

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INSPECTION REPORT ON

Caldicott

Full Name of the School	Caldicott
DCSF Number	825/6009
Registered Charity Number	310631
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Age Range	7 to 13
Gender	Boys
Inspection Dates	19th to 22nd November 2007

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 was not carried out in conjunction with Ofsted, Children's Directorate, and the report does not contain specific judgements on the National Minimum Boarding Standards. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection and evaluates the quality of the boarding experience and its contribution to pupils' education and development in general. The full Ofsted report produced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk under Inspection reports/Boarding schools.

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 Caldicott is a boarding and day school for boys aged seven to thirteen. The school was founded in 1904 in Hitchin, Hertfordshire with just eight boys. In 1938, the school moved to its present site in Farnham Royal, Buckinghamshire, and in 1968 it became a charitable trust. Whilst it is a Church of England school, boys of all faiths are welcome. Most boys begin their Caldicott career as day boys, and all boys board in their final two years, having had the opportunity to experience at least a week's trial boarding.
- 1.2 Although central London is only 20 miles away, the school is in a rural location, and stands within 40 acres of grounds and playing fields. The original Victorian house is the administrative centre of the school, and also incorporates the boarding accommodation. Over the years, several buildings have been added to provide modern and up-to-date facilities. Since the last inspection, the Centenary Hall has been completed to provide a theatre for drama and music. All classrooms and common rooms have been renovated, and it is intended to open a new science block in February 2008.
- 1.3 The number of boys on roll is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. In total, 235 boys currently attend the school, 104 of them as boarders, with 46 boys in Years 3 and 4, 96 in Years 5 and 6, and 93 in Years 7 and 8. Entry to the school is generally at age seven, but many boys join at age eight and there is another significant entry at age ten. The results of standardised tests across the school indicate that the average ability of the boys is well above the national average, although the spread of ability is relatively wide.
- 1.4 Most boys come from professional or business families, and live within 20 miles of the school; in addition, 27 boys come from abroad. Of the boys who live in Britain, 31 come from ethnic minorities, with the largest group being of Asian ethnicity. Overall, 24 boys are from families where English is not the principal language; 14 of these are at a relatively early stage of learning English. The school has identified 43 boys as needing support with their learning, the most usual difficulties being dyslexia, dyspraxia or the development of literacy skills. No boy has a statement of special educational needs.
- 1.5 A few boys leave Caldicott at age 11 and continue their secondary education in local selective maintained schools. Others join the school as boarders at this age to prepare for Common Entrance examinations into their senior schools. At age 13, when their time at Caldicott is at an end, almost all boys transfer to independent senior boarding schools, and the remaining few gain places at local independent day schools.
- 1.6 The school aims to provide a warm and supportive environment in which a boy can: flourish and grow both academically and personally; feel that he is valued; be given the experience of life in a community while still developing individual talents through a wide range of opportunities; develop confidence in his own abilities; and be challenged and made to feel proud of his achievements.

- 1.7 National Curriculum 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 (NC) equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 3
Form 2	Year 4
Form 3	Year 5
Form 4	Year 6
Form 5	Year 7
Form 6	Year 8

2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The Educational Experience Provided

- 2.1 The educational experience provided is of good quality and successfully fulfils the aims of the school, particularly those of providing an environment where a boy can be given a wide range of opportunities, where he can be challenged and where he can feel proud of his achievements. Good progress has been made since the last inspection.
- 2.2 The broad curriculum effectively incorporates linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, aesthetic and creative elements of learning. Religious studies (RS), French and personal, social and health education (PSHE) are also included, and higher up the school the curriculum leads on to the Common Entrance syllabi. Latin is introduced during Year 5, and Greek is taken by the more able boys. Boys are grouped by ability in English and mathematics soon after arriving at the school in Year 3 and, from Year 5, boys are streamed for most subjects. In Year 8, another stream is added with the introduction of a scholarship group. Changes since the last inspection have seen further development in the provision for drama, music, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. Whilst the younger boys benefit pastorally from having a class teacher who teaches them for English and mathematics, all boys' learning is enhanced by the expertise and enthusiasm of specialist teaching staff in many subject areas.
- 2.3 The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. All staff participate in the activities programme and their level of involvement is high. Whilst many activities are sporting or musical, others reflect the diverse interests of the staff and boys, with clubs including art, drama, French and sculpture. Some external instructors visit the school, for example to teach judo. In their respective pre-inspection questionnaires, boys and their parents commented very favourably about the activities offered, and the high participation rates are evidence of the boys' enjoyment. Boys in Years 7 and 8 are also involved with voluntary service, for example by regularly visiting a local elderly care home to talk with the residents, and by supporting conservation projects in the area. Involvement in these activities indicates the high level of social responsibility the boys feel for their local community.
- 2.4 The school prepares boys very well for each stage of their education within the school and for the transfer to the senior schools of their parents' choice. A strong induction programme as they enter the school helps them to settle quickly into routines. The mixed-age tutor system from Year 6 onwards means that boys are well known by their tutor over a three-year period. Boys also receive help with their study skills as they move through the school. The school's commitment to Common Entrance and its effective PSHE programme contribute to the preparation for senior transfer. The headmaster is knowledgeable about a wide range of senior schools, arranges information evenings and is always available to parents to discuss their choices.
- 2.5 Curriculum planning and policy documents are sufficiently detailed to provide coherent and progressive learning across the whole school, but their quality varies between subjects. The best planning is good and clearly indicates how and when within subjects the programme of study is to be covered. Some subject planning leaves the organisation of the study programme too much to individual staff. The variety of educational trips and visits, including residential and overseas trips, and the visitors who come into school to share their expertise and resources, all make an excellent contribution to the breadth of boys' learning experiences. All boys in the school have equal opportunity to be successful within the excellent range of activities provided.

- 2.6 Provision for those boys with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, is good. All boys are screened for any learning needs as they enter the school. Parents are involved in discussions at an early stage and are kept well informed of their sons' progress. The school has recently introduced individual education plans (IEPs) for these boys, which include focused targets promoting good progress, but so far this is only applicable to boys in Years 3 to 5. The use of these IEPs is gradually being extended to include the whole school. All staff are made aware of these boys' learning needs so that they can provide effective support within the classroom.
- 2.7 The setting and streaming structure ensures that the more able boys are given work which is appropriate to their needs. The school challenges boys with talents in many subjects including drama, music, art and games and provides opportunities for them to reach the highest levels possible according to their ability.
- 2.8 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the curriculum [Standard 1].

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- 2.9 Boys learn effectively and achieve well in relation to their abilities, successfully fulfilling the aims of the school to provide a supportive environment in which they can flourish academically, be challenged, and feel proud of their achievements. These high standards of learning and achievement have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 2.10 Boys are generally given opportunities to develop their ideas and initiative; they think and act critically and their creativity is fostered well, as in a lesson on *Macbeth* when boys were writing their own witches' spells. They learn to play, work, succeed and share their discoveries. They apply their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively in many subjects and activities. Boys are successful in undertaking their own investigative work in subjects such as history and geography, when the occasional opportunity is provided.
- 2.11 No significant difference is apparent in the relative attainment between boys in different classes within the same year, in different subjects, or between those of differing abilities. All boys are exceptionally well motivated and equally willing to work hard on the tasks set.
- 2.12 The school does not enter boys for national tests at age 11. However, the schools to which the boys transfer when they leave Caldicott, many of which have a very high standard of entry, indicate that the boys' achievement in their time at the school is good for most and exceptional for some. These standards of achievement were reflected in the lessons seen across the school during the inspection.
- 2.13 The school has an impressive list of individual and team successes, including the achievement of twenty-one scholarships over the last three years, covering academic, sporting, music and drama awards. One hundred and sixty-three music examinations over three years and thirty-eight speech and drama examinations last year were passed, the majority of which were with merit or distinction. A number of boys attend the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) music courses in their holidays, or play with the National Children's Orchestra. Boys enter the local schools' French Verse Speaking competition, and the school won first place last year. Many boys win gold, silver and bronze certificates in the national Mathematics Olympiad, and the school regularly has boys achieving in the top 50 entrants in a national history competition. The school is particularly strong on the sports field, excelling in rugby, hockey and cricket, and is also one of the strongest schools locally for playing squash. In athletics, eight boys qualified for the national IAPS finals last year, and twelve did so the year before. Boys won silver and bronze in the county finals of judo last year and others play football for Reading or cricket for Berkshire.

Participating in these activities enables the boys to develop personally, particularly contributing to the development of their confidence, understanding of team responsibilities and support and respect for each other.

- 2.14 Boys develop effective skills and have very positive attitudes towards work and study. They enjoy their work, can listen and articulate well, read intelligently with understanding and write fluently and effectively. They are confident in lessons and express ideas clearly, as in a lesson where they demonstrated well-developed skills in discussion about a car manufacturing company. In an English lesson, boys read aloud First World War poetry with sensitivity, adapting their tone and volume appropriately to convey the sombre nature of the poem.
- 2.15 Good numeracy skills were observed in many mathematics lessons throughout the school as well as in other subjects such as science and design and technology. Whilst ICT skills are strong, little evidence was seen of the use of ICT in lessons during the inspection, but wall displays and past work indicate that boys are given regular opportunities to develop their skills.
- 2.16 Boys reason and argue cogently, maturely and succinctly, as was evidenced in a debate with a local girls' school regarding the belief that, 'in this world of equality, men and women, boys and girls should compete on a level playing field'. Some effective examples of boys thinking for themselves were observed, but, in a small minority of lessons, they were not given opportunities to do this because the teaching was too prescriptive.
- 2.17 Boys organise themselves well and are able to work independently. They also work effectively when collaborating. Good paired work was observed in a geography lesson where boys used their combined skills in reading detailed maps. In a tutor group meeting of boys from Years 6 to 8, teams interacted successfully to act out scenarios about National Anti-Bullying Week. However, very little evidence was seen of boys making their own notes and, in some subjects, much of their note-taking had been copied from the board or a text book.
- 2.18 Boys arrive promptly to lessons and settle quickly and quietly. They concentrate well and are keen to participate in discussion work in lessons. They persevere with their work, and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. They are enthusiastic in their work and activities, and it was apparent that they enjoyed their learning.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- 2.19 The quality of boys' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school fulfils its aim of providing a warm and supportive environment in which boys can grow personally and feel valued. A comprehensive and systematic PSHE programme is now in place, demonstrating that progress since the last inspection has been good.
- 2.20 The school's aims for the boys are exemplified in their outstanding spiritual development, implicit in the ethos of the school and in the example set by staff within a happy Christian community, centred around the chapel which is at the heart of the school. The boys participate with confidence in a variety of high quality assemblies held within the chapel, and the music played beforehand prepares the boys extremely well for the act of worship to follow. They listen attentively and reflectively, contribute fully and sing with gusto. Their spiritual sensitivity was highlighted in assemblies about the support and care boys give to each other in order to keep them safe from bullying and in the support the school gives to other cultures through their charity giving. The boys have high self-esteem and self-confidence, increased by the praise and encouragement given by staff, and by participation in

sports teams, music performances and drama productions. They appreciate the repetitive patterns of the world around them, and, in an art lesson, they responded with amazement and utter respect when shown the 'Op art' work of Bridget Riley.

- 2.21 All boys live by a very strong moral code. They have a clear idea of right and wrong and of acceptable behaviour. They respect each other and the staff and are extremely polite, even when they are unaware of being observed. The school rules, some of which have been written by the boys themselves, are posted in classrooms and dormitories. The boys understand the need for these rules and respond well to the pluses and minuses of the school's reward and sanctions system. Their behaviour is exemplary because of the high expectations of the staff. They know they can express their views when considering issues, which enables them to practise moral decision-making within a safe and open environment. The effective PSHE programme gives opportunity for them to study moral issues such as personal health choices and environmental issues concerning energy conservation and global pollution.
- 2.22 Boys' social development is excellent. They collaborate extremely well with each other in lessons, within group activities and on the games field. The older boys demonstrate exceptionally good leadership skills through the responsibility of being dormitory monitors, head boy or prefects. A regular friendship focus group for boarders enables boys to develop outstanding relationships. They are aware of democratic processes and have used these to elect their representatives for the new school council. They understand political and social institutions in England. Their awareness of their responsibility to the world around them is seen in their financial support which has enabled a 'Caldicott classroom' to be built in a school for orphans in Kenya.
- 2.23 Boys' cultural awareness is extremely well developed. All boys readily accept and acquire a deep understanding and tolerance for the cultures, traditions and diverse backgrounds of their peers, particularly of those boys who come from abroad. They enjoy living and working together, promoting harmony between each other. Boys have a strong appreciation of the differences between various religions because of the RS programme, and through the posters displayed around the school depicting world faiths. The very wide range of excursions which the school organises, such as the rugby tour to South Africa, the cricket tour to Sri Lanka and the Year 8 leavers' trip to the battlefields of the Somme, develops the boys' understanding of life in other lands. Food days are occasionally organised so that boys can sample food from around the world. In the creative and humanities subjects, the boys' knowledge of their own culture is continually increased by visits to art galleries, museums and concerts.
- 2.24 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [Standard 2].

The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)

- 2.25 Teaching is effective across the school, fulfilling the aims of providing a supportive environment in which a boy can flourish and grow both academically and personally, in addition to being challenged and feeling proud of his achievements. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection. In a substantial number of lessons seen, teaching was outstanding. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that teaching helps their child to make progress, and, in the pupil questionnaire, almost all boys were positive about the fact that teachers help them to learn.
- 2.26 In all subjects, teaching enables boys of all abilities to acquire new knowledge, make progress according to their ability, increase their understanding and develop their skills. Boys for whom English is an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well, either in class by their subject teachers or through withdrawal lessons with teachers who are qualified to ensure they make rapid progress. They achieve as well as their peers because of this individualised support.
- 2.27 Teachers know the boys very well and show a good understanding of their abilities and prior attainment. They are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and their enthusiasm is clearly evident. In many lessons, boys are generally very well managed and time is used extremely effectively, with a brisk pace which keeps all boys focused on the main activities. However, on occasion during the inspection, boys did not achieve as much as they could; the management of the lesson resulted in a considerable amount of learning time being lost because boys were kept waiting for further work or support rather than being able to move on in their learning. The most successful lessons are very well planned with a good variety of activities which meet the needs of all boys and promote effective learning. Staff vary their teaching methods in order to respond to different learning styles. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the interest and enjoyment of boys were maintained beyond the usual learning activities by the playing of a game on equivalent fractions. This gave boys the opportunity to challenge peers who they thought might have made a mistake.
- 2.28 Resources, including ICT, to support learning are good both in quantity and quality in all subjects and are used effectively. Boys use the library and ICT facilities for research and working independently, and many clearly enjoy reading. They apply themselves to each task conscientiously and have the ability to work and think for themselves, because teaching generally fosters intellectual, creative and physical effort and interest. However, the use of a large number of worksheets in some subjects, and the over-direction of teaching in a few lessons, meant that boys were not given enough opportunity to share their own thoughts and ideas or find their learning experiences enjoyable, a fact expressed by a small minority of boys in their questionnaire. Teachers encourage exemplary behaviour, and relationships, both in the classroom and around the school, are excellent. The programme of visits is very wide ranging and contributes much to the quality of teaching and the boys' educational experiences.
- 2.29 A marking policy is established across the school, but it is not applied consistently. Some of the marking is encouraging, and gives useful advice to pupils on the ways in which they can improve. When this happens, pupils say it is helpful. However, standards of marking are variable. Some marking is cursory with just a tick placed at the end of the work and with few comments designed to advance learning.
- 2.30 A system of assessment operates effectively. Staff keep records of pupils' attainment in lessons and in their written work. Grades for attainment and effort are also recorded in all subjects approximately every four weeks and kept on a central system. These are analysed and discussed at staff meetings, to identify any pupils with an unusual emerging pattern of

attainment or pupils who may require extra support. In addition, pupils' attainment is assessed regularly, through the use of a range of standardised tests and examinations. However, the progress of individual boys is not yet checked effectively as they move through the school, and senior managers are currently discussing how this can be improved.

2.31 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 The quality of pastoral care, welfare, health and safety is good. Within this, pastoral care is outstanding, providing a supportive environment in which the boys feel valued, thus successfully fulfilling the school's aim. The school pays careful attention to the welfare, health and safety of the boys. Procedures have been consolidated since the last inspection.
- 3.2 Teaching and non-teaching staff, across the whole school community, contribute to the excellent care, support and guidance for all boys. Tutors play an important role in the care of the boys and know them particularly well, to the point where a tutor was described as being 'like a parent'. Boys, both day and boarding, have a high regard for the support and care that they receive; they are confident that they can easily approach staff and that their problems will be sorted quickly and efficiently.
- 3.3 Tutors are further supported by highly effective pastoral arrangements. The senior house tutor supports the tutors in their role through an effective house system, which succeeds in enhancing the quality of pastoral care by developing a team spirit amongst staff and boys; further support is offered by the whole senior management team. Policies are clearly written and both staff and boys are aware of pastoral procedures. All staff, beginning with their induction into the school, are given clear guidance as to their pastoral roles and responsibilities.
- 3.4 The quality of relationships between staff and boys and among boys is outstanding, promoting a very caring atmosphere. The boys are exceptionally well mannered and staff are excellent role models. Boys play happily together and show their understanding of each other's needs through their mutual support and care. They are at ease with staff but retain tremendous respect for them.
- 3.5 Measures to promote good discipline and outstanding behaviour, including procedures to guard against harassment and bullying, are successful. A good PSHE programme is used to guide boys' feelings and responses to bullying. In discussions, boys said that bullying is rare but, when it does occur, they are confident it is dealt with constructively and promptly. A 'black box', in which boys are able to write concerns if they do not wish to talk, is promoted well within the school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, the boys indicated that they do not have enough opportunity to express their views. A school council has recently been set up with the intention of enabling this to happen. The system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood and boys value their contribution to the house system by gaining 'plus points', which are part of the house competition; this encourages a purposeful ethos. In their questionnaire, a few boys felt that teachers were not fair with rewards and punishments. During the inspection, a large number of discussions were held with groups of boys, and they were all extremely positive about the fairness of the way the system was used by many staff.
- 3.6 The provision for welfare, health and safety is good. A robust policy for child protection and the recruitment of staff has been implemented. Child protection measures are well known by all staff, who have received appropriate training. The child protection officer has also been fully trained in the necessary areas of inter-agency work, and is supported in that role by a governor with responsibility for child protection. All measures to reduce risk from fire and other hazards have been taken and fire safety arrangements are thorough. A health and safety committee is in operation, and governors regularly discuss health and safety matters. Risk assessments have been undertaken across all areas of school life and electrical equipment is

regularly checked for safety. Good provision is made for boys who become ill at the school. Matrons deal effectively and sensitively with minor concerns and a full-time nurse attends injuries and illnesses of a more serious nature. However, when a boy is given medication by one of the qualified welfare staff, they record this in different ways and not always immediately on to the database.

- 3.7 Admission and attendance registers are maintained correctly in electronic form, but they have only been backed up monthly as required since September 2007. Pupils are supervised well throughout the school day. All boys, whether day or boarding, are offered nutritionally balanced food, and those who are vegetarians or have medical needs are catered for, but there is no alternative choice for the main course. At lunch, pupils eat with staff and this allows staff to encourage excellent manners and behaviour whilst engaging with the boys, developing social skills most effectively. Through their PSHE programme, boys learn about the benefits of pursuing a healthy lifestyle.
- 3.8 The school has an appropriate plan for improving its accessibility to boys with disabilities and conforms to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act.
- 3.9 The school meets most of the regulatory requirements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils [Standard 3]. In order to meet all the requirements, the school must:
- (a) ensure that the admission and attendance registers are electronically backed up or printed out each month and retained for three years after the end of the school year in question [Regulation 3.(9)].

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

- 3.10 The school has established outstanding links with parents and the wider community. These links make a very effective contribution to the school's aim of providing a warm and supportive environment, in which it is evident that parents are fully involved. The school has strengthened and built upon the good links reported at the last inspection.
- 3.11 In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the vast majority of parents were overwhelmingly happy about the education and support given to their sons. No significant concerns were raised. They were particularly pleased about the quality of teaching, which helps their sons to make progress, the curriculum offered, and their belief that the school promotes worthwhile attitudes and values. In discussion, they are particularly appreciative of the way the school encourages them to be involved in its life, they are extremely happy with the education provided and they feel strongly that all levels of ability are very well catered for. In addition, they feel that their views are valued and that there is an immediate response when any matter is raised, because the headmaster is easily approachable. The inspectors endorse these positive views.
- 3.12 The school is very welcoming and parents have extensive opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. They are welcome to attend school events such as plays, concerts and sports fixtures. The 'Friends', an association of parents, is most supportive, organising social events both specifically for new parents and for current parents. Members of the 'Friends' also help in the school by listening to the younger boys reading. Each year, parents raise money for a number of charities, including a hospice in Oxford, a leukaemia charity and Samaritans. Parents can be involved in the Caldicott choral society and concert scheme, whereby professional musicians run workshops for boys during the day and then perform at an evening concert for parents and the local community.

- 3.13 Information provided for parents is comprehensive. The attractive prospectus provides a great deal of information about the school, whilst the website, which is updated on a daily basis, is a valuable form of communication to parents worldwide. Parents are sent a magazine each term containing a good selection of material including pupils' art, creative writing and reports on sporting fixtures. Informative handbooks are produced for parents of day boys and boarders, and the weekly newsletter is emailed to all families. All parents and boys receive a termly diary which sets out details of sporting fixtures and other activities.
- 3.14 Information about their sons' work and progress is shared with parents on a regular basis. Grades for standards of work and effort are sent to parents approximately every four weeks, a shortened report is issued in the spring term, and twice a year full written reports are issued. The standard of these reports is variable; the best are detailed and informative about the progress which a boy has made, setting out targets for further improvement, and including information about his personal development. However, some reports contain too much detail about the curriculum covered and not enough information about how much progress has been made. Parents of boys with learning difficulties and disabilities, and of those boys for whom English is an additional language, are kept informed about their sons' progress by receiving a copy of his individual education plan and then receiving full and detailed reports at the end of the Summer term. Parents' evenings are held once a year for most boys. In discussion, parents indicated that they greatly value the regular reporting on their sons' progress and they feel able to follow up any issues immediately with tutors or teaching staff.
- 3.15 The school operates an 'open-door' policy, so that any concerns from parents can be dealt with swiftly. The headmaster is available morning and evening whenever possible, and parents appreciate this regular contact. The school deals with any parental concerns with due care.
- 3.16 The school has extremely strong links with the wider community. The chapel choir regularly sings in local churches and boys participate in the annual village show. School facilities are made available at no cost to a number of local organisations, including cricket clubs and a scout group. The local half marathon starts each year in the school grounds. The school also makes its minibuses available to the local primary school as well as inviting these pupils to use its facilities for afternoons of design and technology. A substantial amount of money is raised every year for charities by various activities including a sponsored swim or walk, and this involvement in reflecting on the needs of others has a very positive impact on boys' personal development.
- 3.17 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].

The Quality of Boarding Education

- 3.18 The quality of the boarding experience at Caldicott is excellent, supporting and enriching the education and personal development of the boys. This represents an improvement since the last ISI report. The school is successfully fulfilling its aim of providing a warm and supportive environment in which a boy can feel valued and be given the experience of life in a community, while developing individual talents through a wide range of opportunities. In the pre-inspection questionnaire to parents, the responses were overwhelmingly positive about the boarding experience. The recommendations from the last CSCI report, relating to policies and procedures, job descriptions, health and safety systems, risk assessments and the renewal of furniture, have been met.

- 3.19 A very informative handbook covering all aspects of boarding life is prepared for boarders and their parents. Currently, 11 boys in Year 6 board and all boys are expected to board in Years 7 and 8. Relationships among the boys are outstanding, within a relaxed and caring atmosphere created by the boarding staff, who the boys say are very kind and caring. The number of staff involved with the boarding community is high and relationships between boys and staff are excellent. The boys say that bullying is a rare occurrence and, when it has arisen, it has been very well handled by the staff. The boarders value their rewards system and look forward to treats of various kinds for their excellent behaviour. The sanctions system is a light-touch one and the boys consider it to be fair and appropriate. Each dormitory has a Year 8 boy as a dormitory monitor, a practice about which both the older and the younger boys are extremely positive, in addition to adult supervision close by. In particular, the younger boys said that the dormitory monitors were very sympathetic and helpful at moments of homesickness, especially when they first began boarding, and were supportive if they had a problem. Both the dormitory monitors and the other boys change dormitories regularly in order to extend their circle of friends. The needs of the boys are very well met physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually, and boys are well aware of adults they can talk to if they are troubled.
- 3.20 The school offers all its boarding pupils an excellent range of extra-curricular activities in the evenings and at weekends for those who remain at school, including paint-balling, ice-skating, museum trips, the 'London Eye' experience and a visit to a famous football ground. Boarders particularly enjoy using the sports facilities and those in areas such as ICT and music.
- 3.21 The quality of the accommodation for boarders is good. One or two of the dormitories are a little crowded, but facilities such as the bean bag area, television and DVD equipment and the boarders' library are clearly appreciated by the boys. Boarders in Years 7 and 8 have a common room for each year group which includes comfortable seating, a snooker table and television. Showers, washing and toilet facilities are suitable. The school is surrounded by fine grounds that are particularly appreciated by boarders in the Summer months.

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 The governors provide outstanding care for the school and its development. Their overall aim, in which they are highly successful, is to provide a warm and supportive environment for the boys. Since the last inspection, the quality of governance has continued to improve, and governors' care for the future of the school can be seen in their excellent financial provision for major building work carried out over recent years.
- 4.2 Governors have a wide range of experience and expertise, through which they support the school. Several are former parents, and one is an 'old boy'. Some governors now have a specific responsibility for an aspect of school life; for example, child protection, boarding, finance or linking with parents. The size of the board means that, apart from a separate finance committee, they are all involved in the discussions and decisions taken in the termly governors' meeting. The governors are aware of their responsibilities and, for example, discuss health and safety. They are particularly aware of the need to maintain teaching and boarding staff of the highest quality, and they invest heavily in resources, ensuring that effective provision is made for the educational needs of the school. They share with the headmaster a clear vision for the school's future and are involved in the compiling of the development plan.
- 4.3 Governors find out about the work of the school through the regular reports of the headmaster and bursar. Heads of department also attend meetings in turn to inform the governing body about developments in their subject and to answer any questions. Governors are thus able to support, advise and often challenge the work of the staff. Another informal contact is the invitation extended to a group of staff to attend the dinner held after each governors' meeting. Governors thus keep extremely effective oversight of the school, particularly through the close contact maintained between the headmaster and the chairman, and they are well informed of the school's successes in academic standards and all activities.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.4 Leadership and management are successful and fulfil the school's aims, particularly those of providing a supportive environment in which boys can flourish and grow both academically and personally. In response to the last inspection, a policy for in-service training has been developed, the library stock has been increased and a librarian has been appointed, indicating that good progress has been made.
- 4.5 Highly effective leadership is given by senior managers, as reflected in the good quality of education and the outstanding care of the boys, and recent appointments to this group have served to strengthen it. At the time of the last inspection, the size of the senior management team made it difficult for effective and responsive decision-making to take place. Since then, a new and smaller senior team action group has emerged to form a strong policy-making executive, ensuring the school's aims are met. Further academic support is given by department heads and all staff are fully involved in the pastoral care of the boys. The school's view of its future development is centred on retaining its position as a school which focuses on high achievement in academic and personal terms, and ensuring that boys continue to be prepared well for their future educational career, particularly through the opportunities given for boarding. However, whilst the current written two-year school development plan is based on those issues which have been recognised as important for the school's future development, the objectives are not sufficiently prioritised, no-one is named

as taking responsibility for fulfilling each of them, and the financial implications have not been fully explored. Not enough written information is given to show how the school will achieve its objectives or recognise its success. The school is aware that this lack of focus makes it difficult for all members of staff to contribute towards the fulfilment of the plan through their own roles within the school.

- 4.6 Suitable policies have been drawn up to cover most aspects of school life, including academic policies, and a senior member of staff is given the role of monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness over set periods of time. Whilst department heads are involved in some monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observation in their own subjects, senior staff are aware that this is not undertaken regularly or rigorously enough for it to have sufficient impact on the quality of the educational experience.
- 4.7 Across the school, teaching staff are deployed well and contribute significantly to boys' learning and welfare during the day and in boarding. Staffing levels are generous and enable strong support to be given to the boys, particularly those who have learning difficulties or disabilities or for whom English is an additional language. The recruitment of well-qualified staff is successfully managed, the required staffing checks, including those with the Criminal Records Bureau, are carried out and all information is kept on a centralised record. Induction procedures for staff new to the school are comprehensive and support them effectively. The school does not participate in the national scheme for the induction of newly qualified teachers. Many in-service training opportunities are available, but the current appraisal system, which is in the process of being re-developed, does not link successfully with the school development plan.
- 4.8 Resources for learning, including provision for ICT, are plentiful, competently managed and meet the needs of all boys. The well-stocked libraries, which have seen major refurbishment since the last inspection creating attractive and well-equipped facilities, are used by the boys and staff to contribute effectively to learning. Procedures for budgeting operate very efficiently.
- 4.9 Arrangements for the day-to-day management of the school work very well. The administrative and other support staff, including pastoral, maintenance, catering and cleaning staff, provide high quality assistance, and the school runs smoothly. Communication within the school is very effective and communications with the parents and the community are extremely strong.
- 4.10 The school provides a very secure environment for the boys. Its facilities are outstanding, and the school continues to make excellent provision in its premises for all areas of the curriculum and at all ages. The school's accommodation and grounds are extremely well maintained, and outdoor space provides very effectively for educational and recreational play. The high quality, bright displays, particularly of the boys' art work, create an exciting learning environment. Pupils say they are happy, and they are clearly proud of their school.
- 4.11 The school meets the regulatory requirements for the suitability of proprietors and staff and for premises and accommodation [Standards 4 and 5].

5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Overall Conclusions

- 5.1 The school has many strong features and is outstanding in several important areas. All boys learn and achieve well because of a broad curriculum, including a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, and good quality teaching, of which a substantial amount is outstanding. Their personal development is excellent, underpinned by the very strong pastoral care given by all members of staff, the exceptional quality of the boarding experience enhanced by extensive facilities, and by the school's impressive focus on sport and the arts. The leadership of senior managers, ably supported by outstanding governance, is highly effective. Extremely strong links have been forged with the local community and with parents, and they and their sons are very positive about the educational experiences provided. Relationships throughout the school community are excellent. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning and the current appraisal system are not carried out rigorously enough, the school development plan is not sufficiently focused, and the checking of boys' progress is not yet followed through uniformly. The school is aware of these issues, and has already begun to discuss the way forward. In spite of these areas for development, Caldicott fulfils its aims extremely well and meets the needs of the boys effectively by preparing them for the next stage of their education with a high level of success.
- 5.2 Progress since the last ISI inspection has been good, with an improvement in the quality of the library provision and the appointment of a librarian, and the drawing up of an in-service training policy. Issues from the last CSCI report, relating to policies and procedures, job descriptions, health and safety systems, risk assessments and the renewal of furniture, have been resolved.
- 5.3 The school complies with most of the regulatory requirements, but does not at present meet Standard 3 (welfare, health and safety of pupils).

Next Steps

- 5.4 The school has no significant weaknesses, but to improve the quality of its educational provision, it should take the following action.
1. The leadership and management of the school should be improved by:
 - rigorously monitoring teaching and learning, and sharing best practice, so that boys' achievement is raised still further;
 - providing a sharper focus to the written school development plan, by including priorities, costings, and how the objectives are to be realised, so that all staff can contribute to its fulfilment through their own subject improvement plans;
 - developing the current appraisal system, so that it is linked to the school development plan.
 2. The school should further develop its assessment procedures so that the progress of individual boys can be checked more effectively as they move through the school.
- 5.5 In order to meet all the regulatory requirements, the school must:
- (1) ensure that the admission and attendance registers are electronically backed up or printed out each month and retained for three years after the end of the school year in question [Regulation 3.(9)].

6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 19th to 22nd November 2007. 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. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the sanatorium. 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

Mrs Elizabeth Coley	Reporting Inspector
Mr David Aylward	Headmaster, IAPS school
Mr Pete Brooks	Headmaster, IAPS school
Mr Tony Duncan	Head, IAPS/HMC junior school
Mrs Tracy Handford	Head of Science, IAPS/HMC junior school
Mr Thomas Noble	Deputy Head, IAPS school