



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

AMPLEFORTH COLLEGE

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Ampleforth College

Full Name of School/College	Ampleforth College
DfE Number	815/6006
Registered Charity Number	1063808
Address	Ampleforth College Ampleforth York North Yorkshire YO62 4ER
Telephone Number	01439 766000
Fax Number	01439 788330
Email Address	admin@ampleforth.org.uk
Headmaster	Mr David Lambon
Chair of Governors	Father Cuthbert Madden, Abbot of Ampleforth
Age Range	13 to 18
Total Number of Pupils	569
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (384 boys; 185 girls)
Number of Day Pupils	Total: 86
Number of Boarders	Total: 483 Full: 483
Inspection Dates	19 Jan 2016 to 21 Jan 2016

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, as amended. 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.

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 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 trustees responsible for governance, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended registration sessions and an assembly. Inspectors visited each of the boarding houses 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

Mrs Ruth McFarlane	Reporting Inspector
Mr Peter Last	Team Inspector for Boarding (Assistant Head and Head of Boarding, HMC school)
Mrs Diane Riley	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of Welfare and Boarding, ISA school)
Mr Joss Williams	Team Inspector for Boarding (former Pastoral Deputy Head and Boarding Housemaster, HMC school)

CONTENTS

	Page
1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL	1
2 SUMMARY	2
(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements	2
(ii) Recommendations for further improvement	2
(iii) Progress since the previous inspection	2
3 COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS	3
(a) Boarding provision and care	3
(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding	4
(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision	5

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Ampleforth College is located adjacent to a Benedictine monastery on a 60-acre site on the North York Moors, North Yorkshire. It is a Roman Catholic co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged 13 to 18. Ampleforth Abbey operates the school through the St Laurence Education Trust, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ampleforth Abbey Trust. The trustees of the St Laurence Education Trust are the legal governors of the school. The chair of the Trust is the Abbot of Ampleforth.
- 1.2 The school's mission is to share with parents the spiritual, moral and intellectual formation of their children, in a Benedictine community, with which their families may be joined in friendship and prayer for the rest of their lives. The school aims to educate the young in the tradition and sacramental life of the Church; to encourage each pupil towards a joyful, free and self-disciplined life of faith and virtue; and to work for excellence in all endeavours, academic, sporting and cultural.
- 1.3 Most pupils board at the school in one of ten boarding houses. The boarding houses, of which three are for girls and seven are for boys, are located on the school site and comprises boarders of mixed ages. All housemasters and housemistresses are laypersons. Since the previous inspection a number of new members of the senior team have been appointment, including the school's first lay headmaster in September 2014.
- 1.4 The school has 569 pupils in total, of whom 483 are boarders (364 boys and 145 girls). The sixth form comprises of 253 pupils, 220 of whom are boarders. Of the 162 pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 43 receive specialist learning support from the school, 2 of whom have education, health and care (EHC) plans. Of the 131 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), 60 require language support.
- 1.5 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
Fourth Form	Year 9
Fifth Form	Year 10
Remove	Year 11
Middle Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Complete the work to ensure that provision and practice, including in granting privileges and the use of mobile telephones, is consistent across the houses.
2. Improve boarders' awareness of school councils, encourage them to participate, and ensure that their views receive prompt and effective responses.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken as part of an integrated inspection by ISI in January 2013. All of the National Minimum Standards were met. There were no boarding 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 A suitable induction programme for boarders includes a comprehensive handbook. This is supported by noticeboards which provide full guidance on the school's core values and its routines, rules and policies. Information provided includes boarder support networks, including contact details for independent listeners and the Children's Commissioner. House chaplains, a counsellor, and house and infirmary staff offer additional support. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 Qualified staff maintain a well-equipped infirmary with properly segregated accommodation, toilet and washing facilities. Policies and regularly monitored practice cover all requirements including first aid and care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, to ensure boarders' physical and mental health and their emotional well-being. Most boarders agreed, in their responses to pre-inspection questionnaire, that they are well looked after when ill or injured. Medicines are correctly stored, issued, secured and recorded. Homely remedies are stored and administered safely in each boarding house. Local medical professionals include a doctor who holds a daily surgery. Other specialists are available. In consultation with a doctor, staff assess boarders' needs and competence to self-medicate and to issue or withhold consent to treatment. Confidentiality and patients' rights are respected. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 A few boarders stated in their questionnaire responses that making contact with family and friends from outside school is not easy. This was not supported during checks made in boarding houses. Boarders are able to contact family and friends in private house landlines and electronic media, but arrangements differ from house to house regarding the use of mobile telephones. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All boarding accommodation is appropriate, well maintained, heated, well-lit and ventilated, with space for study and for social interaction. A suitable rolling programme of refurbishment and improvement to the boarding facilities is evident. Boarders are permitted to personalise their areas. Sleeping accommodation is protected from unauthorised access. Toilet and washing facilities are adequate and provide appropriate privacy. Reasonable adjustments are made for boarders with restricted mobility, such as lifts in some houses. Security arrangements do not intrude on boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 The provision of food is based on a four-week cycle of menus which offer nutritious choice, variety and quantity. Food is prepared, served and eaten centrally, in hygienic surroundings. All allergens are clearly identified and special dietary requirements are catered for. Water and fresh fruit are available at every meal and also in the boarding houses. A majority of boarders reported in the questionnaire that the food is not good. Boarders agreed widely during discussions that the situation had improved recently. A minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction in the questionnaire with regards to the availability of snacks. In visits to all of the boarding houses, appropriate provision was noted. Boarders can purchase additional snacks within school. When needed, the infirmary draws up care plans to ensure that boarders with disabilities can eat with choice and dignity. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Care of boarders' personal laundry and bedding is effective. Appropriate arrangements ensure that clean laundry is returned to the appropriate boarder. Older boarders are permitted to do their own laundry where facilities permit.

Boarders can purchase necessary personal items within school. A small minority reported in their questionnaire responses that they do not feel that their belongings are safe. All boarders have their own lockable space and they can also deposit valuable items and pocket money with staff for safekeeping. The search policy is written in accordance with the latest guidance and records are kept when searches are conducted. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 Boarders are provided a balance between free time and the wide variety of suitably risk-assessed activities, ranging from robotics to forestry in addition to music and sport. They also have access to local facilities appropriate for their age. Boarders enjoy a choice of safe recreational areas where they can be alone or in company. In the library and in their houses, boarders have access to information about global events. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Appropriately trained house staff ensure thorough implementation of the written risk assessment policy and health and safety policies, including a school safety charter. These documents reflect current guidance and requirements. Effective implementation ensures that the premises are maintained in a condition which safeguards boarders' welfare and protects their well-being, health and safety. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 Fire safety procedures, risk assessments and practices are suitable. House staff are trained appropriately to act as fire marshals for their house. They hold regular fire drills and keep clear records. Boarders confirmed that regular drills occur during boarding time. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Almost all boarders in their questionnaire responses stated that they feel safe at school, and all the parents who responded agreed. An up-to-date safeguarding policy is available to parents on the school website and also by request. Close links are maintained with outside agencies. Records show that matters to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Those with specific responsibilities ensure that any new information is promptly disseminated to all staff and that all staff training is up to date. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school promotes values of respect, honesty, politeness, resilience, listening and kindness, and these inform written policies for good behaviour and positive conduct. All parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school achieves high standards of behaviour. Detailed policies to combat bullying include cyberbullying. A few boarders indicated in their questionnaire responses that they feel that bullying is not effectively dealt with. Checks of records and discussions showed that incidents that are reported are dealt with promptly, effectively and according to the school's policies. A minority of boarders felt that some teachers are unfair in issuing rewards and sanctions. Suitable systems of rules and sanctions are implemented and suitably recorded. The protocols for physical restraint are appropriate. Checks of records and discussions with staff and boarders showed that, while sanctions are fairly applied, practice is inconsistent from house to house regarding the awarding of privileges. For example boarders in some houses, but not others, are occasionally permitted 'lie-ins' or breakfast in-house'. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school operates appropriate policies to ensure safe recruitment. Prospective staff are checked thoroughly for their suitability to work with children before appointment. Details are recorded systematically and accurately on a centralised

register. The school does not appoint guardians for boarders. Written agreements and criminal record checks are undertaken for those over 16 who are not employed by the school but live in boarding houses. Visitors are suitably supervised to prevent any unauthorised access to boarders or their accommodation. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A statement of the school's boarding principles is available in handbooks and through the parent portal. Practice in the houses fully reflects its principles. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 Governance, leadership and management of the school actively promote boarders' well-being. The trustees monitor the effectiveness of all aspects of boarding and ensure its successful leadership and management, and its development. The leadership team has begun work to ensure that practice is consistent across the houses, but this work is not yet complete. Communication between pastoral and academic staff is effective. Boarding management demonstrates good skills and knowledge, and is suitably experienced and trained. Regular formal and informal communication ensures that regulations are monitored. All required policies are maintained, with action taken as appropriate, to improve boarders' outcomes. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 All staff and volunteers involved in boarding are appropriately experienced, receive induction, and receive regular performance reviews. All have written, defined roles. The role of spouses and other adult members of staff households is made clear. Supervision by staff outside teaching time is sufficient. Staff studies are accessible to boarders to encourage interaction and accessibility. Boarders are aware of which member of staff is on duty and how to contact staff by day and at night. Staff know where boarders are through suitable registration. The written procedures, should a boarder be missing, are understood by staff. Staff living accommodation is separate and appropriate; any access is properly supervised. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Attention is paid by trustees, leaders and staff to ensure that all boarders enjoy equal status. Consequently boarders do not feel discriminated against, whatever their background or ability. Religious, cultural and other differences are celebrated and respected. Policies have appropriate regard and sensitivity to the needs of all, including those with SEND or EAL. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A minority of boarders stated in their questionnaire responses that their views are neither asked for nor responded to. Inspection evidence found that the school operates a wide variety of forums and councils that encourage boarders to provide their views and to have an input into the provision of boarding. These include year-group committees, house councils and social committees. Boarders are not penalised for raising issues in good faith. The groups are not always publicised sufficiently to encourage boarders to attend. Inspection evidence shows that not all matters raised receive prompt and effective feedback from the school. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school responds to complaints according to suitable published procedures. Logs of complaints identify those which relate to boarding, along with the action taken. Parents express a high degree of satisfaction with all aspects of the boarding provision. Comments from a very few parents indicated that they would appreciate quicker acknowledgement of their communications with the school, and more detailed explanations of any changes made to current practice. The inspection found that the systems allow for efficient response. [NMS 18]

- 3.22 Senior boarders in positions of responsibility are known as monitors and are selected, trained and inducted appropriately. They are supervised appropriately. A small minority of boarders indicated dissatisfaction in their questionnaire responses with the opportunities for responsibility available. Boarding houses offer leadership opportunities at all levels. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for boarders. [NMS 20]