



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

TAVERHAM HALL SCHOOL

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Taverham Hall School

Full Name of School	Taverham Hall School		
DfE Number	926/6008		
Registered Charity Number	311272		
Address	Taverham Hall School Taverham Norwich Norfolk NR8 6HU		
Telephone Number	01603 868206		
Fax Number	01603 861061		
Email Address	enquire@taverhamhall.co.uk		
Headmaster	Mr Michael Crossley		
Chair of Governors	Mrs Sharon Turner		
Age Range	2 to 13		
Total Number of Pupils	298		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (186 boys; 112 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	5	5-11: 171
	3-5 (EYFS):	74	11-18: 48
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	287	
Number of Boarders	Total:	11	
	Full:	0	Weekly: 11
Inspection dates	10 Jun 2014 to 12 Jun 2014		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in May 2011 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited each of the boarding areas and the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Paul Brewster Reporting Inspector

Mrs Linda Smallwood Team Inspector (Former Deputy Head, GSA/IAPS school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Taverham Hall School is a co-educational day and boarding preparatory school for pupils between the ages of two and thirteen years, a few miles from Norwich. The school is based around Taverham Hall, a neo-Jacobean mansion built in 1858, set in 100 acres of parkland with woods, and the River Wensum flowing through. The school was established in 1921 and became an educational trust in 1967, with governors as trustees. There are now eight governors, all of whom have clear areas of responsibility.
- 1.2 The boarding facilities and prep school classrooms are in the main hall. The school offers an extended day and the opportunity for weekly or flexible boarding. There are no full boarders. Boarding accommodation for boys and girls is located on two, separate floors with residential staff accommodation adjacent.
- 1.3 The pre-preparatory department, Nursery and a sports hall are in separate purpose-built buildings. The grounds provide space for a woodland learning environment, as well as for sporting, outdoor and country activities.
- 1.4 The school aims to ensure that pupils feel cared for, valued and happy and that they leave the school as well-rounded, confident individuals.
- 1.5 The school has 298 pupils of whom 160 are in Years 3 to 8. There are 11 weekly boarders and 27 regular flexi-boarders, staying for at least one night per week. The school has identified 58 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 36 of whom receive specialist learning support. Three pupils have English as an additional language. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.6 Since the previous inspection a new outdoor classroom has been constructed in the woods, river access is provided, and there is the improved facility of an artificial playing pitch. The staff appraisal and performance management process has been updated and the staffing arrangements for finance and general administration have been restructured. A new dormitory has been created which is specifically for the older boys and refurbishment has taken place in both the girls' and boys' boarding areas.
- 1.7 The vast majority of pupils are white British, with very few from minority ethnic groups. Their families live relatively near the school and have business or professional backgrounds.
- 1.8 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendation for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Introduce regular formal reviews for boarding staff which lead to a systematic approach to general boarding training.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in May 2011. There were no recommendations.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New boarders are welcomed by staff and by older boarders who act as 'buddies'. The boarding handbook gives appropriate guidance to new families. There are several staff to whom boarders can turn when upset or in need of personal guidance, including independent figures, such as clergy, whose contact details, together with external helpline numbers, are displayed in house. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Medical arrangements are overseen by suitably-qualified medical staff who, together with residential staff, provide 24-hour care. There are clear and thorough policies for first aid and medication which are rigorously followed. Records are correctly maintained and medicines stored securely. Doctor's appointments, and ancillary or emergency medical treatment can be arranged if parents are unable to do so. The few pupils who self-medicate are appropriately assessed and monitored. Patients' confidentiality is respected. Accommodation for boarders who are ill is suitable. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 None of the boarders are in school at the weekend, so all see their families regularly. Boarders may have mobile phones, and all have access to school computers and house phones. Although a very small minority of pupil responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire suggested contacting family and friends is difficult, inspection evidence indicates that boarders can contact home easily. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 The boarding accommodation is secure; girls' dormitories on the first floor and boys' dormitories on the second floor are light, suitably furnished and well maintained. Boarders have access to classrooms and a computer room for homework, and the older boarders have desks in their rooms for their own private study. The bathrooms are spacious, clean and afford appropriate privacy, as do screens in the dormitories. Boarders are able to personalise their own areas, and many do. Members of the public that hire school facilities in term time do not have unsupervised access to boarding accommodation. There is no CCTV installed. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Boarders enjoy a variety of nutritious meals and healthy snacks in the dining room. Portions are ample and there is choice and provision of individually planned meals for those with special dietary requirements. The storage areas and kitchens are orderly and hygienic. Fruit is always available and bottled water is supplied in the boarding areas. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Adequate laundry provision for clothing and bedding is made in house. There is ample storage space for belongings. Valuables may be secured in a staff cupboard or lockable boxes, and boarders feel that their belongings are safe. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 There is a suitable range of facilities and activities enjoyed by boarders at the end of the school day. Boarders have enough study and free time. The grounds offer a variety of safe play areas and the accommodation affords activity and quiet spaces. Newspapers and supervised internet access provide information about current affairs. School trips and weekends at home ensure that boarders have experience of the wider community. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school has written and implemented a suitable policy on compliance with relevant health and safety laws. Risk assessments are carried out for all areas of the school, including activities both on and off site. Facilities are properly maintained and there is regular, documented testing of school safety equipment. [NMS6]
- 3.11 Measures to prevent fire are secure; they include a suitable fire assessment and equipment is tested regularly. All necessary fire records are maintained and drills are carried out termly during boarding time, including at night. Staff explain procedures personally to new boarders. [NMS7]
- 3.12 Boarders say that they feel safe and very well cared for. Child protection measures are implemented effectively and monitored annually by the governing body. They are contained in an up-to-date policy that is in accord with official guidance. All staff are regularly updated on child protection matters and are aware of what to do should there be a concern about a boarder's welfare. The suitably trained safeguarding lead maintains close links with boarding staff to share any pastoral concerns. [NMS11]
- 3.13 Good behaviour is promoted by appropriate policies which are consistently implemented. Boarders say that behaviour is typically kind and positive, and that disagreements are quickly resolved with help from senior boarders, Gap Year students and boarding staff. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of boarders said that boarding staff treat them fairly although a small minority of respondents said that teachers are inconsistent in their use of sanctions. Records show that small misdemeanours are carefully tracked and appropriate sanctions are in place for more serious offences. Boarders confirm that the school's firm approach to bullying ensures that any incidents are effectively resolved. All boarders in Years 7 and 8 are expected to look after younger boarders and they take this responsibility seriously. [NMS12]
- 3.14 All adults aged over 16 living within the same building as the boarders are employed by the school. All staff appointments made since the previous inspection have undergone the required recruitment checks and visitors and outside contractors are suitably supervised. The school does not appoint guardians. [NMS14]

3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 Parents and boarders say that the school is successful in its stated aim, to ensure the boarders feel cared for, valued and happy and that they leave the school as well-rounded, confident individuals. This aim is openly published and known by staff, boarders and parents. [NMS1]
- 3.17 Resident senior managers effectively oversee the boarding arrangements, which are implemented effectively by resident house staff. A whole-school development plan is produced by school leaders working with governors, and contains within it suitable objectives for boarding provision. Boarding staff meetings are held weekly. Written records of concerns and incidents in boarding time are kept by senior staff. These measures effectively monitor the boarders' progress and general well-being. All the required boarding records are maintained and monitored regularly. [NMS13]
- 3.18 Staff with boarding duties have clear job descriptions. A comprehensive induction process enables new members of staff to gain the necessary knowledge and confidence. Boarding training is undertaken as staff ask for it and informal staff reviews are used to set targets and identify opportunities for professional development. Formal appraisal and review systems for boarding staff are not in place limiting opportunities for systematic monitoring of boarding. The boarders are well supervised in their free time, and staff know the boarders' whereabouts at all times. An effective policy on missing children is understood by staff. Appropriate adults are readily contactable at night, living in self-contained flats that are only accessed by boarders under supervision. [NMS15]
- 3.19 The school's inclusive ethos ensures that boarders do not experience discrimination. Boarding staff are aware of their individual needs. They ensure that activities are inclusive and that individuals, including those with SEND, are supported sensitively. Boarders report that they are extremely happy with their boarding experience. [NMS16]
- 3.20 Suggestion boxes, a termly boarders' forum and the school council allow boarders to offer their views. They can also raise issues or concerns informally with staff. Boarders say that these mechanisms are effective and that they have resulted in visible improvements. [NMS17]
- 3.21 A suitable complaints procedure for parents operates effectively and records are properly kept. Almost all parents of boarders who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were satisfied with the school's handling of concerns. [NMS18]
- 3.22 There is no prefectorial system. [NMS19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for pupils. [NMS20]