



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**BRITISH SCHOOLS OVERSEAS**

**INSPECTION REPORT ON**

**THE LADIES' COLLEGE**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## The Ladies' College

Full Name of School	<b>The Ladies' College</b>	
Address	<b>Les Gravees St Peter Port Guernsey GY1 1RW Channel Islands</b>	
Telephone Number	<b>01481 721602</b>	
Fax Number	<b>01481 724209</b>	
Email Address	<b>principalspa@ladiescollege.ac.gg</b>	
Principal	<b>Mrs Ashley Clancy</b>	
Chair of Governors	<b>Mrs Kate Richards</b>	
Age Range	<b>11 to 18</b>	
Total Number of Pupils	<b>395</b>	
Gender of Pupils	<b>Girls</b>	
Numbers by Age	11-18:	<b>395</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>395</b>
Number of Boarders	Total:	<b>0</b>
Inspection dates	<b>18 Oct 2016 to 21 Oct 2016</b>	

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI Schedule* for the inspection of British schools overseas. The inspection consists of two parts: a preliminary two-day visit followed by a four-day (team) inspection. The previous ISI inspection was in March 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved by the British Government for the purpose of inspecting schools in England and overseas. As such, ISI reports to the English Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet the relevant Standards for British Schools Overseas and the *ISI Framework* requirements. ISI is also the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). Accordingly, ISI inspections of British schools overseas are required to:

- help schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of pupils' education and of the care for their welfare;
- provide objective and reliable inspection reports which help schools to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses;
- inform parents and the wider public of the quality of British schools overseas by placing reports in the public domain;
- report to the DfE the extent to which schools comply with the published Standards for British Schools Overseas;
- where applicable, assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and through public reporting makes the information available to parents, governments and the wider community.

Inspections for British schools overseas follow closely the framework and guidance for independent school inspection in England. The major difference is that schools in England must comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which do not apply with legal validity to schools outside the United Kingdom. However, the inspection of overseas schools takes account where possible of compliance with any local requirements and it judges the extent to which the schools comply with the British Government's Standards for British Schools Overseas. The range of these Standards is as follows.

1. The quality of education provided by the school (Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment).
2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils.
4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff.
5. The premises and accommodation.
6. The provision of information for parents, carers and others.
7. The school's procedures for handling complaints.
8. The quality of provision for boarding.
9. Leadership and management of the school.

**The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will 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 or company law.**

## 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 Standards 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 their learning, attitudes and skills	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 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	11
(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians	12

## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 The Ladies' College was founded in 1872 to provide an academic education for girls. It is a single-sex, selective, non-denominational Christian school. All of the governors are appointed by the States of Deliberation (the island's parliament). One of the members must be a sitting member of the States. The school shares lessons in the sixth form with a nearby boys' school.
- 1.2 The College aims to encourage each girl to grow in confidence, enjoy her talents to the full and value the qualities of others; and to provide an environment in which girls grow up happily, develop wide interests and make lifelong friends.
- 1.3 There are 395 girls enrolled at the senior school of whom 83 are in the sixth form. Girls proceed directly from Melrose (the prep school) into the senior school; those entering from other schools at the age of eleven years as fee paying pupils take the school's entrance assessment. The college has grant-aided status and, as a result, approximately one-third of places are allocated by the States on the basis of the education department's 11+ tests.
- 1.4 There are four bilingual pupils, none of whom is identified as having English as an additional language. Thirty-six pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SEND), of which twenty-seven receive specialist support from the school. Most girls choose to stay in the school for their sixth form education and the majority of girls go on from Year 13 to university. A small number of girls go straight into employment.
- 1.5 The overall ability profile of the senior school is above the British national average. Around half of the pupils in Year 7 have above average ability. Most pupils in Year 12 have ability either similar to or above the British national average. Pupils are mainly from white skilled and professional families. About two-thirds were born on Guernsey and, apart from a small number from overseas, the remainder are of UK origin.
- 1.6 The principal, assistant principal and bursar have all been appointed in the last three years. The chair of the governing body was appointed in May 2016 and is no longer required to be a Deputy (a member of the States). Since the previous inspection a sixth form centre, art and drama building and dining room have been built; in September 2016, a significant extension to the main teaching facilities was officially opened.
- 1.7 English 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 tables.

College	NC name
Remove	Year 7
Lower 4	Year 8
Upper 4	Year 9
Lower 5	Year 10
Upper 5	Year 11
Lower Sixth	Year 12
Upper Sixth	Year 13

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

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

- 2.1 The Ladies' College very successfully achieves its aims to create an environment in which pupils enjoy their talents and aspire to be the best that they can be. The quality of pupils' achievements is excellent. Pupils have secure subject knowledge and skills. They are conscientious and committed to learning and they perform well at GCSE and A-level. Many pupils are highly successful in music, dance, art and sport. Pupils' academic achievement is supported by an excellent curriculum. Teaching is well planned and organised, and the atmosphere in class fosters application. In the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all pupils reported that they were making good progress in their work and that teachers help them learn. Teaching reinforces pupils' knowledge, but in some lessons approaches can allow pupils to withdraw from challenge or from taking initiative in their learning. Since the previous inspection the quality of marking and of the use of data has been improved. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, a small minority of parents said the school had not provided worthwhile help regarding SEND; the school has very recently appointed a specialist in this area although specialist approaches are not yet routinely part of curriculum planning.
- 2.2 Pupils' personal development is excellent. Behaviour is exceptional, and pupils have strong moral awareness based on the framework of a programme to develop decision skills. In the questionnaires, the very large majority of parents agreed that the school achieved high standards of behaviour and promoted worthwhile attitudes. Pupils of all ages take leadership roles, show responsibility and collaborate productively. They show a mature empathy, and are widely involved in charitable and community activities on the island and beyond. In the questionnaires, a minority of pupils thought that teachers treat pupils unequally but the record of rewards and the few sanctions used shows no evidence of bias. A minority of pupils believed that teachers do not monitor their workload, and the school is addressing the unevenness in homework that sometimes occurs.
- 2.3 In the last three years, the governors have developed robust procedures to ensure that the well-being of pupils is actively promoted. They have worked closely with the leadership and management of the school to create a development plan that builds on the school's considerable strengths but that unashamedly confronts areas for development. At the core is a belief that a focus on further academic success sits alongside an equal emphasis on a continuation of the pupils' excellent personal development.

**2.(b) Action points**

**(i) Compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas**

2.4 The school meets all the requirements of the Standards for British Schools Overseas.

**(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Encourage pupils to more routinely apply higher order learning skills in lessons.
2. Ensure that the planning of all lessons includes opportunities to provide intellectual challenge for all abilities, and approaches that meet the needs of pupils with SEND.



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

#### 3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievements and their learning, attitudes and skills is excellent.
- 3.2 The school's aim that pupils enjoy their talents and aspire to be the best that they can be is successfully achieved. Pupils' academic subject knowledge and understanding, and their extra-curricular skills, are excellent. They are highly organised, punctual and complete tasks quickly and efficiently; they approach their responsibilities calmly. Pupils demonstrate the school's motto to *fais ce que dois adviene que pourra*: do your duty come what may, successfully.
- 3.3 Pupils are exceptional listeners. In assemblies, they listen quietly but attentively. In lessons, teachers rarely need to repeat instructions. Pupils speak with confidence in drama and other lessons, but in assemblies or concerts their natural reserve sometimes makes them hesitant. They are frequent readers, and many are involved in the choice of fiction for the school library. Pupils' writing skills are excellent, and they use an appropriate range of genres. The most able are adept at summarising rather than copying notes.
- 3.4 Pupils are highly creative in art, drama and in English. In a recital musicians performed with accomplished technique, mature expression and exceptional musicality. Pupils choreograph gymnastic displays, and many are involved in producing assemblies. Pupils' responses in discussion are well reasoned and logical; they apply their understanding, and the most able analyse and balance evidence.
- 3.5 In the sixth form, pupils synthesise and evaluate subject content, and in lessons they show initiative. Younger pupils have excellent recall, but less frequently challenge arguments or introduce their own perceptions. Independent thought and research is more frequently found in extra-curricular groups; for example, lower school pupils are just beginning a two-term research project on citric acid. Pupils are confident numerically. They achieve high standards in mathematics, and can apply techniques effectively, for example by using statistics to analyse poverty in countries at differing stages of development. They use information and communication technology (ICT) proficiently; for example, in photographing plant dissections or researching the lineage in Genesis.
- 3.6 Pupils' achievements in wider activities are outstanding within the geographical limitations. In Channel Island competitions, both teams and individuals have gained success in gymnastics, swimming and athletics. Many pupils gained recognition in the world dance championships, and in 2015 the school was the best "small school" at the independent schools' fencing competition. Pupils have represented Great Britain at sailing. In recent years, for the size of the school, a high number of pupils have achieved the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award. The record of success in the UK Maths Challenge is strong, and teams have won prizes in national robotics competitions. Pupils gain CREST awards in science. Pupils' high standards of musical performance are reflected in their participation in national and regional orchestras, and in external music examinations. Artists regularly win prizes in the island's many art festivals. Leavers are very successful in gaining places at their first-choice high demand universities.
- 3.7 Pupils are entered for GCSE/IGCSE and A-level examinations. The following analysis uses the English national data for the years 2013 to 2015. These are the

most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in the GCSE/IGCSE examinations have been above the UK national average. From the results in GCSE and standardised measures of progress that are available for 2013 to 2015, pupils made good progress in relation to the average, for pupils in the UK with similar abilities. From 2013 to 2015, A-level results were above the UK national average, with nearly four-fifths of grades at A\*/B in 2016. From the results in A-Level and standardised measures of progress that are available, pupils made progress that is appropriate in relation to the average for pupils in the UK with similar abilities.

- 3.8 In 2016 in GCSE/IGCSE examinations nearly half the grades were A\*. Analysis shows that this represents progress which is more rapid than in previous years. The proportion of A\*/A grades in 2016, at just under half, was higher than in all years since the previous inspection. The improvement in pupils' progress is reflected in the enhanced quality of written work over recent years: written answers to questions are more focused, and pupils are responding in detail to advice given by teachers.
- 3.9 Pupils with SEND make progress at least in line with other pupils in lessons. They answer confidently, and value the encouraging approach of teachers. The written work of those with SEND shows no discernible difference to that of others. Written exercises are completed thoroughly and with little error. The most able make very rapid progress and achieve at a very high level in both GCSE/IGCSE and A level examinations.
- 3.10 In the questionnaires, almost all pupils said they were making good progress in their work. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to their work. They are conscientious, committed, and enjoy and take satisfaction from the learning process. The presentation of their work is immaculate. Pupils are enthusiastic and whole hearted in their approach to all activities, but in lessons they can be reticent, unwilling to question the direction taken, accepting rather than challenging. They work successfully as individuals, and with others, indicating the fulfilment of the school's aim of providing an environment where each can grow up happily, enjoy her talents to the full and, importantly, to value the qualities of others.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision (including community links of benefit to pupils)**

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent.
- 3.12 The college's aim to provide balanced and relevant education with well-being at the core, is successfully achieved. The curriculum covers all the requisite areas of learning and is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs. The needs of the most able are met by timetable arrangements that allow pupils to select a demanding range of subjects at GCSE and by being encouraged to undertake independent research beyond lessons. The extended project qualification enables sixth formers to pursue their studies in greater depth, and drop-in sessions for those in the lower school are well attended by those wishing to explore topics of interest. In physical education, pupils beyond Year 8 are organised by skill, allowing them all to actively participate. In the questionnaires, a small minority of parents said the school had not provided worthwhile help regarding SEND; the school has very recently appointed a specialist to improve provision in this area though, at present, specialist approaches are not yet routinely part of curricular planning.
- 3.13 The curriculum between Years 7 and 9 provides a balanced range of experiences, including the study of drama, three modern foreign languages and Latin. An extensive review of the curriculum at GCSE has resulted in greater flexibility of

choice and the opportunity to learn any two of the languages to GCSE alongside three separate sciences. Although a few parents in the questionnaires felt their child was not offered an appropriate range of subjects, pupils normally study 11 subjects to GCSE and hence retain a broad base from which to make A-level choices.

- 3.14 The personal social health and economic education (PHSEE) programme is extensive and strongly supports the school's emphasis on developing confidence and self-knowledge. It is presented in an impartial manner and enables pupils to make informed choices about their life style and future careers. External specialists address sexual health and relationship issues at appropriate ages, and in Year 9 pupils study the governing arrangements on the island.
- 3.15 The excellent extra-curricular programme enables pupils to further develop their skills or to experience new opportunities in art, music, drama and gymnastics and team sports. The "run a kilometre challenge" and triathlon are magnets for all physical abilities, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme attracts large numbers. The school works closely with outside groups to ensure that pupils are not over-committed, particularly in sport. The alternative curriculum week in the summer term enables pupils of all ages to develop skills from climbing to cookery: Year 9 pupils undertake some work-related learning and sixth formers can study for a qualification to teach English as a foreign language (TEFL). Sixth formers take part in the island's debating competitions, the Young Enterprise scheme and management shadowing opportunities. The excellent careers advice and guidance on university choices is supplemented by wide-ranging enrichment lectures.

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

- 3.16 The contribution of teaching is excellent.
- 3.17 Teaching contributes successfully to the school's aim for each girl to enjoy her talents to the full. In the questionnaires, the overwhelming majority of pupils indicated that teachers help them learn and provide them with help when they need it. All teaching is characterised by excellent planning and organisation, including the flexibility to change the direction of lessons to meet pupils' immediate needs. Almost all lessons include a variety of activity, and hence pupils' concentration and behaviour is exceptional. Revision exercises are widely used and reinforce pupils' secure subject knowledge. The openness between teacher and pupil creates an atmosphere in classrooms which fosters hard work and application. The pace of lessons maintains pupils' good and often excellent progress. When teachers give thought to grouping, learning is accelerated, for example in Latin where the most able pupils collaborated in rapidly completing complex exercises using passive verbs.
- 3.18 All teaching is effective in securing pupils' understanding and developing their ability to apply subject skills. Pupils gain security and reassurance through making written notes. In the most effective lessons, teachers create opportunities to challenge pupils' understanding or to develop their latent powers of reasoning and criticism. In these lessons teachers have a clear awareness of individual pupils' strengths and areas for development. In addition, the most able are stimulated and pupils with SEND are identified as needing different support. Hence the school has started to meet the recommendation of the previous inspection to provide more successfully for the development of higher order thinking and questioning skills, to encourage more independent learning.
- 3.19 The marking and assessment of written work is thorough, and departments use assessment data to set targets for progress. The recommendation in the previous

inspection about extending good practice in marking and making better use of data has been fully met. Teachers' comments in books are detailed and give clear guidance on strategies for further improvement, and they now place greater emphasis on recognising content and depth rather than focussing on the quality of presentation. Teachers often make good use of the start of lessons to reinforce less secure skills identified in homework. In the questionnaires, a very small minority of pupils expressed concerns that teachers were not monitoring their workload, whereas most parents were content about the amount of work set. In discussions pupils reported that the expectations can be uneven, but that the content of homework strongly supported their learning.

- 3.20 The significant investment in the school's new teaching areas and classroom resources enhances pupils' achievement. Departments are well resourced, particularly in music, art and science. Interactive whiteboards are integral to the new classrooms, but their introduction is too recent for teachers to be practised in their use. Many teachers use ICT to provide notes and show clips of video, but have yet to develop its opportunities further. In the questionnaires, almost all pupils indicated that the teachers encourage them to work for themselves and to work independently. This is exemplified in the planned use by pupils of ICT on their own devices in lessons. Pupils were enabled to progress at their own pace, discuss the validity of information and research in greater depth.

## **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 the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 The college's aim to develop resilience and growth is successfully achieved. Pupils develop into confident young people as they move through the school. They value the opinions of others, and are tolerant and respectful towards those of all ages and backgrounds. They are bright, positive, amiable and socially well balanced. They understand that risk taking and chancing failure accelerate personal development. Pupils seize the opportunities provided by the school's alternative and extracurricular programme to discover and advance their skills, and hence further their self-confidence. They perform with assurance at festivals of literature and drama, and converse easily with adults. Pupils are unafraid of physical challenge. The school's record in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme reflects their tenacity. The pupils show strong organisational ability, founded on the myriad house and school activities that they arrange without adult help. They are loyal to form, house, school and island. In sixth form lessons, girls debate confidently with boys. They argue forcibly for their own opinions, but listen attentively to male perspectives, for example when analysing the application of social exchange theory in psychology.
- 4.3 Pupils have reacted enthusiastically to the greater opportunities they have been given to shape the future of the school. They have strong ideas, based on evidence, and argue persuasively. They are receptive to the contrasting views of others, and are open to change. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate excellent leadership. In a hustling to elect a form captain, younger pupils were astute in identifying listening skills, awareness of minority views, and confidence in confronting issues as required qualities. Their mature empathy underpins excellent relationships and behaviour. Pupils show pride in their own achievements and pleasure in those of others. They congratulate and praise spontaneously. Team work and collaboration are central to their approach.
- 4.4 The pupils value silence. None threaten the period of quiet before assembly that gives each pupil the opportunity for self-reflection, thought and, for some, meditation. The Christian element is important for many, and pupils value the fact that the school celebrates the major Christian festivals. Pupils develop an appreciation of the non-material aspects of life. In a religious studies lesson, younger pupils explored the place of the universe in religious faith.
- 4.5 The pupils have a strong moral awareness. They distinguish right and wrong, between the acceptable and the unacceptable. For example, they organised an assembly which gave an unequivocal message about bullying. The few school rules are respected, and the school's sanctions policy is rarely required. Pupils are unafraid to confront wider issues. They have a clear understanding of the fundamental values of democracy, tolerance and personal freedom. One GCSE group discussed discrimination in relation to gender preference, and another the origins of goodness; younger pupils reflected whether in Abraham's place they would have answered the call of God to sacrifice their son.
- 4.6 Pupils contribute to the lives of others outside the school community. Many lead fund raising to sustain charitable initiatives in Asia and in Africa. Pupils have a strong awareness of Guernsey's history and its relationship with neighbouring islands and countries. The island's geography and demographic limits the opportunities to learn directly with and from many of different creed, colour or

culture. However, pupils develop a strong knowledge of other religions through the curriculum and as they move through the school, become adaptable and culturally aware. The very low numbers of former pupils who drop out of university is a signal that they are personally as well as academically well prepared for life beyond school.

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

- 4.7 The quality of the contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.
- 4.8 Pupils at the Ladies' College receive exceptional guidance and care through the lattice of form tutors, house staff and year coordinators. As a result, pupils' behaviour, both to each other and to adults, is outstanding, and personal relationships across the school are open, honest and empathetic. Form tutors and year coordinators are key conduits for the provision of support for individual pupils. Their involvement in PHSEE teaching enables adolescent issues to be contextualised. The matrix of house and form requires pupils to identify with different groups and develop personal responsibility and leadership, as well as enjoying representing these groups in activities ranging from sport to photography.
- 4.9 These opportunities to develop loyalty to differing groups contribute to the excellent behaviour. Bullying is very rare. Pupils highly value a programme that develops their decision making in social situations.
- 4.10 In the questionnaires, a small minority of pupils said that the school did not respond to their views. In discussion, pupils said their opinions were highly valued. For example, the regular Deputy's Dozen meeting programme is one of the many avenues in which pupils canvas for change and had been effective in altering lunch arrangements and improving the availability of copying facilities in the sixth form. A minority of pupils in the questionnaires felt that pupils were treated unequally. In interviews pupils reported that in the past the school had recognised academic success exclusively. Aware of the criticism, the school has balanced its approach. The policy for rewards and sanctions is thoughtfully constructed. The award of house points is analysed and shows no bias towards ability. Excellent work certificates recognise any achievement beyond expectation, and Principal's commendations and the Ladies' College Guild ambassador award are awarded for outstanding commitment and service in all areas of school life.
- 4.11 All staff have received up-to-date training in safeguarding. Recruitment procedures have recently been tightened, and now would satisfy regulations in force in the United Kingdom. The school has introduced a single central register of appointments. Checks on the suitability of all staff and relevant volunteers are now robust. Arrangements to identify children at risk of harm or in need are exceptional. The school has initiated a "team around the child" approach to include the views of all involved. It works closely with external professionals and the island's agencies to provide appropriate support for pupils. All girls are taught how to keep safe online, and protocols are reinforced in assemblies. Parents receive guidance on effective approaches, and access to inappropriate websites is closely monitored. Any pastoral or academic concerns about pupils are shared openly at the weekly briefing, and thus incipient issues can be quickly addressed.
- 4.12 The food offered at lunchtime is both varied and nutritious, and the PHSEE programme considers the contribution of diet and exercise to a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.13 All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Risk to pupils' welfare is regularly assessed and one tangible response has been the

readjustment of traffic flows at the entrance. Fire drills and checks of detection equipment are frequent. The health and safety policy contains all the recommended elements, with clear lines of responsibility, and procedures have been externally reviewed. Medical arrangements are suitable. First aid provision is appropriate, and a quiet room is available for sick pupils. A school nurse attends weekly. Accidents are recorded and any trends monitored. The school has a policy to ensure that any pupils with needs or disabilities can benefit from the educational opportunities.

- 4.14 The school's admissions and attendance policy is robust. Records are retained for the required period. Procedures for identifying reasons for lateness or absence are effective, and the school is aware of protocols in the United Kingdom for reporting children missing from education.

## **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 governors provide effective oversight of the school in line with its aims. They discharge with distinction their responsibilities to support the school's leadership in providing an excellent education. Governors' expertise in financial planning has enabled the completion of new buildings and investment in resources that enhance pupils' educational experience. Governors have prepared strategically for the opportunities presented by the island's review of the structure of secondary education. They work closely with the other grant-aided colleges to ensure that pupils from a wide range of backgrounds can benefit from the outstanding opportunities provided.
- 5.3 Governors have an excellent insight into the working of the school, and provide an effective blend of support and challenge to the leadership. Their frequent visits are often linked to a specific area of the development plan. Governors' involvement in, for example, the review of the curriculum, the quality of parental engagement and the support for pupils' well-being have provided a strong foundation for the positive initiatives introduced. The creation of associate governors and appointments since the previous inspection has strengthened skills in education, human resources, and pupil well-being. Nomination and induction procedures have been formalised.
- 5.4 Governors have sharpened their focus on their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the college's procedures to safeguard children, and for welfare, health and safety. They receive training at an appropriate level and discuss in detail the annual safeguarding report and measures to ensure that all pupils are provided with appropriate support and guidance.
- 5.5 Since the previous inspection, the governors have appointed a new principal, bursar and a significant number of heads of department, and have supported the consequent changes in style and emphasis. They actively confront the island's challenges of recruiting and retaining the quality of staff needed to maintain the excellence of the college's education.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management**

- 5.6 The leadership and management of the school is excellent.
- 5.7 The recommendations from the previous inspection report have been largely addressed. Improved pupil tracking enables teachers to set suitable targets for academic progress, and has contributed to the recent improvement in examination results. Lunch choices exclude non-healthy options, and the school unobtrusively monitors possible changes in eating patterns. Opportunities for pupils to learn independently are still limited. There are excellent examples of individual research, but invariably they are found in work outside the taught curriculum, and the skills are detached from the approach in lessons.
- 5.8 Recent appointments to the senior leadership team have allowed a review of the roles. Lines of responsibility are clear and communication is fluid. The school development plan is the engine of change. Wide consultation between governors, staff and parents has ensured that it embeds initiatives from the United Kingdom in the context of the island. The plan sets out the detailed implementation of the



leadership's transparent vision to ensure a proper balance between continued excellence in academic and other achievements alongside an emphasis on the girls' personal development. Leaders of academic departments, houses or year groups are supportive of the school's strategic direction. In the questionnaires, a very large majority of parents agreed that the school was well managed.

- 5.9 There is a strong culture of self-criticism and review with a focus uniquely on pupils. Their welfare, health and safety have been prioritised. The content and implementation of all school policies have been overhauled and now meet the requirements of Standards for British Schools Overseas. Procedures to check that staff and relevant volunteers are suitable to work with children are strong. Safeguarding practice is clear, and the school has developed close communication with the island's children's agencies. All staff and governors have received appropriate training in child protection, welfare, health and safety.
- 5.10 The senior leadership sets the school tone. Relationships are respectful but informal. Pupils confidently approach staff with concerns or worries. Pupils are given clear guidance which enables their pastoral and academic needs to be harmonised. They value recent initiatives to ensure the views of all ages are represented. The introduction of two new programmes has highlighted the school's aim of further encouraging determination, resilience and positive attitudes to challenges in the pupils' already excellent learning attitudes and personal development.
- 5.11 Adjustments to the curriculum and the quality of teaching have contributed to higher examination results. The school's curriculum review was exhaustive and thorough, with wide consultation within the school community and with successful schools in the United Kingdom. It now offers an option of subjects appropriate to the pupils' ability and interests, and provides a breadth up to Year 11 that allows wide choice in the sixth form. The leadership has worked closely with Elizabeth College to ensure the school is ready for new A-level specifications and arrangements. The cementing of enrichment programmes supports the school's aim to continue for balance in the pupils' education outside the examinations curriculum. The introduction of the Ladies' College Diploma further reflects the leadership's belief that extra-curricular activity and community participation are parallel and not subservient to excellent academic results. The effectiveness of teaching is reviewed regularly. The scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that the quality of marking and feedback to pupils have advanced over the last three years. The biennial appraisal of teachers includes self-assessment and lesson observation, and where necessary it is followed by focused professional development. The improved targeting has ensured that there is now earlier intervention if pupils are under-performing. In the questionnaires, a small minority of parents felt that pupils with SEND did not receive appropriate support. The needs of those with dyslexia and other learning barriers have been met by the leadership's appointment of a full-time coordinator, but it is too early for it to have affected approaches to SEND pupils in class.

### **5.(c) The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.12 The quality of links with parents, carers and guardians is excellent.
- 5.13 In the questionnaires, parents expressed overwhelming approval for the progress made by their daughter and the standards of behaviour achieved. The vast majority agreed that communication was easy and that responses to questions was timely. They reported that information about the school is readily available. In other areas where there was less agreement the school has already acted. A small minority of

parents were not satisfied about information on their daughter's progress. This was traced to confusion about the system of standardisation used, and explanatory letters have already been sent to parents.

- 5.14 The school provides to parents and parents of prospective pupils all the information required of a school in the United Kingdom, including safeguarding policies and a suitable complaints procedure. In the questionnaires, a small minority of parents felt their concerns had not been listened to, but examination of correspondence shows that the school's response has been receptive and measured. There have been no formal complaints during the last year.
- 5.15 The school encourages active participation in appropriate areas of school life. A vibrant and creative Parents' Association supports the organisation of school events. Many parents contribute by offering careers advice and work experience, or providing opportunities for the alternative curriculum day. The school involves parents in seminars and workshops addressing for example, ensuring safety online and adolescent issues.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and staff and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair 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 documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Mr Stephen Cole	Reporting Inspector
Dr Iain Farrell	Team Inspector (Former Director of Studies, HMC school)
Mr Malcolm Hebden	Team Inspector (Head of Dept, COBIS school)
Mr Ian Mitchell	Team Inspector (Former Head of Dept, HMC school)
Mrs Fiona Rhodes	Team Inspector (Senior Manager, COBIS school)