



From the Headmaster

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3rd September 2009

Dear Parents,

This letter accompanies the Independent Schools Inspection (ISI) report for Epsom, which was carried out in May 2009 and finally presented to the School in late July. I have highlighted aspects of the report below to 'whet appetites' for a complete reading of the full report which is 'outstanding' in many key areas.

SRBorthwick

The Quality of Education

- The college is successful in providing a broadly based education, as at the time of the last inspection, and in furthering its ambitious aim to provide exceptional all-round opportunities, academic, sporting and cultural, together with a stimulating curriculum and an extensive extra-curricular programme.
- The college is rightly proud of its superb opportunities for extra-curricular activities. These experiences greatly enrich the curriculum. An extremely wide variety is offered and pupils are expected to participate in a number of different activities during the course of each year.

Pupils' Learning and Achievements

- Pupils' learning and achievements are strong. The college is successful in its aim to challenge its pupils to develop their talents and to maximise the individual potential of each pupil. Since the last inspection, the college has maintained a high level of academic results.
- Pupils' attainment at age sixteen is very good in relation to their abilities. Results in GCSE over the three years to 2007 have been far above the national average for all maintained schools and higher than those for maintained selective schools. National comparisons are not available for 2008, but the college results were similar to those obtained in previous years, with two-thirds of all pupils gaining A* and A grades.
- Pupils' attainment at age eighteen has also been very good in relation to their abilities. Their performance in A-level examinations has been well above the national average for all maintained schools and above that for maintained selective schools. National comparisons are not available for 2008, but the college results were similar to those for previous years, with eight out of ten pupils gaining grades A and B.
- Outstanding achievements occur in a wide range of academic and extra-curricular areas.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

- The quality of the pupils' personal development is outstanding, and meets the stated aim of the college to challenge pupils to become confident and tolerant young people, with a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to the community, and a clear moral and spiritual awareness. The last inspection report commented on the pupils' helpfulness, courtesy and conduct, and judged personal development to be very good as a result of the college's provision. These elements are now an even stronger feature.
- The development of spiritual awareness amongst the pupils is extremely good. Respect shown for each other by members of the college community is a notable feature of the atmosphere of the college,
- Pupils have a strong moral sense and a clear awareness of what is right and wrong. The pupils' social development is outstanding.
- The pupils' cultural development is notable.

The Quality of Pastoral Care

- As at the time of the last inspection, the pastoral care of the pupils continues to be of a high standard and is effective in reflecting the college aim to create a supportive community, in which all members are valued..

The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community

- In accordance with its aims, the college has a highly effective partnership with parents and productive links with the wider community. Communications with parents have improved since the last inspection, through the development of the college website, a more consistent induction programme and the use of email.
- Very good links are promoted with the wider community and these are of great value in extending the pupils' experiences and their understanding of the world outside the college.

The Quality of Boarding Education

- The boarding experience is of a high quality in supporting pupils' education and personal development, and it has some outstanding features. .

Overall Conclusions

- Epsom College is successful in furthering its ambitious aim to provide exceptional academic, social, sporting and cultural opportunities. This is strongly endorsed by parents and pupils.
- The pupils' achievement is very good in examinations and academic performance and they have considerable achievement in sport, music and extra-curricular activities. They are greatly assisted by their excellent attitudes to study and their advanced development in basic skills.
- The teaching which they receive is effective in promoting progress for pupils of all abilities.
- The pupils' personal development is outstanding. By the time they reach the sixth form, they are confident, reflective, articulate young people with a strong commitment to the college.
- Their personal qualities are fostered by the high quality of pastoral care, by the clearly defined responsibilities available to them within the house system, and by the rich variety of extra-curricular activities.

- The success of the college is helped by the highly effective relationship with parents and by productive links outside the school. However, attention to regulatory compliance has been relatively less successful for pupils' registration and staff appointments. The formulation of development planning has lacked sharpness and support by all subject departments to spread best practice in teaching, marking and reporting. The college has shown awareness of unevenness in its provision but its monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous to promote a high level of consistency.
- Since the last inspection, the senior leadership of the college, supported by the academic and pastoral managers, has maintained and in some respects enhanced the distinctive ethos and broad educational experience provided by the college and realised through the dedication of the staff. Beneficial developments have been achieved in management and pastoral structures, in day and boarding accommodation, in the increased numbers of girls and the enhanced provision and use of ICT. Progress has been made on the issues identified in the previous ISI inspection, but departmental management and registration procedures continue to deserve emphasis. The recommendations of the CSCI report have received beneficial attention, recently renewed.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- The inspection was carried out from 5th to 8th May 2009. The inspectors examined samples of pupils' work, observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with pupils. They held discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff and with the chairman of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions, assemblies and a chapel service. Inspectors visited boarding houses and the medical centre. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the college.