



QEH
BRISTOL

INSPECTION REPORT

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**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS COUNCIL
(ISC)**

INSPECTION OF

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL

By the

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE
(ISI)**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Queen Elizabeth's Hospital

Full Name of the School	Queen Elizabeth's Hospital
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Age Range	11 to 18
Gender	Boys
Inspection Dates	3rd to 6th November 2008

This inspection report follows the framework laid down by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The inspection was carried out under the arrangements of the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership. It was also carried out under Section 162A(1)(b) of the Education Act 2002 as amended by the Education Act 2005, under the provisions of which the Secretary of State for Education and Skills accredited ISI as the body approved for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to ISC Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended with effect from January 2005 and May 2007.

The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Queen Elizabeth's Hospital (QEH) was founded in 1586 by John Carr, a Bristol merchant, who in his will provided for a Bluecoat school in Bristol on the lines of Christ's Hospital in London. The School's Charter was granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1590 when QEH opened and was specifically charged with "the education of poor children and orphans". In 1920, boys were admitted to what was otherwise a boarding school. Boarding ceased in July 2008. In 1984, the Queen became Patron, the school's website describing this as "a fitting prelude to its 400th anniversary". Princess Anne opened the QEH Theatre in 1990; Prince Edward opened the new sixth-form centre in 2007. Both buildings presented a considerable challenge for the architects given the school's restricted but unusual hillside location.
- 1.2 The school sets out to provide a first-class education for boys. It seeks to help each boy to develop his academic potential by providing a wide range of activities. QEH aims to be a friendly and supportive community with Christian values where boys learn to respect one another and themselves. It also aims to offer a high standard of pastoral care so that boys feel secure and grow into responsible members of society. The school was last inspected in September 2002.
- 1.3 At the time of the inspection, the school had 541 boys including 139 in the sixth form. Only one pupil did not have English as his principal language and he was receiving support. No pupil had a statement of special educational needs, but 58 pupils had been identified by the school as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities and 23 were receiving specialist learning support from the school, mainly for dyslexia-related difficulties. The school produces individual education plans for these pupils.
- 1.4 The school admits about 75 pupils each year into Year 7, grouped into 3 equal classes of about 25. There is a small intake of pupils into Year 9 and a further intake into the sixth form. The school is selective, based on an entrance examination into Years 7 and 9.
- 1.5 Pupils come from a wide social background. The school is able to assist just over a tenth of its pupils each year, several of whom pay no fees at all. Fee-paying parents are generally professionals working in medicine, law or financial services. A tenth of pupils are from Asian or Afro-Caribbean backgrounds.
- 1.6 The school's ability profile is well above the national average. If pupils perform in line with their ability, their GCSE and A-level results should be well above the average for boys in maintained schools, but below the average for boys in maintained selective schools.
- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The school provides an outstanding educational experience for its boys, fulfilling its aims and philosophy. The academic curriculum is broad. The wide-ranging extra-curricular provision is excellent and is well supported by a high quality personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme for all year groups which prepares pupils well for university and the world beyond.
- 2.2 The curriculum has broadened since the last inspection, promoting participation in a wide variety of activities. A very good range of knowledge and skills is taught. The curriculum is effectively planned and published. It provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. In design and technology, because of accommodation constraints, provision is limited to resistant materials and computer-assisted design.
- 2.3 At GCSE, breadth is promoted by a compulsory core of subjects that includes English language and English literature, mathematics, a minimum of two sciences and at least one modern foreign language. There is a wide range of other subjects to choose from and plans to add physical education in the near future are indicative of the school's continual attempts to meet the needs of its pupils. If pupils study three sciences, a non-examined arts-based course is taught to provide breadth of experience. Pupils embark on four AS levels in Year 12 from a wide choice and the majority continue with three subjects to A2, although a small number carry on with four subjects. In addition, they attend a PSHE lesson and either games or community service.
- 2.4 The school is continuing to offer subjects such as Latin and further mathematics at the same time as introducing new subjects such as religious studies and Greek. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in all subjects. Good examples of its use are data logging, applets and spreadsheet simulations. However, its potential is not fully exploited, most obviously in the use of interactive whiteboards.
- 2.5 A reading week was introduced to address the concerns identified both in the last inspection report and by staff who recognised the need to improve literacy. This was so successful that a second week was introduced and there was evidence of some pupils reading for over ten hours during the week. In addition, the introduction of the library period in Years 7 and 8 is an initiative that has encouraged pupils to read more widely.
- 2.6 The wide programme of extra-curricular activities enriches the pupils' broad education. There are examples of sports teams reaching national standard but the school is equally interested in providing opportunities for pupils of all abilities. Debating is strong and there has been recent achievement at national level. Music offers many opportunities for pupil involvement which include choirs, ensembles and orchestras. There is very good quality drama in QEH's own well-equipped theatre. A wide variety of subject-based trips are organised which enhance the curriculum, including many overseas. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is popular and more than twenty pupils have recently achieved this at gold level. Fund raising to support charities is very strong and was occurring during the inspection in aid of Children in Need.
- 2.7 Pupils are very well supported by enthusiastic, committed and well-qualified staff. Relationships between pupils and staff are genuine and a high level of mutual respect exists. Boys are very willing to seek extra help. The school exists as a close knit community where the standard of pastoral care is extremely high, which encourages pupils to reach their full

potential. The arrangements and efforts made to assist pupils' transition into Year 7 are commendable and are much appreciated by the pupils.

- 2.8 Arrangements for peer support are effective and much appreciated. The number of Year 13 pupils willing to give something back to the school community in this way epitomises the ethos of the school. Younger pupils found this scheme together with the PSHE extremely useful in breaking down barriers between themselves and the sixth formers.
- 2.9 Pupils requiring assistance have individual education plans. Teachers know which pupils have learning needs and these are very well catered for. Attention is given to preparing pupils for the next stage of education, training, employment and for adult life. All pupils in Year 12 carry out a week's work experience placement in the period immediately after their AS-level examinations. Pupils are given a large degree of responsibility in organising this. In addition, a small number arrange their own placements at the end of Year 11.
- 2.10 Preparation for application to higher education also commences in this post AS-examination period. Tutors provide effective help and pupils are encouraged to take an aptitude test, which the majority find useful. Pupils are then expected to carry out their own independent research into the most appropriate higher education courses, though support is readily available if required. Pupils who are identified as having strong academic potential are encouraged to attend a series of approximately ten after-school sessions which provide additional support.
- 2.11 The procedure for the selection of prefects involves pupils writing a formal application at the end of Year 12 before attending a series of interviews. This is a good example of the school preparing them for life in the world beyond.
- 2.12 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.13 Pupils' learning and achievements inside the classroom as well as in games and extra-curricular activities are outstanding. The school's stated aims of helping each boy to develop his potential are very well met.
- 2.14 Boys settle quickly to tasks, and work with enthusiasm and commitment. They respond positively to a wide variety of teaching approaches, and engage in their academic tasks and other activities with a profound sense of enjoyment. There is a real air of purposeful diligence in the classroom. They enjoy learning in an atmosphere which encourages and respects their efforts and achievements. Similarly, they take advantage of and appreciate the opportunities offered.
- 2.15 Levels of numeracy are high. Boys are articulate communicators via the spoken and written word. Measures to tackle concerns in literacy have been very successful. A good example has been the introduction of commendation cards in Year 7. Boys who read two books receive cards and are acknowledged in their tutor groups.
- 2.16 In all year groups, pupils have a thorough knowledge and understanding of their subjects. They have relevant skills and can think critically. An example of this was seen in a Year 11 history lesson where boys used pertinent questions to arrive at an understanding of a country's policy of containment of communism, and showed an ability to analyse a propaganda poster and describe how it sought to achieve its intended effect. In a Year 12 geography lesson, boys asked perceptive questions relating to changing demographics in countries with varying migration patterns. In a Year 10 English lesson, boys demonstrated their critical faculties in a debate about boxing. Also in English, a discussion about a

television programme considered the use of language as a tool in asserting power over others. In a Year 13 mathematics lesson, boys were able to use vector geometry to complete proofs. A Year 8 music class studying Indian classical music debated the significance of each musical part in a trio.

- 2.17 Boys are encouraged to think creatively, often being given the framework of an idea and told to approach it in whatever way they think appropriate. They develop their own style by experimenting with colours and the layout of a picture in sixth-form art. GCSE design and technology pupils are given a basic idea such as designing a container for a household object. They then decide for themselves what they should design and how to approach the task.
- 2.18 Pupils achieve well in public examinations in relation to their ability. In the last three years for which national comparative data was available at the time of the inspection, GCSE results were far above the average for boys in maintained schools, and A-level results well above the corresponding average. At both levels, results were above the average for boys in maintained selective schools. Standardised measurements of progress indicate that progress overall to GCSE and in the sixth form has been above national norms for pupils of similar ability.
- 2.19 Pupils participate fully and with pride and enthusiasm in the school's extensive range of sport and other activities. In Years 7 to 10 there is a system in place to encourage boys to attend at least two activities per week. There are many outstanding individual and group achievements. Notable success has been achieved in the UK Chemistry Olympiads and Mathematics Challenges. The senior rugby team reached the last sixteen of the Rosslyn Park Sevens Tournament in 2006, 2007 and 2008. The school has representatives at county level in swimming, cross-country and rugby, at regional level in cricket and national level in karate. In addition, individual success is being achieved in leading the junior class in the motor racing national championship. There is a rugby tour every two years to destinations such as South Africa or New Zealand and 2008 saw a cricket tour to the West Indies. There is an annual ski trip, usually to Europe, but most recently to the USA.
- 2.20 There are plenty of opportunities for all to participate. During the inspection, every Year 7 pupil was involved in a competitive rugby match against another school but the provision goes further, including football, hockey, cricket, tennis, athletics, climbing, judo and recreational table tennis, which is played by pupils at every spare opportunity during the school day. In addition, the house sports competition, the Crispin Shield, runs throughout the year and is contested in thirteen sports for which there are house trials before the competition itself.
- 2.21 Outdoor pursuits are involving an increasing number of boys, with over twenty now working for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award at gold level and the majority of Year 10 at bronze level. The school enters teams for all three sections of the Ten Tors competition, a trek across Dartmoor. In 2008, there was a three week expedition to the Himalayas.
- 2.22 Debating and public speaking maintain pupils' record of success. The school has been a finalist in the International Competition for Young Debaters for the past four years, having been national champions in 2004, and in 2007, pupils were finalists at both the Oxford and Cambridge Union competitions. There are at least three drama productions per year and boys have been selected for the National Youth Theatre, the National Youth Music Theatre, the Bristol Old Vic and a children's television workshop. A joint music trip to the USA with another school took place in 2007 and next Easter the choir is to visit Salzburg. Many boys participate in competitions for the Arts Cup where, amongst other things, they compete in activities as varied as performance poetry, scrabble and public speaking in a foreign language.

- 2.23 Pupils have many opportunities to be involved in different musical activities including choirs, ensembles and orchestras. Popular music and jazz have been revitalised in recent years. The well-attended jazz band is one of the many facets of music at the school and contributed to a highly successful concert in the summer. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are encouraged to learn an instrument through peripatetic lessons and for some instruments there is a subsidised fee during the first term. A theatre lighting club has recently been established to help support these shows.
- 2.24 Boys work well when offered opportunities to work independently. Across the range of subjects, they research essays and projects using a variety of sources. Those studying a particular poem in A-level English read a variety of poems on a similar theme. Year 13 pupils work on Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP) papers in their own time in mathematics. Year 11 history pupils showed outstanding understanding of the issues in speeches outlining the pros and cons of the Marshall Plan. Boys develop styles of learning which suit them individually.
- 2.25 A feature of the school is the respect shown by boys for others, and the co-operation amongst boys in helping each other to learn is a significant factor in the academic success of the school. Sixth-form art and GCSE drama pupils present an idea to the rest of the class who then make suggestions for improvement. Sixth-form pupils studying mathematics will explain the solution of a problem, and their peers examine the logic of the route used and suggest a different approach. Boys work well in pairs, for example in language oral work, ICT and science. This sometimes happens on a more informal basis. Boys test each other's knowledge of modern language vocabulary and Year 13 pupils studying Spanish often continue to converse in the target language for the rest of the day after a lesson.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.26 Overall, the quality of pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual development is strong. During their time at school, they develop self-awareness and a greater awareness of others. Poems composed by pupils from Year 7 to Year 9 revealed a good understanding of themselves and also of intangible concepts such as love. Self-confidence is developed in many subjects and activities through pupils' communication with each other and their teachers. Pupils' self-esteem is enhanced by much encouragement and praise. A good example of this was in a Year 9 lower ability mathematics class when pupils made excellent progress with the factorising of quadratic expressions.
- 2.27 Pupils show a good understanding of the human condition. Two examples of this were in English where Hamlet's role was discussed and pupils developed a good understanding of his fatalism, and in Year 12 French where boys showed a good understanding of existentialism and man's role in society. Pupils of all ages participate in performances and cultural activities, all of which develop their aesthetic and qualities.
- 2.28 Pupils have a good developing understanding of faith and are receptive to the faiths of others. Visits to a Buddhist temple by Year 7 and to Bristol Cathedral by Year 8 raise awareness of different religions. The Christian Union's promotion of searching questions such as 'Why are we here?' leads to lively debate and increased understanding. Similarly, a recent visit to Nepal gave an opportunity to appreciate more fully both the Hindu and Buddhist religions.

- 2.29 Pupils are also developing an understanding of, and views on, past and present moral values and during the inspection there were many instances when pupils expressed their views clearly. For example, pupils studying GCSE Spanish took part in a lively debate on bullfighting. Similarly, pupils who had been studying *The Crucible* in Year 10 were able to discuss discrimination and persecution with great sensitivity. Members of the debating society spoke enthusiastically about recent debates on creationism and the justification for the death penalty applied to soldiers accused of cowardice in World War One. PSHE classes have provided pupils with the opportunity to consider a range of different moral issues, such as society's differing attitudes towards death and the changing role of families over time.
- 2.30 Pupils' social development is excellent. They get on well together in class and in extra-curricular activities. Pupils are courteous and well mannered, showing good consideration for fellow pupils as they move around the school and during unstructured time in the school playground. They are good communicators and demonstrate a high level of self-confidence. There are good examples of collaborative work in a range of activities. These include the choir, sport and outdoor activities such as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, all of which encourage social interaction, leadership, initiative, organisation and independence. Joint activities with a nearby girls' school such as concerts and debates also aid pupils' social development. Pupils of all ages respond well to the many opportunities to accept responsibility. School prefects, house captains and the peer support scheme all aid the social cohesiveness of the school.
- 2.31 Pupils have good cultural awareness. Their involvement with art, drama and music is extensive. They know and understand a great deal about different faiths. They respect each other's opinions. This is reinforced by successful lessons in ethics and philosophy in Years 12 and 13. It is also enhanced by the school's PSHE programme. Pupils have a good knowledge of British culture as a result of theatre visits to Bath and Birmingham, art department visits to London galleries and music trips to America and Italy. These are augmented by trips to France and Spain organised by the languages department, with pupils staying with host families. Pupils develop an understanding of local culture through extensive links with the local community. For example, their attendance at productions by visiting theatre companies making use of the school's theatre and their positive response to visiting speakers help to raise awareness of cultural issues.
- 2.32 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.33 Overall, the quality of teaching is high. The majority of lessons seen were either good or outstanding. No lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching across all age groups enables pupils to make excellent progress, be challenged and achieve high standards. The school continues to maintain the teaching quality noted at the previous inspection and successfully achieves its aim of helping each boy to develop his academic potential. Parents and pupils responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires recognised the positive contribution that teaching makes to pupils' attainment.
- 2.34 Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught. They are enthusiastic to share their passion for their subjects with pupils. They know their pupils well, and identify those who need extra help and support. Teachers have access to good information on pupils' needs and abilities through the school's internal website. They are generous with their time after school and during the lunch break to offer further guidance. Some teachers encourage participation in the excellent scheme offered by the older pupils which helps others struggling in some subjects, and specialist help is given

- by the learning support centre. The recent appointment of a new learning support teacher is resulting in more targeted help being given to pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to those who are gifted and talented.
- 2.35 Gifted and talented pupils are offered extra work in subjects such as mathematics, where they can be entered for International GCSE or AS modules early and take STEP. In science and geography, boys are entered for the Olympiad competitions. A number of boys in Years 8 and 9 have been entered into a gifted and talented programme promoting thinking skills and problem solving, and Greek is now on offer as an extra language at lunch time. All year groups are encouraged to read widely around their subjects and outside lectures are available to enhance the work of pupils in Years 12 and 13.
- 2.36 Teaching is successful in fostering a high level of intellectual, physical and creative effort from pupils in many lessons. For example, a Year 13 history lesson on the impact of the Reformation in Spain required challenging intellectual analysis and judgement in the use of historical sources. Year 10 pupils challenged the teacher in physics with questions on nuclear power and a mix of activities in Year 11 Spanish displayed exceptionally good use of the target language.
- 2.37 Some excellent examples of computer generated research were evident in many subjects using a high degree of skill in graphics and illustration, and some excellent creative work was produced in drama by the Year 12 pupils establishing a "sense of place" using the work of Brecht as inspiration. Large scale drawings were done blindfold in art in Year 12, while pupils listened to the teacher describing anatomical parts.
- 2.38 Lessons are often fun and enjoyment is evident, as in a Year 11 English lesson exploring ideas around the role of women in relation to an article from the 1950s. Pupils enjoy working in pairs or in groups and there is a strong work ethic.
- 2.39 In a few lessons, pupils' intellectual curiosity is not exploited. This is due to unimaginative teaching including over-dominance by the teacher, pupils being asked to listen for too long and pupils being given undemanding tasks such as reading aloud from text books. In these instances, pupils' ability to take their own initiative is limited. Sometimes tasks are not developed to promote higher level thinking.
- 2.40 The quality of marking is inconsistent. Marking is regular and about half the work seen included clear comments on how pupils could improve. In other examples of marking, comments were limited in scope. The best examples of marking also pay close attention to the school's literacy policy, and correct spelling and grammar. Good use of oral feedback was observed in most lessons. Comprehensive records of marks awarded are kept by teachers in mark books or on the computer system, and individual pupils' progress is monitored carefully by heads of department using the school's own grading system.
- 2.41 Teaching is supported by a good quality, quantity and range of resources but effective use is not yet made of the interactive whiteboards, and further training and sharing of good practice have been identified as necessary by most departments.
- 2.42 The school meets the regulatory requirements for teaching [Standard 1].

3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils

- 3.1 Staff provide outstanding care for all pupils; the school gives appropriately close attention to welfare, health and safety. This was endorsed in the pre-inspection parental and pupil questionnaires and by the positive response of pupils during the inspection that they feel highly valued and supported.
- 3.2 Pastoral care for all pupils is provided through tutors, heads of year and the house system. Tutors take direct responsibility for supervising pupils' overall progress and for providing guidance. Two formal tutorial periods are provided each week, but tutors are easily accessible at other times. The recent appointment of a second deputy head with specific responsibility for pastoral care, and the further creation of separate heads of year for Years 8 and 10 have strengthened the provision. A distinctive feature is the peer support system that exists to ensure the welfare of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. Boys in the sixth form oversee this provision very effectively, and mentors receive training both in school and through external agencies.
- 3.3 A tradition of mutual support exists between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils. The special atmosphere in assemblies reflects this, particularly where pupils participate and where individual and group achievements are celebrated. Pupils value the care and patience of staff and enjoy the sense of belonging to a community. Senior pupils influence and encourage useful initiatives, and promote good behaviour by their example. At the heart of this system are the deep knowledge of and care for pupils that the senior management and the school counsellor display.
- 3.4 The school has detailed policies on a wide range of pastoral issues including discipline, behaviour management, anti-bullying matters and equal opportunities. This information is available to staff electronically and further general information is also contained in the staff handbook. Pastoral issues are also addressed within a comprehensive personal, social, health and development programme. The disciplinary focus emphasises positive behaviour, mutual consideration and responsibility, and the school is successful in meeting its aim of creating a friendly, supportive community where boys learn to respect one another and themselves. A detailed child protection policy is in place and the school has fully implemented the government guidelines for checking the suitability of staff.
- 3.5 The school takes seriously its health and safety responsibilities. Detailed, effective policies, including procedures for events and school games that take place off site, are in place and the school's investment in a scheme to secure the service of a health and safety advisor has proved to be successful. Fire safety procedures and risk assessments are carried out regularly to a high standard.
- 3.6 The health centre is an example of excellent practice. The location offers ease of access to a safe, secure and secluded environment. Trained staff are available to deliver first aid support at games fixtures. Communication between the health centre and other staff is excellent, and records and policies are properly maintained.
- 3.7 Meals are provided in the multi-use assembly hall. The queuing arrangements from both ends of the hall work effectively and pupils conduct themselves well. The atmosphere encourages good social interaction and the food is of extremely high quality. Meals are nutritious, varied and served in sensible proportions. The catering arrangements and the support staff make a major contribution to the health and well-being of pupils.

- 3.8 Care is taken to monitor the attendance of pupils, with registrations taking place twice a day, and the return of sixth-form pupils who choose to take lunch off-site is carefully managed.
- 3.9 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3].

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

- 3.10 The school has very successful links with parents and the wider community. Parents are highly satisfied with the school. In the parental questionnaire, almost all said that the school helps their children make progress, that standards of behaviour are high and that boys have worthwhile attitudes and values. They said that the school handles concerns well. Parents also said that they have good opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. Apart from parents' evenings when they have the opportunity to discuss their sons' progress, they have opportunities to attend in a good number of other activities. These include drama productions, art exhibitions, choirs, major school concerts, and smaller informal recital concerts and jazz ensembles.
- 3.11 Parents receive a plentiful supply of information about the school. Apart from regular newsletters, there are also highly professional publications such as *The Elizabethan*. This portrays the life of the school realistically through powerful photography and text. The developing website is well used by both pupils and parents. Prospective parents are given a comprehensive suite of documents that explain application procedures very clearly.
- 3.12 Reports to parents are now being produced electronically. Their layout is well designed and clear. Comments on pupils' work are useful in terms of what they have achieved. However, a weakness is that they do not always spell out clearly enough what pupils have to do to improve. Parents also see pupils' homework diaries and progress cards which are given to some pupils. Targets being pursued are not stated clearly on these cards, nor are teachers' comments couched in terms of the targets.
- 3.13 The school handles concerns from parents very well. Complaints have been dealt with successfully through discussion between the headmaster, parent, pupil, and, where relevant, teachers.
- 3.14 The school has a large number of links with the wider community, all of which raise boys' awareness and sensitivity to issues that exist both nationally and internationally. In a series of discussions with pupils they spoke of their involvement in fund raising for numerous charities, supporting for example Bolivian street children, cyclone victims through the Burma Appeal, children with mobility difficulties and homeless people. A substantial sum is raised each year for Children in Need. Boys also spoke about their role in voluntary service overseas and in local community service which is sometimes part of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Representatives of the community spoke warmly of boys' participation in activities as diverse as supporting pilgrims at Lourdes and singing at an annual Christmas event at Blaise Castle. Members of the public also use the school's facilities, in particular the theatre and the gymnasium. A local football club uses the school's sports facilities. Many visitors attend the school including those who speak at assembly. There are numerous educational visits overseas. The provision of financial support from the school to a number of boys is a substantial and very practical link with the local community.

- 3.15 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the provision of information and the manner in which complaints are to be handled [Standards 6 and 7].

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The governing body sets and secures appropriate aims and values for the school, and provides outstanding oversight and guidance. Its structure and management are well defined. The governors are secure in their responsibility in helping to ensure that the school's ethos and high academic standards are maintained. They consider evidence on the school's performance carefully and form independent views. They support but also constructively challenge the headmaster.
- 4.2 A good range of experience amongst governors ensures that the six committees have appropriate professional expertise. Careful analysis of the skills of the existing governors has helped to ensure that new appointees have appropriate experience. The governors and all members of the senior management team have an excellent relationship and share a common sense of purpose.
- 4.3 Governors are appropriately involved in educational development and financial planning strategies that ensure effective educational provision, and investment in human and material resources. They are actively and carefully planning for the future. Recent improvements include a new sixth-form centre which is being well used. The opening of the junior school since the last inspection has been successful. Governors are keen to increase the number of bursaries currently funded by the school and are actively looking for ways in which this can be done.
- 4.4 A day-long meeting held away from the school for the senior management team and governors on the development of the school was appreciated by all, and allowed useful discussion and brain storming to take place. The school is considering this to become a biannual event.
- 4.5 Governors attend school functions and are known by staff. The recent initiative of presentations to the governing body by heads of department has been well received and has enabled the governors to appreciate more fully the contributions made by staff and the issues they face.
- 4.6 The governing body is effective in discharging its responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. A governor has specific designation for child protection, is suitably trained and meets regularly with the pastoral deputy head.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.7 Leadership is outstanding. The headmaster's impact is considerable because he listens well and is highly supportive of initiatives taken by both staff and pupils. This is enhanced because he knows when to delegate. He is very successful at representing the aims and ethos of the school and has an excellent relationship with parents as well as the wider community.
- 4.8 The school is extremely well managed by the senior management team. The day to day running of the school is very effectively delegated to the deputies and director of studies. The senior management team works together very effectively to ensure that the school is run efficiently but also with great sensitivity. The senior management team monitors the school's performance thoroughly, and is diligent in ensuring that the aims of the school are met and that all pupils receive the best possible education in a challenging yet supportive atmosphere. Staff feel well supported in their roles and regard the senior management team

as accessible, professional and caring. There is a very good development plan. The current priorities for future development include the building of a new science block and swimming pool. The school development plan is reviewed annually by designated members of staff and the governors.

- 4.9 The role of head of department has been strengthened since the previous inspection. Heads of department are now more involved in the management and development of their departments. They meet regularly with the director of studies in an environment in which they are listened to and where new ideas are discussed and promoted. The annual review of departments ensures that achievement in individual subjects is carefully scrutinised and culminates in a meeting between each individual head of department, the director of studies and the headmaster.
- 4.10 The recent introduction of additional head of year posts has strengthened further the high level of pastoral care. New heads of year meet regularly with the deputy head in charge of pastoral care and also have pastoral committee meetings that include the school nurse and counsellor. The school's middle managers are well supported in their roles by all in the senior management team. They feel involved in the school's decision making process and know that any initiatives they propose will be carefully considered.
- 4.11 Policies and procedures are clear and appropriate; they are reviewed when the need arises. The senior management team consults staff when policies are being written or reviewed. All policies are available to staff.
- 4.12 Since the previous inspection, a new system for appraisal has been sensitively introduced. The system is closely and carefully monitored; it allows for all staff to be observed by the headmaster as well as their reviewer. Mutual lesson observation is now a successful practice in many departments. Appraisal is used to assess future in-service training needs. Recent examples have included teaching and learning styles, the use of data on pupils' performance and improving the quality of pupils' transfer experience from junior to senior school.
- 4.13 The school appoints well-qualified and motivated teaching and support staff. Arrangements for the induction of new teachers work well. Newly qualified teachers are well supported and monitored effectively. All new staff quickly feel part of the school community.
- 4.14 Departments are well resourced. Financial resources are well managed to meet the school's aims and the needs of its pupils. The bursar is very committed and manages his departments very effectively. The administration of the school is very efficient. Support staff are highly valued members of the community of which they feel part. All support staff are appraised regularly; they are all able to take advantage of additional training opportunities, such as day release, to gain vocational qualifications. They feel well supported by both their line managers and the bursar.
- 4.15 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].
- 4.16 The school participates in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers and meets its requirements.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 QEH fully meets its aims, and its ethos is strongly reflected in the attitudes and enthusiasm of pupils and staff. Pupils are very appreciative of how staff help them and the opportunities the school offers. Academic standards are high; so too is the personal development of pupils. Teaching is effective and pupils learn enthusiastically and successfully. The curriculum meets pupils' needs. Pupils at QEH are very well looked after. Pastoral care is outstanding. There are excellent links with parents, and leadership and management are outstanding at all levels, including the role played by the governors. The school has a realistic and relevant development plan.
- 5.2 There has been considerable improvement not only in areas signalled for development in the last report but also in additional initiatives, reflecting the school's high level of awareness. There have been changes to the curriculum reflecting a response to pupils' interests and needs. Public examination results have continued to improve. Arrangements for pastoral care have improved through the introduction of new heads of year and further developments in peer support. Outdoor pursuits and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award have been highly successful. There is a new system of professional review for teaching staff, and non-teaching staff are appraised biannually. Careers guidance and work experience are much more extensive. The induction programme for new pupils has been considerably enhanced.
- 5.3 The school meets all the regulatory requirements.

Next Steps

- 5.4 In order for the school to improve further it should:
1. in teaching and learning, make more effective use of interactive whiteboards;
 2. ensure that all marking achieves the standard of the best by explaining clearly what pupils have to do to improve;
 3. build on the quality of the new format reports to parents by stating clearly the actions pupils have to take in order to make further progress.
- 5.5 No action is required in respect of regulatory requirements.

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 3rd to 6th November 2008. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

List of Inspectors

Mr Paul Armitage	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Julie Bolter	Head of Department, SHMIS school
Mrs Maureen Bradley	Former Headteacher, GSA school
Mr Tim Jenkins	Head of Department, HMC school
Mr Jay Piggot	Headmaster, HMC school
Mr Peter Sutton	Deputy Head, HMC school
Dr Michael Yates	Head of Department, HMC school



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