommended in the previous inspection. Internal and standardised assessment systems have increased, enabling teachers to track individual pupils' progress and set clear targets for improvement that are already having a positive impact. Teachers' and leaders' performance is regularly assessed against a rigorous set of standards. All new staff, including in the EYFS, undertake safeguarding training with key personnel receiving frequent update training. Good arrangements are in place for staff supervision, in-house coaching, mentoring and training. These arrangements have been further enhanced by the recent management restructuring and the appointment of a director of teaching and learning.
- 5.12 Throughout the school the links with parents are extremely strong. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school as shown in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires. They feel well informed and that staff know their children well. They express strong support for the aims of the school and the quality of education and care provided for their children.

- 5.13 Parents feel that any problems are dealt with swiftly. There is a suitable complaints policy and records show that concerns and complaints are dealt with appropriately.
- 5.14 Parents have ample opportunities to take part in school life. In the EYFS, parents are given opportunities to 'stay and play' before their child starts, and prospective pupils are invited to a 'taster day'. Parents of children in all year groups are offered the opportunity to attend the meeting for new parents at the senior school. Parents are welcomed to many events such as musical recitals, concerts, drama productions and sports events through the school.
- 5.15 A strong and active parents' association, the 'Friends', organises social events such as weekly coffee mornings and an annual Fundraising Ball. Parents are well informed about the progress of their children. A very small minority of parents expressed concern, in their questionnaire responses, about the quality of information they receive about their children's progress. Inspectors investigated the concern, checking records and discussing the view with the leadership. Inspection findings do not confirm the concern. Parents of all year groups attend regular parents' meetings and receive regular, detailed, written reports about their children's work and progress. The quality of these in Bow has improved following a recommendation in the previous inspection.
- 5.16 The informative prospectus provides all the necessary information for prospective and current parents. The school's website is excellent and provides extensive information about school life. This is supported by regular newsletters, in particular the 'Friday Flyer' which provides comprehensive details of news and events both within the school and the individual houses. Parents are alerted to last-minute issues through a portal link.

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