

4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Quality of Governance

- 4.1 Governance is good and stronger than was reported at the last inspection. The structure established is particular to the needs of a Benedictine school but is well defined and enables effective oversight of the school. The whole ethos and purpose of the school stem from the life of the monastic community which founded and owns it. The members of the Abbot's Council are the trustees and carry the responsibilities of governorship. They work in close collaboration with, and largely under the advice of, the Board of School Advisers (BSA) which consists of the trustees and lay people of wide-ranging experience and expertise. This collaboration, and consequently the role of the advisers, has been strengthened following a review of governance that has resulted in more effective oversight of the school.
- 4.2 Both trustees and advisers are well aware of the responsibilities and duties of governors and are actively involved in planning and development. Sub-committees of the BSA provide effective monitoring and support of educational development, proper financial control and budgeting, good support for ICT, effective oversight of marketing and regular evaluation of the performance of the BSA itself. The school has benefited from the guidance and foresight of the trustees and advisers, as well as from the substantial investment and generally good resources provided.
- 4.3 Trustees and advisers have a shrewd understanding of the school and are in a position to offer appropriate advice, support and stimulus, and to ensure that the school fulfils its mission as a Catholic Benedictine foundation. Some trustees work in the school; all live on the campus. The advisers have established appropriate means of informing themselves about the work of the school, including receiving regular reports from academic departments and delegating one adviser to attend a termly meeting of the teaching staff. Despite these arrangements, some staff do not properly understand the respective roles of trustees and advisers and their responsibilities.
- 4.4 The trustees and advisers are fully aware of, and diligent in discharging, their responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including taking proper steps to review and evaluate the effectiveness of their child protection policies and procedures. A serious recent incident involving a member of the monastic community caused the trustees to request an independent review of the measures taken to minimize risk. The advice received from the independent experts has been fully implemented.

The Quality of Leadership and Management

- 4.5 The leadership of the headmaster and his senior team is excellent. It provides the clear vision and direction that nurture a distinctive identity for the school and a genuine sense of community. It is instrumental in the school's high degree of success in fulfilling its aim of 'teaching a way of living'. Management throughout the school is good. Heads of department fulfil their duties and responsibilities effectively although, as the school is aware, some areas of inconsistency remain. The school has significantly improved in its management and monitoring since the last inspection.
- 4.6 The large leadership team oversees all aspects of school life, setting standards and encouraging a constant search for improvement. Responsibilities are effectively delegated enabling the school to plan and to make significant advances. Members of staff have a high regard for the senior leadership team, and appreciate the educational direction and the high level of challenge provided. The recent move to co-education has been especially well