



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**SALESIAN COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Salesian College

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Full Name of School       | <b>Salesian College</b>   |
| DfE Number                | <b>850/6022</b>   |
| Registered Charity Number | <b>1130166</b>  |
| Address                   | <b>Salesian College<br/>119 Reading Road<br/>Farnborough<br/>Hampshire<br/>GU14 6PA</b> |
| Telephone Number          | <b>01252 893000</b>   |
| Fax Number                | <b>01252 893032</b>   |
| Email Address             | <b>office@salesiancollege.com</b>   |
| Headmaster                | <b>Mr Gerard Owens</b>  |
| Chairman of Governors     | <b>Mr Alan Lion</b>   |
| Total Number of Pupils    | <b>648</b>  |
| Gender of Pupils          | <b>Mixed (614 boys; 34 girls)</b>   |
| Numbers by Age            | 0-2 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 5-11: <b>0</b><br>3-5 (EYFS): <b>0</b> 11-18: <b>648</b>           |
| Number of Day Pupils      | Total: <b>648</b>   |
| Number of Boarders        | Total: <b>0</b>   |
| Inspection Dates          | <b>07 to 10 Oct 2014</b>  |

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in October 2008.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Mr Paul Spillane    | Reporting Inspector                                 |
| Mrs Sandra Clements | Team Inspector (Former deputy head, GSA school)     |
| Mrs Susan Court     | Team Inspector (Former senior teacher, SofH school) |
| Mrs Doris Hugh      | Team Inspector (Senior teacher, GSA school)         |
| Mr Keith Knight     | Team Inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)             |
| Mr Roderick Spencer | Team Inspector (Former senior master, SofH school)  |

# CONTENTS

|  | Page      |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2 THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>(a) Main findings</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>(b) Action points</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| (i) Compliance with regulatory requirements  | 3         |
| (ii) Recommendations for further improvement   | 3         |
| <b>3 THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS</b>  | <b>4</b>  |
| (a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning   | 4         |
| (b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils) | 5         |
| (c) The contribution of teaching   | 6         |
| <b>4 THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| (a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils  | 8         |
| (b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care   | 9         |
| (c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety  | 9         |
| <b>5 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| (a) The quality of governance  | 11        |
| (b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians                   | 11        |

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Salesian College is situated in Farnborough, Hampshire, and is an independent Roman Catholic grammar school for boys aged 11 to 18 with a co-educational six form, which was founded in 1901. There are 614 boys and 34 girls in the school. The sixth form has been co-educational since 2007. Members of all faiths are welcomed into the school, which is part of a worldwide organisation of educational foundations run by the Salesians, a religious order founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in Italy by St John Bosco.
- 1.2 The school's stated aim is to send young people out into the world who are confident, comfortable with themselves and all those around them, good Christians, honest citizens, decent people and well equipped to take their place in and make a significant contribution to society. The school strives to achieve this aim by the Preventive System of Education promoted by Don Bosco and based on the three principles of reason, religion and loving kindness. These principles should encourage pupils to develop a strong sense of responsibility and a caring attitude towards one another and the community at large. The school also seeks to promote excellent academic, cultural, spiritual and physical achievement within a caring ethos.
- 1.3 Salesian College is a charitable trust. Apart from the one parent governor, two teacher governors and one governor who is nominated by the Bishop of Portsmouth, the members of the governing body are appointed by the Provincial on behalf of the Trustees of the Salesians of Don Bosco. The headmaster took up his appointment in September 2014.
- 1.4 Most of the pupils are of white British origin and come from professional and business families in the neighbourhood. The ability profile of Years 7 to 11 is above the national average; most pupils are of at least above average ability, with few being of below average ability. In Year 7 at least a quarter of pupils are well above average ability. The ability profile of the sixth form is also above the national average, although with a wider spread of ability than in the younger year groups. Four pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), but none of them requires or receives support for their English. One pupil has a statement of special needs. The school has identified 87 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 30 receive specialist learning support from the school.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

| School      | NC name |
|-------------|---------|
| Year 7      | Year 7  |
| Year 8      | Year 8  |
| Year 9      | Year 9  |
| Year 10     | Year 10 |
| Year 11     | Year 11 |
| Lower sixth | Year 12 |
| Upper sixth | Year 13 |

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school is very successful in fulfilling its stated aims. The excellence of academic achievement owes much to the excellence of the curriculum and the teaching. Pupils find the collaborative approach of the teaching staff very helpful and supportive. Teachers know their pupils extremely well; they plan their lessons carefully to include a variety of approaches which succeed in engaging pupils' interest and, in almost all cases, in enabling them to maintain strong progress. A small amount of the teaching could make better use of assessment information and marking to focus on what needs to be done. Pupils also achieve success, both individually and collectively, across a wide range of intellectual, sporting and cultural activities. Pupils display highly positive attitudes in all that they undertake. They benefit from a rich and varied programme of visits and trips, in this country and abroad.
- 2.2 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They are very proud of the school and say that they are happy to be there. There is a real sense of community, a place where the Gospel message of care for one another is properly lived out and where a spirit of goodwill permeates all aspects of school life. Teaching about the public institutions of England is adequate, but not sufficiently systematic. In accordance with Don Bosco's precepts, religion, reason and loving kindness exercise their influence throughout the school; pastoral care is excellent. The pupils present themselves very well and, known and valued as individuals, display self-esteem and the right sort of self-confidence. They also develop a mature sense of responsibility and a caring attitude. They look after one another considerately and maintain a strong tradition of charitable giving and action. The pupils are very well prepared for the next chapter of their lives.
- 2.3 Governance, leadership and management are excellent. School life runs very smoothly. The governors serve the school devotedly and exercise effective oversight over all aspects of its life and work. Forward planning is well considered, business-like and supported by evidence. Leadership is strong and purposeful, and the school is efficiently managed. Accessible and approachable, all those in senior positions promote a sense of common purpose. Teaching and support staff all contribute to the spirit of co-operation and the sense of community. The caring ethos finds expression in pastoral care of a high order. Arrangements for welfare, health and safety ensure that the pupils are safe. Historic deficiencies in the safeguarding policy have been rectified; all statutory requirements are now met. The recommendations of the previous inspection report have been satisfied. At all levels, the quality of communication is very good and the school's relations with parents are excellent. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents express great satisfaction with the quality of education which their children are receiving.

## **2.(b) Action points**

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

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010.

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

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Use assessment data consistently across all subjects in order to monitor progress and set targets for improvement.
2. Ensure that all marking of pupils' work is brought up to the standard of the best.
3. Adopt a systematic approach to teaching about the public institutions and services of England.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is excellent.
- 3.2 Pupils are successfully educated according to the school's aims to promote excellent academic, cultural and physical achievement.
- 3.3 At all ages, pupils display excellent levels of knowledge and understanding and have well-developed skills which are evident in lessons across various subject areas and extra-curricular activities. The overall standard of competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and in the presentation of work, is high. Pupils reveal excellent levels of creativity, observed, for example, in drama, art and creative writing. They demonstrate good standards of logical thought and are proficient in information and communication technology (ICT). Excellent numeracy is evident in mathematics and across a range of other subjects.
- 3.4 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in GCSE are above the national average for boys in maintained schools, and similar to that for boys in maintained selective schools. The level of attainment at GCSE, and standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils make progress between Years 7 and 11 that is at least appropriate and often good in relation to the average for pupils of similar abilities. In 2014, the level of attainment at GCSE was sustained, with the percentage of top grades equalling the average for the previous three years.
- 3.5 At A level, results have been above the average for maintained schools, and are similar to that for maintained selective schools. The level of attainment at A level, and standardised measures of progress that are available, indicate that pupils make progress that is at least appropriate in relation to pupils of similar abilities, with particularly good progress being made by the 2013 year group. In 2014, the pupils' overall performance at A level reflected good academic progress and the percentage of top grades matched the previous year's high point. Nearly all of the upper sixth leavers proceed to university degree courses, either immediately or after a gap year.
- 3.6 Pupils with SEND are provided with individual support and make excellent progress, so that their academic results are indistinguishable from those of other pupils. Pupils who are able, gifted and talented are appropriately challenged: they achieve very well at GCSE and gain entrance to highly selective universities after A level. They also participate well in demanding activities such as extension projects.
- 3.7 Pupils achieve success in various extra-curricular activities. A number of sports teams and individual players have gained district, regional and national representative honours. Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is developing well. Pupils also achieve success in national competitions related to their academic subjects.
- 3.8 Throughout the school pupils display a very positive attitude to learning. In the pre-inspection questionnaire they rated their academic progress and their extra-curricular involvement highly. They participate with enthusiasm in their lessons, work successfully on their own and co-operate constructively with their peers. In their extra-curricular activities they contribute eagerly and wholeheartedly.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

- 3.9 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.10 The curriculum provides very well for pupils of all ages, abilities and needs. It supports the school's aim of promoting excellent academic, cultural, spiritual and physical achievement within a caring ethos. An extensive provision of extra-curricular activities and links with the wider community enriches pupils' experiences. The curriculum has been constantly reviewed since the previous inspection to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of current pupils.
- 3.11 The academic curriculum comprises a good range of subjects in Years 7 to 9, including separate sciences and two modern foreign languages. As they progress through the school, pupils are provided with suitable choices at GCSE and A level. They have benefited from the introduction of business studies and classics at GCSE and theatre studies and psychology at A level. Religious education supports the Catholic ethos of the school and plays an important part in the development of pupils. An excellent programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) further enables them to develop self-esteem, confidence and emotional stability, but the teaching of the public institutions and services of England takes place in a very piecemeal fashion.
- 3.12 As part of the response to the recommendation in the previous report, the school has introduced a compulsory GCSE in business communication and systems technology for all Year 10 pupils. Throughout the school, pupils now display secure understanding of and familiarity with ICT. Three fully equipped computer suites are open to all, and provision is being increased with the very recent piloting of tablets in modern foreign languages.
- 3.13 The school is seeking to improve the way that it meets the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils. Two recent initiatives are the provision of core and additional science to a designated group of Year 10 pupils, with the abler members of the year group able to study three separate sciences, and the Extended Project Qualification to Year 13. Although a very small minority of parents commented on the lack of support for very able pupils, the inspection found that the high expectations in the majority of lessons raise the general standard of all pupils.
- 3.14 Daily subject workshops offer valued support for pupils who need extra help. Those with SEND are identified early in their time at the school. They receive excellent specialist support, as well as appropriate help in lessons. This enables them to gain access to the full curriculum and to make good progress, achieving public examination results which are in line with those of other pupils.
- 3.15 The excellent provision of extra-curricular activities is a great strength of this vibrant community. Pupils develop their talents, achieve success and grow into confident young people, in accordance with the school ethos. An extensive range of trips, visits and competitions provides academic enrichment and residential trips abroad raise the pupils' cultural awareness. The performing arts enable them to develop self-confidence and the ability to speak in public. Large-scale musicals are among the highlights of the drama provision; in the music department, opportunities to sing in an ensemble range from Schola, a small cathedral-like choir, to the junior choir of over 150 pupils. Sports contribute greatly to pupils' physical development and appreciation of teamwork; having several teams in a year group enables a large number of pupils to represent the school, not least in the sixth form, for both boys

and girls. Sixth formers develop leadership skills through positions of responsibility, the Young Enterprise scheme and Level 2 award in Sports Leadership. The school has established strong national and international links with charitable organisations, and pupils seize these opportunities to give of themselves enthusiastically and generously. In line with the teachings of the Gospel, they learn to care for others and they grow in maturity and self-knowledge. Individual pupils seek out further charitable activities.

- 3.16 The careers and thorough higher education guidance prepares pupils very well for the next stage. Mock interviews, visiting academics and business people, and psychometric tests develop their knowledge and understanding of themselves.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.17 The quality of teaching is excellent.
- 3.18 Throughout the school, teaching is very effective, successfully promoting pupils' progress and fostering academic excellence in accordance with the school's aims. A very high proportion of teaching is well planned, varied and briskly paced, and excellent time management engages pupils well. Teachers share their specialist enthusiasm with their pupils, engendering interest and endeavour. Teaching demonstrates the highest expectations of pupils and uses knowledge of their needs and abilities in planning; it also includes careful revisiting of previous learning. The rapport between teachers and their pupils is extremely positive, enabling the teaching to be purposeful, effective and enjoyable. Pupils recognise the contribution that teaching makes to their progress, and the generous individual help that teachers readily provide both within and out of curriculum time. In their responses to the questionnaire, pupils affirm that they are very pleased with their academic progress, and their parents express a similarly high level of satisfaction.
- 3.19 Teaching displays excellent subject knowledge and uses a variety of successful approaches; it is well structured to promote progress and good resources are readily available to support the pupils' learning. Following recommendations of the previous inspection, teachers make much more use of ICT to enhance their lessons and pupils use ICT effectively, including the excellent virtual learning environment (VLE), for independent study and research. The most successful teaching has clear objectives and uses open-ended and focused questions to assess the pupils' understanding and progress. This encourages independent thought and critical thinking, and takes advantage of the exemplary behaviour of pupils, leading to strong progress in learning.
- 3.20 While most of the pupils' work is marked regularly, the school marking policy is not uniformly followed so that practice varies across, and within, departments. Marking comments are frequently affirming but do not always set explicit goals, and pupils' errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not consistently corrected. In the best examples, teachers give constructive comments for further improvement and the opportunity for pupils to assess their own performance. Pupils appreciate the individual oral feedback they receive in lessons, which is focused on individual needs and allows them to understand how to make progress in their work.
- 3.21 Teachers appreciate the need to use information from assessment to guide planning and curriculum development, and most use it, if inconsistently, to track pupils' progress against standardised benchmarks. The best examples identify what can

be reasonably expected of pupils in the future, providing target grades for performance in public examinations.

- 3.22 Where required, additional support is readily available to all pupils, and teaching provides opportunities for pupils, including those with SEND, to develop their skills and to consolidate their knowledge. Teaching groups selected by prior attainment in some subjects enable students to progress at a pace suited to their ability. In the best teaching, opportunities to extend the most able are planned carefully, and many lessons provide more challenging work to provide stimulus for these pupils. A significant improvement since the previous inspection has been the school's introduction of the Extended Project Qualification for upper sixth pupils. The taught element of this qualification is well structured and supervised, resulting in an excellent opportunity for sixth form pupils to develop their independent learning skills.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Pupils are comfortable with themselves, are well rounded, confident and have great pride in their school. The ethos of the school is steeped in the Roman Catholic faith, held up as a true path for life, and it connects with lessons in many and varied ways. Pupils display a high level of emotional intelligence and self-awareness. They are able to talk seriously and maturely about the spiritual dimension of their lives, and pupils of different faiths and of no faith appreciate the enrichment which they derive from masses, assemblies and retreats, ranging from an opportunity to reflect to a deepening of their faith.
- 4.3 Pupils' moral development is excellent. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and this is typified by their behaviour around the school. Their moral compass is displayed by the way that they embrace the school's core principles in their everyday actions, reinforced by the courtesy points, which are on view in every classroom. Pupils demonstrate a keen appreciation of moral and ethical values, not only through their work in religious studies, but through their personal choices when choosing (or not) to eat healthily or when encountering cyber-bullying.
- 4.4 Displaying excellent social development, pupils are extremely courteous, showing respect for their teachers and peers. They evidently care for one another and there is a strong mutual respect between teachers and pupils in lessons and other meeting places. They are completely at ease with those in different age groups and with adults. Numerous opportunities, ranging from small clubs and societies to the annual revue, enable pupils to be active members of the community. Older pupils demonstrate their leadership in the excellent mentoring scheme, where they are encouraged to help younger peers, and running the wide-ranging charities programme, focused mainly on fund-raising ventures, covering disability and young people. Pupils acquire a suitable and broad general knowledge of the public institutions and services of England from lessons, assemblies and other sources, but the various topics are not covered in a systematic manner.
- 4.5 Pupils have a strong appreciation of their own and other cultures, based on their own direct experiences and aided by references in many lessons. As a result, they demonstrate a clear appreciation of the achievements of the Western cultural tradition as well as those of other faiths and cultures. Pupils from a variety of backgrounds work and live together harmoniously. Pupils extend their understanding of diversity through participation in a range of ventures at home and abroad, including visits to Lourdes, Switzerland, Greece and Rome, valuable work in a Salesian school in Zambia, and links with other Salesian schools throughout Europe and the USA. These experiences greatly enhance pupils' personal development and their appreciation of different cultures, circumstances and ways of life.
- 4.6 Pupils grow spiritually throughout their time in the school, from the child in Year 7 to the mature young person in Year 13. They are confident but not arrogant, thoughtful yet not afraid to put across a point of view. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their life and education.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.7 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 The staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils. The heads of year, ably assisted by a team of tutors, are at the heart of the arrangements for pastoral care, whose success is founded on the extent to which they know their pupils. Excellent support is provided by the chaplaincy, seen to be 'there for everybody'. Systems are in place to ensure that any problem, whether pastoral or academic, is dealt with positively in the light of the school's guiding principles. Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are excellent and contribute significantly to the family spirit of the school. There is an excellent sense of co-operation between pupils and teachers.
- 4.9 The speed and success with which new Year 7 pupils settle into the school owe much to the lengthy induction course and the allocation of older pupils to look after them. A weekend away together early in the academic year enables new Year 12 pupils to integrate easily into the year group.
- 4.10 The pupils show an increasing awareness of the need for healthy eating and adequate exercise as they move through the school. The wide range of activities available, together with the varied and nutritious meals provided, help pupils to choose healthy options for themselves.
- 4.11 The school promotes extremely high standards of behaviour in line with its aims, with clear policies and procedures to promote tolerance and discourage harassment or bullying. The very rare cases of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively in line with the school's published procedures.
- 4.12 The school has an excellent plan to improve access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.13 In their responses to the questionnaire a few pupils said that teachers are not always fair in the way that they give rewards and sanctions and a small minority suggested that the school did not listen to their opinions. Inspection evidence did not support these views. Inspectors found that records and interviews reveal rewards and sanctions to be proportionate and used consistently. Similarly, the team found that the school does listen to the views of pupils. The college council is a properly constituted body with elected representatives and has been responsible for numerous improvements, such as the provision of sports equipment, a new suggestions box and the refurbishment of the school clock.

#### **4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.14 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.15 The pupils say that they are happy at the school and that they feel safe. Provision for their health and safety is given a high priority. The health and safety committee is efficient and effective; a comprehensive audit plan is regularly monitored, checked by the chairman of the committee and submitted annually to the governing body. Registers record appropriate training given to teaching and support staff on matters relating to welfare, health and safety.
- 4.16 Clear procedures for safeguarding pupils and eliminating discrimination are implemented in a highly effective manner. The required checks on new staff are carried out and recorded correctly, as is attendance at the child protection training

which all staff receive on appointment and at specified intervals. Historic shortcomings in aspects of the safeguarding policy have been swiftly rectified; the policy now meets all requirements.

- 4.17 There are good facilities for pupils who are ill or injured. Staff are given detailed information about pupils in need of particular consideration on health grounds. The medical facilities are suitable for the treatment of pupils suffering from minor injuries or illnesses, and 13 members of staff are trained in first aid to the higher level.
- 4.18 Appropriate steps are taken to minimise the risk from fire: all equipment for preventing and fighting fire is regularly checked and termly fire practices take place. Pupils receive thorough education regarding e-safety and the acceptable use of the internet. External consultants assist in preparing good risk assessments for on- and off-site activities.
- 4.19 The admission and attendance registers are completed meticulously, and maintained and stored in accordance with regulations.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is excellent.
- 5.2 The governing body is wholeheartedly committed to the aims and ethos of the school. The governors explicitly state that spiritual life should dominate and take precedence over all other aspects of the school's strategy, and that pupils' health and safety are paramount and must not be compromised: these priorities are defined in the detailed, reflective strategic development plan, which is supported by a wealth of statistical data.
- 5.3 The governors conscientiously discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, and investment in staff, accommodation and resources. A good range of committees, including ones with responsibility for ethos and for ICT, help the governors to achieve a comprehensive oversight of school activities. The composition of the governing body, with parent and teacher governors, also contributes to a wide and deep understanding of the life and work of the school. Relevant expertise is represented on committees such as those covering finance and health and safety, and members of staff are co-opted on to committees as required.
- 5.4 The governors have a clear insight into the working of the school. They visit regularly on formal occasions and at other times. They give generous support to senior staff, who speak highly of the governors' experience, love of the school, and willingness to make themselves available and to devote a very great amount of time to school matters. In partnership with, and as a critical friend of, senior management, the governing body is demanding but fair in its high expectations.
- 5.5 Scrutiny of the evidence prior to the inspection showed that, in the past, the school had not always been rigorous in ensuring that it updated all policies in line with changes to regulatory requirements. By the end of the inspection, the school had taken suitable steps to ensure that the few remaining shortcomings in policies had been rectified, and all policies, including those relating to safeguarding, now comply with requirements. The full governing body carries out an annual review of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.6 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is excellent.
- 5.7 Strong leadership and management ensure that the school is successful in achieving the aims of Don Bosco to provide an education based on the principles of reason, religion and loving kindness. The recent appointment of a new headmaster and a restructured leadership team is being followed by a period of reflection and review. The roles of the senior leadership are plainly delineated and working well. Senior and middle managers are approachable and accessible at all times, leading

to excellent relationships and harmony between school, parents and pupils, as desired in the Salesian ideal. Pupils say the staff are always willing to offer appropriate guidance and support.

- 5.8 There is clear educational direction, based on thorough self-evaluation of existing practices. For example, at the time of the inspection, working groups were reviewing the curriculum, the timetable and the PSHE programme. A detailed strategic plan gives the school clear educational aspirations in accordance with the recommendations of the previous inspection. All members of staff are committed to the development aims of the school. The leadership has met the recommendation from the previous inspection to increase the use of ICT by students in order to enrich their independent learning; the virtual learning environment (VLE) has made a major contribution to achieving this aim, being used effectively by pupils of all ages to access files and use resources made available by the staff. The use of electronic calendars, access to personal academic data and information to aid transfer to higher education are particularly welcomed by sixth form students. Communication at all levels is excellent; parents are well informed about day-to-day school life, particularly as it pertains to their children.
- 5.9 The leadership team has met the recommendation of the previous inspection to link development plans and performance targets more closely to the teaching and learning priorities of the strategic plan. Middle managers have clearly understood responsibilities for both pastoral and curricular matters, which they fulfil with enthusiasm and skill. Support staff are a greatly valued part of the school. They have an excellent relationship with the teaching staff and regularly take part in school visits and residential trips.
- 5.10 The school appoints staff of high quality. All required checks are carried out and recorded correctly. A detailed induction programme for new staff ensures that they quickly become conversant with the ethos and procedures of the school. A rigorous scheme of annual performance review based on fairness and equality of opportunity is established. Clear targets for improvement are set against agreed criteria generated by lesson observation and review. Professional development is effectively targeted, arising from the performance review process and from individual career aspirations. The school makes good use of staff expertise for internal training, and staff who attend external training courses disseminate their findings among their colleagues.
- 5.11 Links with parents are excellent. They are extremely satisfied with the education and support provided for their children and with the quality of communication with the school, as shown in their response to the questionnaire. The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents and any areas of concern are addressed immediately. The school's clear and appropriate complaints procedure is available on the website. In recent years the very few formal complaints have been handled professionally and resolved satisfactorily.
- 5.12 Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. The parent teacher association flourishes and hosts a variety of fundraising events for charity, contributing to the close relationship between parents and the school. The half-termly newsletter keeps parents up to date with information about school trips, sporting successes and staff news. The VLE is well used as a means of communication between the parents and the school. The school provides the required information for prospective parents. The two induction days for new pupils in June and an activity week in the summer are well attended. An evening

meeting for the new parents in the first week of the autumn term welcomes newcomers into the school community. Parents and new pupils are provided with helpful handbooks. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through detailed end of term reports.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**