



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

MOUNT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

BOARDING WELFARE

INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Mount St Mary's College

Full Name of College	Mount St Mary's College		
DfE Number	830/6014		
Registered Charity Number	230165		
Address	Mount St Mary's College College Road Derbyshire S21 3YL		
Telephone Number	01246 433388		
Fax Number	01246 435511		
Email Address	info@msmcollege.com		
Headmaster	Dr Nicholas Cuddihy		
Chair of Governors	Mr Jim Kelly		
Age Range	11 to 19		
Total Number of Pupils	263		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (153 boys; 110 girls)		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	0	5-11: 0
	3-5 (EYFS):	0	11-19: 263
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	213	
Number of Boarders	Total:	50	
	Full:	41	Weekly: 9
Inspection dates	18 to 20 Nov 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 June 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 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 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 Deborah Forbes

Mr Robert Gower

Reporting Inspector

Team Inspector for Boarding (Former Boarding
Housemaster and Director of Music, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL1

- 1.1 Mount St Mary's College is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged 11 to 18 situated near the borders of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. Its aims are based on the principles of Ignatius Loyola and the Society of Jesus that he founded. The school seeks to foster in its pupils the development of the whole person, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, artistic and physical, recognising that each one is unique in the eyes of God. It aims to instil in them a love of truth and a knowledge of self. It is an inclusive school which educates pupils in the Jesuit tradition. The Mount Trust was established in 2006 and has a board of governors who are responsible for the management and control of the trust and its schools. The headmaster was appointed in September 2014 and is the chief executive officer of the trust.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection there has been significant change in governance and leadership arrangements. There are currently 263 pupils in the school, 153 boys and 110 girls, of whom 50 are boarders, distributed evenly between boys and girls. Most of the boarders are full boarders but the school also accommodates some weekly- and some flexi-boarders. They are drawn from the local area and the majority come from a range of overseas countries, some from other Jesuit colleges elsewhere in the world. Most pupils in the school are from professional, business and agricultural backgrounds. The school has identified 58 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), 31 of whom receive specialist learning support from the school. There are 33 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and they all receive support for their English. There are three pupils with a statement of special educational needs. There are two boarding houses, one for boys and one for girls, both within the school grounds
- 1.3 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
Upper elements	Year 7
Figures	Year 8
Rudiments	Year 9
Grammar	Year 10
Syntax	Year 11
Poetry	Year 12
Rhetoric	Year 13

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school does not meet all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013, and therefore it must:

- devise a written policy to promote good behaviour which is accurately replicated in all relevant material published by the school [National Minimum Standards 12.1, under Promoting positive behaviour];
- ensure that the policy to promote positive behaviour complies with relevant legislation and guidance [National Minimum Standards 12.2, under Promoting positive behaviour];
- ensure that it allocates sufficient time, opportunity and resources to the management and leadership of boarding [National Minimum Standard 13.1, under Management and development of boarding].

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.2 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Establish a system of regular review and updating of school policies, ensuring that only a single version of each is published and on the school website.
2. Provide those boarders who study in their bedrooms with adequate lighting for their desks.
3. Ensure that boarders have adequate opportunities to access information about the world outside the school.
4. Make more formal the arrangements for boarders to make known their views, and the school's responses to them.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in June 2011. The school was recommended to involve the pupils more in consultation about the meals and to provide cooking facilities for the boys. There were recommendations about replacing locks on boarders' bathrooms and bedroom doors. The school was also recommended to ensure that boarders fully understood the anti-bullying procedure and to monitor the records. Fire safety training should be provided for all boarding staff. Management and monitoring systems in the boarding houses needed to be improved. The school has responded fully to the recommendations with the exception of improving management systems within boarding.

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 boarding family handbook provides comprehensive initial information for both parents and boarders. Senior boarding staff lead induction for boarders when they first arrive at the school. Boarders reported that they were well looked after throughout this introductory process. A small minority of pre-inspection questionnaire responses suggested that boarders did not know what to do if they were worried or unhappy, but, in interview, they said that they can always turn to a range of staff for personal guidance. Contact details for an independent listener and national helplines are prominently displayed in houses. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The school has appropriate policies for the care of boarders who are unwell; these are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are current. Qualified nurses staff the medical centre, which has appropriate accommodation for sick or injured pupils. Referrals are made to external professionals as necessary. The nursing staff have devised their own phrasebook of useful questions to assist in the care of sick boarders who have EAL. All medicines are securely stored and any medication given to boarders is appropriately recorded. Boarders may self-medicate after assessment by the medical centre. Confidentiality is observed. Boarders reported that they are well looked after if they are ill. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 A small minority of questionnaire responses suggested that boarders did not find it easy to contact their family and friends, but inspection evidence indicated that, although the wi-fi provision can be erratic, boarders have no difficulty in contacting families and friends, whether by phone, internet or e-mail. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Boarding houses have refurbished accommodation, in which the majority of rooms are spacious and single, with en-suite facilities. Many boarders have their own rooms although some prefer to share a room. Furniture is modern and purpose-built and bedding is warm. Boarders can personalise their rooms with posters and pictures. They have their own desks in their rooms but, as no desk lamps are provided, the lighting is inadequate. Boarders reported that they feel safe in their houses. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 Pre-inspection questionnaire responses reported that a minority of boarders were unhappy with the food provided, but in interviews they did not confirm this view as a priority issue. Inspection evidence found that the food is plentiful and nutritious. A food committee offers boarding pupils a further forum for their views. Based on the school's healthy eating policy, menus are varied and offer choice, including a vegetarian option. Provision is made for those with dietary needs or food allergies. Catering staff receive regular food hygiene training. Boarders can make their own snacks in house kitchens, whilst a daytime and evening tuck shop provides hot food and drinks. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 A weekly on-site laundry service is provided and boarders may also use washing machines in the houses if they prefer to wash their own clothes. Although a small minority of questionnaire responses indicated that boarders did not feel their belongings were safe, the inspection team noted that pupils have their own room keys and further lockable space is also provided, both within rooms and by boarding staff. Boarders make trips to Sheffield to buy necessary items, in addition to using the school shop. [NMS 9]

3.8 A wide range of weekday activities is offered, from which boarders must choose at least three. They say that they enjoy the varied programme of weekend outings, and contribute their own suggestions. Comfortable common rooms in the boarding houses are complemented by a large social area where boarders can socialise with those from other houses. The school facilities include a fitness centre and swimming pool, in addition to the extensive grounds. For those wishing to spend time alone or quietly, the centrally placed chapel is available. The internet is the main source of current affairs news; newspapers are not made available. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

3.9 The school does not meet one of the NMS under this section.

3.10 The school has a health and safety committee which meets regularly to consider the needs of the school. The health and safety policy complies with relevant health and safety laws, and the school is diligent in ensuring that all requirements are met. Equipment is regularly tested, staff are appropriately trained and risk assessments are carried out for all areas of the school buildings and grounds as well as for outings and trips. The school buildings are maintained to a satisfactory standard in order to ensure the safety of the pupils. [NMS 6]

3.11 Fire risk assessments have been carried out for all parts of the school and all fire-fighting equipment is regularly tested. Staff receive training as appropriate and boarding staff can do fire safety training online. The alarms are tested weekly, and fire practices are held and recorded every term, both in the school day and in boarding time. Fire exits are clearly marked and boarders reported that they know what to do if an alarm sounds. The school has an appropriate policy for fire safety. [NMS 7]

3.12 The school has and implements an appropriate policy for safeguarding its pupils. All staff and volunteers receive regular training, having regard to the most recent official guidance. The governing body has nominated one of its members to liaise with the school and to oversee the school's annual audit of safeguarding. The governing body annually reviews the policy and procedures and the effectiveness of their implementation. The school distinguishes between children in need and children at risk and puts measures in place, including inter-agency working, to meet their needs. [NMS 11]

3.13 The school promotes positive behaviour through praise and encouragement. Sanctions for poor behaviour are applied less frequently than rewards for good behaviour, and boarders regard them as fair and proportionate. Both staff and boarders understand the systems and report that there are few instances of bullying. In pre-inspection questionnaire responses a very few boarders indicated that bullying was not dealt with but, in interview, pupils expressed confidence that it is dealt with effectively. The school takes suitable steps to record, manage and monitor any bullying behaviour which is identified. The policy that outlines the promotion of good behaviour lacks consistency and sufficient clarity. It does not inform or reflect the practice within the school and confusingly, is presented in different versions. There are separate protocols for physical restraint and searching pupils and their possessions, although the school has not recently had to put them into practice. [NMS 12]

3.14 Staff recruitment follows carefully the official requirements and current practice is rigorous in carrying out the necessary checks. In the past the school has not been meticulous in ensuring that the necessary checks have been completed before a

member of staff begins work but past errors have been rectified and safe recruitment is now a priority. Persons living on the school site but not employed by the school are checked appropriately and the school has a written agreement with them specifying the terms of their accommodation. All persons visiting boarding accommodation are kept under supervision and cannot gain unsupervised access to boarding accommodation. The school does not arrange guardians for pupils. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school does not meet one of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The school has a statement of boarding principles and practice which is available to parents, staff and pupils in written documentation. Boarders understand well the way in which boarding operates and the benefits they gain from it. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The practice and development of boarding in the school lack clarity of leadership. The structure of staffing offers plentiful supervision of the boarders but an absence of continuity means that the boarding houses lack cohesion and an opportunity to develop a sense of identity. Senior boarding staff have insufficient time, opportunity and resources to develop practice in accordance with the aims of the school. They have adequate levels of training and experience. There is frequent communication between academic and boarding staff, assisted by use of the school's management information system. Records specified in Appendix 2 of the NMS are maintained and monitored. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Those working in boarding have job descriptions and receive some induction training when appointed to their roles. They are able to shadow more experienced members of staff when they begin work. There is no appraisal process for boarding staff and no opportunities exist for continual professional development. There are sufficient staff to supervise boarders outside teaching time and boarders are always clear who is responsible for them. Staff know how to contact boarders in their charge but boarders do not have to sign out unless they are leaving the campus. There are always at least two adults sleeping in boarding accommodation and boarders report that they know how to contact them at night should the need arise. Staff have a sound knowledge of what they should do if a boarder cannot be found. Staff accommodation is separated from the boarders and boarders do not enter it. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarding staff are aware that a large proportion of the boarders are from overseas and the boarding tutors' handbook devotes a substantial section to advice on how to help such boarders integrate with others and feel included. Boarders all reported that they found the environment friendly and they did not experience discrimination on any grounds. The school has no equality of opportunity policy or three year disability access plan. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 Boarders have some opportunities to express their views in the boarders' council and in house meetings. The school carries out questionnaires to ascertain their views. In their responses to pre-inspection questionnaires a minority of boarders reported that the school did not seek or listen to their views. Inspection evidence indicated that the boarders do have opportunities to express their opinions but arrangements can be informal and irregular. [NMS 17]

- 3.21 The school has a policy on responding to complaints which meets the relevant regulatory standards. It keeps records of all complaints made but aims to address them quickly and at an informal level. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 The boarding houses have house seniors who are senior pupils with responsibilities for organising some aspects of house life. They have no disciplinary role. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The school does not arrange lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]