



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD COLLEGE JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**BOARDING WELFARE  
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Bishop's Stortford College Junior School

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

|                           |   |            |        |            |
|---------------------------|---|------------|--------|------------|
| Full Name of School       | <b>Bishop's Stortford College Junior School</b>   |            |        |            |
| DfE Number                | <b>919/6007</b>   |            |        |            |
| Registered Charity Number | <b>311057</b>   |            |        |            |
| Address                   | <b>Bishop's Stortford College Junior School<br/>Maze Green Road<br/>Bishop's Stortford<br/>Hertfordshire<br/>CM23 2PH</b> |            |        |            |
| Telephone Number          | <b>01279 838607</b>   |            |        |            |
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| Email Address             | <b>jsadmissions@bishopsstortfordcollege.org</b>   |            |        |            |
| Head                      | <b>Mr John Greathead</b>  |            |        |            |
| Chair of Governors        | <b>Dr Philip Hargrave</b>   |            |        |            |
| Age Range                 | <b>4 to 13</b>  |            |        |            |
| Total Number of Pupils    | <b>566</b>  |            |        |            |
| Gender of Pupils          | <b>Mixed (306 boys; 260 girls)</b>  |            |        |            |
| Numbers by Age            | 0-2 (EYFS):   | <b>0</b>   | 5-11:  | <b>329</b> |
|                           | 3-5 (EYFS):   | <b>42</b>  | 11-13: | <b>195</b> |
| Number of Day Pupils      | Total:  | <b>513</b> |        |            |
| Number of Boarders        | Total:  | <b>53</b>  |        |            |
|                           | Full:   | <b>10</b>  | Weekly | <b>3</b>   |
|                           |   |            | Flexi: | <b>40</b>  |
| Inspection dates          | <b>24 Apr 2013 to 26 Apr 2013</b>   |            |        |            |

## 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 February 2010 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 chairman of governors and another governor, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions. Inspectors visited the boarding house 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 Spillane

Mrs Claire Grant

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding  
(Director of Studies, IAPS school)

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Bishop's Stortford College Junior School is the co-educational preparatory school of Bishop's Stortford College in Hertfordshire. It shares a 130-acre site with the senior school, to which almost all pupils transfer at the age of thirteen. The Junior School opened in 1902, and provides day and boarding education for pupils aged 7 to 13. The Pre-Prep department was added in 1995, providing day education to pupils aged 4 to 7. The college headmaster oversees the whole college and the day-to-day running of the senior school. Separate heads of the Junior School and Pre-Prep oversee the day-to-day running of their sections of the college, and both are governed by the college's single governing body.
- 1.2 The Junior School has its own buildings, but also shares with the senior school and the Pre-Prep facilities such as the dining hall, swimming pool, sports hall and playing fields.
- 1.3 The school's stated aim is to provide an all-round education producing happy, confident children with a good, positive attitude to work, to life and to other people. The school also seeks to encourage pupils to develop an awareness of the needs of all whom they meet.
- 1.4 There are 566 pupils in the school, comprising 306 boys and 260 girls. Of the 53 boarders, 37 are boys and 16 are girls. The school has identified 22 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Approximately 20 pupils speak English as an additional language.
- 1.5 Boarders are looked after by resident house parents, assisted by matrons, resident and visiting tutors, and GAP Year students. Pupils board on a full, weekly or flexible basis.
- 1.6 Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of college headmaster, the present incumbent having taken up his appointment in September 2011.
- 1.7 National Curriculum (NC) 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 equivalence are shown in the following table.

| School      | NC name |
|-------------|---------|
| Lower Shell | Year 3  |
| Upper Shell | Year 4  |
| Form 1      | Year 5  |
| Form 2      | Year 6  |
| Lower Third | Year 7  |
| Upper Third | Year 8  |

## **2. SUMMARY**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2011.

### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Upgrade the boys' downstairs washroom and lavatories in the boarding house.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

2.3 Since the previous inspection, undertaken by Ofsted in 2010, the school has successfully met the one recommendation made, to ensure that boarders' evening meals are of adequate quality.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 The school's effective induction process enables boarders to settle quickly. Prospective boarders are offered a 'taster' day, useful written information is sent out and 'shadows' are assigned to new boarders. Boarders say that staff are always available to deal with any concerns. Contact details of helplines are publicised on notice boards and boarders have access to the school's chaplain, counsellor and independent listener. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Appropriate policies and arrangements are established for the care of boarders who are unwell, including provision for first aid, chronic conditions and disabilities. A suitably equipped medical centre for the whole college is staffed by qualified nurses and there is close liaison between medical and residential staff. The administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication is appropriately controlled. Boarders have access to local medical, dental, optometric and other specialist services or provision. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders confirm that they can contact family members and friends in private, electronically or by telephone. The school applies appropriate controls regarding internet use. Parents are encouraged to visit the boarding house whenever they are in school. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents were unanimously satisfied with all aspects of the boarding provision. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 The fabric, furniture, fixtures and fittings of the boarding house are treated with care, and the house is well lit, ventilated, heated and cleaned. Boarders can personalise their bedrooms and they are provided with clean, warm bedding. Washing facilities have a suitable level of privacy. There is an appropriate number of showers, baths and lavatories. The standard of the boys' downstairs washroom and lavatories falls below that provided elsewhere, in terms of the general condition of the room and its facilities. Boarders have a range of private and communal places, including the information and communication technology room, in which to study. Rooms and facilities for boys and girls and for boarders and adults are suitably separated. Appropriate measures provide effective security for the house. The school's CCTV cameras do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In their responses to the questionnaire, a significant minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food provided. During the inspection, however, the meals were found to be nutritious and varied, with plentiful portions prepared and served in hygienic conditions. Those with particular dietary needs are suitably provided for. Boarders have ample access to drinking water. They are also offered fruit and milk during morning break. In the evening they can collect snack food from their tuck boxes and older boarders can make toast in the small kitchen. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry arrangements are efficient. Boarders have their own places to keep their possessions and valuables may be locked away securely. House parents replace toiletries and stationery supplies as necessary. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 Boarders enjoy a wide range of activities during the week and at weekends. There is a full programme on Saturdays and outings are arranged for the boarders on Sundays. Many indoor and outdoor recreational spaces are available to the boarders, including places where they can be alone. Newspapers and television help to keep boarders abreast of events in the wider world. [NMS10]



### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Detailed policies and procedures support the welfare, health and safety of boarders. The procedures for ensuring safety when on and off the premises address all reasonable risks. The younger boarders are escorted to facilities, such as the dining hall, which are located across the road. The school commissions external consultants to carry out regular audits of its health and safety provision. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school complies fully with fire regulations. Measures to prevent risk from fire are comprehensive; the school undertakes systematic fire prevention checks and safety audits, keeping detailed records. Regular fire drills take place by day and when boarders may be expected to be asleep. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school makes the required arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of its pupils. Appropriately trained, all staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection. The governors carry out their responsibilities for child protection, and the full board receives and reviews annual reports on the school's policies and procedures and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 Pupils and staff understand the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies. Boarders report that bullying is not a concern and they are confident that any instances would be dealt with promptly and fairly. A few reservations were expressed in boarders' responses to the questionnaire regarding the fairness of sanctions. However, all boarders interviewed said that sanctions are fair and proportionate. Boarders feel safe and get on well together. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school follows safe recruitment procedures and the central register of appointments is accurately maintained. Visitors to the school do not have access to the boarding house, except with the permission of house staff and under supervision. Residents on the premises who are over the age of sixteen and are not employed by the school have criminal records checks and have signed agreements about their terms of residence. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A suitable statement of boarding principles and practice is published to staff and parents. It is made known to the boarders and is fully implemented. [NMS1]
- 3.17 The house parents provide clear leadership of boarding. The governors support and value the boarding experience and give significant attention to boarding in the development plan. Boarding staff are suitably trained, with experienced staff being instrumental in the induction of new members of the team. Links between the pastoral and academic staff are effective, maintained formally through regular meetings, informally through daily communication and also through the help given in the evenings to boarders with SEND. Required records specified are suitably maintained and stored. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All staff working with boarders have clear job descriptions, induction training and regular opportunities for professional development. Staff supervision rotas are published on notice boards. At all times, boarders know who is responsible for them and staff know the whereabouts of boarders in their care. The school has a suitable policy for missing pupils, which has not needed to be implemented. At least one

member of staff is resident in the house overnight and boarders know how to contact that individual if necessary. Adult accommodation is separate from that of the boarders, and staff are given appropriate guidance over the suitability of boarders visiting staff accommodation. [NMS 15]

- 3.19 Boarders, including those from overseas, confirm that they are well cared for and that staff treat them equally, in accordance with the school's equality and anti-discrimination policy. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders' views are gathered through periodic questionnaires, and boarding staff are always responsive to suggestions and views. Boarders spoke positively of the ways in which their opinions and proposals are taken into account, listing improvements that had been initiated by pupils. Boarders are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school's complaints procedure complies with regulations. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 House monitors help to ensure the smooth running of the house, but do not have any disciplinary powers. They carry out their duties conscientiously. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]