



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

TRING PARK SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

**BOARDING WELFARE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Tring Park School for the Performing Arts

Full Name of School	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts		
DfE Number	919/6041		
Registered Charity Number	1040330		
Address	Tring Park School for the Performing Arts Mansion Drive Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5LX		
Telephone Number	01442 824255		
Fax Number	01442 891069		
Email Address	info@tringpark.com		
Principal	Mr Stefan Anderson		
Chairman of Governors	Mr Michael Geddes		
Age Range	8 to 19		
Total Number of Pupils	331		
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (91 boys; 240 girls)		
Numbers by Age	8-11:	17	
	11-19:	314	
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	133	
Number of Boarders	Total:	198	
	Full:	198	Weekly: 0
Inspection dates	21 Oct 2014 to 23 Oct 2014		

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in March 2011 and can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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

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

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

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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

Inspectors

Mr Paul Spillane	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Nathalie Hart	Team Inspector for Boarding (Head of sixth form boarding, GSA school)
Mrs Sarah Hollingsworth	Team Inspector for Boarding (Director of pastoral care, Society of Heads school)
Mr Nigel Willetts	Team Inspector for Boarding (Housemaster, HMC school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Tring Park School for the Performing Arts is a co-educational boarding and day school for pupils aged from 8 to 19 years. The school is housed in a mansion set in 17 acres of grounds in Tring, Hertfordshire. Founded in 1945, it is a specialist school for pupils who are considered to have a particular talent in one or more of dance, drama, musical theatre and music. Entry is through audition, non-selective assessment and references. As one of the national Music and Dance Schools, Tring Park offers scholarships which are funded by the Education Funding Agency.
- 1.2 The school is a charitable trust administered by a board of governors. It aims to offer a unique opportunity for young people who show an outstanding talent for the performing arts and aspire to an associated career, while still recognising the importance of a fine academic education. It endeavours to nurture creativity and aim for excellence at all times. The school also states that it is dedicated to the provision of a challenging and diverse learning experience within a supportive environment.
- 1.3 There are 331 pupils in the school, 91 boys and 240 girls. There are seven areas of accommodation for the boarders, of whom 58 are boys and 140 are girls. The mansion houses girls on the middle and top floors. There are three boarding houses on the campus, one for boys and two for girls, and three houses in Tring, one for boys and two for girls. All of the houses have resident staff and assistant tutors.
- 1.4 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 tables.

Preparatory Department

School	NC name
Prep 1	Year 4
Prep 2	Year 5
Prep 3	Year 6

Senior School

School	NC name
Form 1	Year 7
Form 2	Year 8
Form 3	Year 9
Form 4	Year 10
Form 5	Year 11
Lower 6 th	Year 12
Upper 6 th	Year 13
3 rd Year 6 th	Year 14

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

2.1 The school meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that all pupils have appropriate places for quiet academic study.
2. Review the role of the tutor in order to ensure this is sufficiently well defined and underpinned by clear aims and objectives.

(iii) Progress since the previous inspection

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in March 2011. The recommendations mostly pertain to medical arrangements, risk assessment and the management of boarding: they have all been met.

3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

3.(a) Boarding provision and care

- 3.1 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 A comprehensive process of induction and guidance for new boarders includes helpful documentation, the allocation of a pupil 'mentor' to each new boarder, and a team-building weekend at the beginning of the academic year. Boarders affirm that they have many adults to whom they can turn with personal problems or concerns. They know the identity of the school counsellors and independent listener. Local and national helplines, including that of the Children's Commissioner, are published on house noticeboards. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The school implements suitable policies for boarders who are unwell, including first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, dealing with medical emergencies and the administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication. The medical centre is well equipped and well staffed. Parents give signed consent to appropriate treatments, and medical records are correctly completed and stored. Medical and counselling staff respect the confidentiality and rights of boarders. They also maintain close liaison with house staff over the health and general well-being of boarders. Those boarders assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so are allowed to self-medicate. All boarders have access to local medical, dental, optometric and other specialist services and provision. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Boarders can easily contact parents and friends, either electronically or by telephone. The school maintains rigorous control over the use of the internet and educates pupils, staff and parents in e-safety. In their response to the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of parents expressed great satisfaction with the boarding provision. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 All of the boarding accommodation is furnished, decorated and maintained to at least a good standard. It is being upgraded as part of a rolling programme. Staff and pupils work collaboratively to make the boarding houses homely, in terms of décor, furniture, fixtures and fittings. Boarders personalise their rooms with posters, photographs and items from home. The boarding premises are well lit, heated, ventilated and cleaned. Bedding is clean and warm, and, where mattress toppers are provided, comfortable. A very small minority of parents considered that the boarding accommodation was insufficiently comfortable. Washing facilities and lavatories afford privacy and are sufficient for the number of boarders. While boarders say that they are happy with their common rooms and sleeping accommodation, some have more limited space than others for quiet academic study. Access to houses is secure and security cameras do not invade boarders' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of boarders expressed dissatisfaction with the food. Evidence from the inspection did not support this view. Hygienically prepared and served, meals were plentiful and nutritious, offering a wide choice of options. Pupils with specific dietary needs are suitably catered for. Kitchens in houses afford boarders the opportunity to prepare drinks and snacks, and afternoon tea is provided every day. Drinking water is clearly marked as such and is available throughout the day. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Laundry provision is appropriate to the needs of the boarders. Boarders may purchase personal and stationery items in the school or in Tring. A small minority of

respondents to the questionnaire said that their belongings were not safe. Inspection found that all boarders do have lockable drawers and/or lockers in which they may keep money and valuables, and passports are centrally stored. [NMS 9]

- 3.8 Combining their academic and vocational courses, boarders have a long working day. Consequently their time for recreation during the week is limited. A minority of boarders wrote in response to the questionnaire that they were unhappy with the balance of free time and activities in the evenings and at weekends and a very few parents stated that the school offered too few weekend activities: during the inspection, boarders said that they appreciated the necessity of a lengthy daily programme and that, on the whole, the school provided a sufficient range of weekend activities suitable for different age groups. Boarders may use a choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors. Through television, newspapers and the internet, they have access to current affairs and news of the wider world. [NMS 10]

3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- 3.9 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 The school's health and safety policy complies with regulations and is effectively implemented to ensure that boarders are protected from harm. In their responses to the questionnaire, parents and pupils say that the boarders feel safe. The procedures for ensuring boarders' safety when on and off the premises address all reasonable risks. An annual health and safety audit and risk assessment is undertaken by external consultants. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The school's fire safety policy covers all required aspects. Precautions taken to minimise risk from fire comply fully with safety regulations. Fire practices are held each term, both by day and at times when boarders may be expected to be asleep. Fire equipment is regularly checked and tested, both by school staff and by external agencies. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 The school fulfils its responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of its pupils. The safeguarding and child protection policy complies with regulatory requirements. All staff receive approved training in safeguarding and are aware of their obligations in this regard. The governors undertake a thorough annual review of safeguarding policies and procedures and the efficiency with which they are implemented. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The school successfully promotes positive behaviour and relationships. Boarders understand the rules. They state that they get on well together and that boarding staff treat them fairly, although a small minority of respondents to the questionnaire said that teachers were not fair in the way that they gave rewards and sanctions. Records show that the very rare cases of bullying have been resolved swiftly and effectively. [NMS 12]
- 3.14 The school operates safe recruitment procedures and the single central register of appointments is accurately maintained. All visitors to the boarding houses are accompanied by a member of staff. [NMS 14]

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

- 3.15 The school meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 A statement of boarding principles and practice is published on the website and in the boarding handbook. It is made known to boarders and the evidence of the inspection demonstrated that it was being fully implemented. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 There is clear management of the leadership, practice and development of boarding in the school. Senior management give strong support to house staff and boarders. Academic, vocational, boarding and pastoral staff liaise effectively, but the potential of the role of the tutor is as yet unfulfilled. Boarding staff are suitably experienced and trained. The boarders' best interests are the subject of much informal communication, and handover books ensure that significant information is passed from one supervising member of staff to another. Like all staff meetings, the scheduled weekly meeting of boarding staff features concerns about individual pupils as the first item on the agenda. The records specified by the NMS are maintained and monitored by the school, with action being taken as appropriate. Boarding is given due consideration in the school development plan, and governors and management have clear short-, medium- and long-term plans for the improvement of the boarding provision. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Boarding staff have job descriptions and receive regular training and appraisal as part of their professional development. Comprehensive daily supervision rotas are published, ensuring that all pupils are properly supervised. Boarders say that there are always enough staff on duty who are available both by day and at night. An additional houseparent is always on duty overnight in case extra cover is required. A signing-out system keeps staff informed of the whereabouts of the boarders. The school's missing child policy is known to staff; it has not needed to be implemented. Staff accommodation is separate from that of the boarders, and boarders invited into such accommodation are appropriately supervised. [NMS 15]
- 3.19 Boarders affirm that they are well cared for and that staff treat them without discrimination, in accordance with the school's equal rights and opportunities policies. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of pupils did not agree that the school asked for their opinions and responded to them. Inspection evidence did not support this view. The school council and the food committee, both consisting of elected representatives from all year groups, have effected changes and improvements to facilities, events and menus. Furthermore, some boarding areas have suggestion boxes and boarders say that staff are always prepared to listen to their opinions. Pupils are not penalised for raising a concern or making a complaint in good faith. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The school's complaints policy satisfies the relevant regulations. A few parents felt that the school did not handle their concerns well. Records of recent formal complaints show that issues have been addressed thoroughly and professionally. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 Prefects have clear job descriptions and receive safeguarding training. Their main roles are to set a good example and to help to ensure the smooth running of the school – 'to lead and to serve'. They have some part to play in the boarding life of the school and younger pupils find them kind and helpful. [NMS 19]

3.23 The school does not arrange long-stay lodgings for pupils. [NMS 20]