

THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Senior School ISI Report Highlights

The following text contains edited highlight from the Senior School ISI Integrated Inspection Report for Burgess Hill School for Girls.

A full, unexpurgated copy of the report can be found from the link on the Inspection Reports page on the school's website.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.

Pupils of all ages have an excellent standard of personal development, in line with the school's aims, being independent, inquisitive and creative individuals yet responsible members of their community. This is demonstrated in their willingness to express differing opinions during class discussions in a confident yet courteous manner.

Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. They have a strong sense of self-esteem and self-confidence which enables them to form relationships confidently. Pupils develop an aesthetic awareness of the non-material aspects of life, shown in their participation in creative and performing arts and through the excellent art work proudly displayed all around the school. They feel valued and supported because they are encouraged to celebrate their own and others' success; their self-awareness is high. Their emotional maturity is evident in the sensitive ways in which they enter into moral debate in classroom activities, such as the exploration of differing expectations of women in the Edwardian period and the 21st Century. They enjoy debate and self-reflection.

Pupils have a developed sense of right and wrong, understanding the need for rules in a well-regulated community. This includes an understanding of, and a respect for, the overarching character of the civil and criminal law of England. They are appreciative of the school's emphasis on support and encouragement. Although they recognise the value of sanctions, pupils felt that these were hardly ever required because the ethos was one of mutual respect. In lessons, pupils showed a mature ability to offer support to one another in paired or group work. At an early age, pupils take responsibility for the organisation of charitable fund-raising, appreciating that there are many people who, through no fault of their own, lead less fortunate lives. For example, pupils took the lead in an assembly which debated the ethics of a war-torn country, prompting intensive fund-raising to provide non-partisan medical support.

Pupils' sense of social responsibility within and beyond the school is excellent. The excellent PSHE programme ensures that pupils are given a broad general knowledge of the public institutions and services of England. They are able to consider the needs of others, reaching outwards to encourage participation from external organisations. They also show respect for those whose lives are lived differently from their own. For example, pupils from Years 9 host a pamper day for local citizens who act as carers for a family member, which involves liaison between local social services and other business organisations. Community service is an important element of school life. Sixth form pupils

act as mentors to younger pupils, organise clubs and lead activities. They value the opportunity to take part in democratic processes through being elected to take on posts of responsibility. For example, they can become members of the charity committee which actively promotes fund-raising for both local and international charities. Part of their remit is to raise sufficient funds to sponsor an educational project in Uganda. Their understanding

is deepened because the school organises an annual journey to the project open to all pupils from Years 10-13 when they actively work on the land with the local people. In this way, they have a deepening understanding of how individuals can pool their resources to benefit communities.

Pupils show excellent understanding of and respect for their own and others' cultural heritage. They benefit from the opportunity to learn from overseas pupils about traditions very different from their own, for example in school assemblies, and they enjoy the celebration of major world festivals such as the Chinese New Year. They understand the importance of accepting fundamental differences with tolerance so that there is no inappropriate discrimination evident. Whilst learning about other societies, the school actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect. This was shown by the way sixth form pupils shadowed the Scottish devolution referendum with their own hotly-contested vote. The school is already preparing to run a mock election in May, with curriculum time used to ensure understanding of party politics and the democratic process. In this way, pupils develop a balanced view on a range of issues, which is well informed by an international perspective.

By the time they leave the sixth form, pupils have matured into articulate, confident young women, who understand democratic processes and have an understanding of global issues, therefore being well prepared for the next stage of their career.

The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.

Staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims. Academic progress is particularly well monitored through a well organised system of mentoring. Pupils have regular meetings with staff, who keep detailed records of performance in assessments so that any unexpected variations in outcomes are noted and appropriate support provided. In their responses to the questionnaire and in conversations, pupils reported their appreciation of the readily available help and guidance which made them feel valued and supported.

Relationships are positive between staff and pupils. Staff know the pupils well. The inspection team found that relationships were warm and nurturing. The majority of pupils agreed that they have a number of people they can turn to if they have personal difficulties. This includes the school nurse, an independent listener and a counsellor. Relationships between the pupils themselves are predominantly excellent, underpinned by mutual respect and courtesy.

Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The wide range of sporting activities offers excellent opportunities to take regular exercise whilst the provision of dietary

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guidance and a suitable range of healthy and nourishing meals enables sensible choices.

The school is extremely successful in setting out high expectations of good behaviour. Relevant policies are well known and comply with current guidance, taking due account of individual pupils' related needs or disabilities. Pupils agree that instances of bullying are

very rare and are dealt with swiftly. A formal register of detentions is kept and monitored, and the few minor incidents that occur are resolved effectively. Achievements are widely celebrated in assemblies, newsletters and published articles on the website.

The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is excellent.

Arrangements to safeguard the pupils' welfare are thorough and well implemented. Designated staff receive regular training, in line with current guidance, which is updated at the appropriate level. Effective systems are in place so that temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of safeguarding procedures. Recruitment checks adhere to safer recruitment guidance and appropriate induction is provided for all those new to the school.

The health and safety policy is clear and detailed, as is all related documentation. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards. Regular fire drills and fire alarm tests take place and are recorded. Risk assessments are carried out and recorded for school activities, both on and off site, including residential trips. Health and safety measures are regularly monitored and evaluated by a buildings and estates committee, who ensure that any necessary improvements are made. Guidance, and in some cases confirmation of compliance with health and safety regulations, is sought from external agencies.

The school's arrangements for the care of any pupil who is taken ill or sustains an injury are suitably thorough. The majority of staff are trained first-aiders so that arrangements for sick or injured pupils are thorough and appropriate. Medical care during the school day is excellent, provided by qualified staff in a well-resourced medical centre. Care of boarders who are unwell during the night and weekends meets their needs well. Staff can request additional support from the nursing staff when outside of surgery hours. Appropriate action is taken to record and report incidents. First-aid kits are suitably placed in different areas of the school. Medicines are stored and administered safely. Provision for those who have EAL or SEND is excellent. Careful note is taken of any additional requirements so that pupils' needs are fully met.

Registration of pupils in the morning and afternoon is carried out thoroughly. Any unexpected absences are followed up promptly and effectively. The school's admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and correctly stored for the preceding three years.