

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## INSPECTION REPORT ON

### Elizabeth College

Full Name of the School	<b>Elizabeth College</b>
DCSF Number	<b>N/A</b>
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Principal	<b>Dr Nick Argent</b>
Chairman of Directors	<b>V Rev Canon Paul Mellor, Dean of Guernsey</b>
Age Range	<b>2 to 18</b>
Gender	<b>Mixed 2 to 11; Boys only 11 to 18</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009</b>

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The inspection does not examine the financial viability of the school or investigate its accounting procedures. The inspectors check the school's health and safety procedures and comment on any significant hazards they encounter: they do not carry out an exhaustive health and safety examination. Their inspection of the premises is from an educational perspective and does not include in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the School

- 1.1 Elizabeth College was founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1563 as an Anglican foundation ‘to ensure a ready supply of ministers for the Church.’ It has a continuous history on the island of Guernsey providing an academic education for boys. It occupies two sites close to the heart of the town. Since 1949, it has had its own junior school for pupils from the ages of seven to eleven and, since 1996, a nursery and pre-preparatory department for pupils from the ages of two to seven. These sections of the college have, since the time of the last inspection in November 2000, expanded to receive both girls and boys. The college shares subject provision in the sixth form with the nearby college for girls.
- 1.2 The college has a simple and comprehensive aim ‘to educate and encourage our pupils to fulfil their abilities, enabling them to become socially responsible citizens within our caring and Christian foundation.’ It welcomes pupils of all faiths and denominations, and those who are of none.
- 1.3 The size of the college has increased since the time of the last inspection from 751 to 819 pupils. Almost all of this increase has been in the junior school where numbers have risen from 282 to 349, 286 boys and 63 girls, of whom 103 are under the age of five. The senior school has presently 470 pupils in place of 469 in 2000. Of these, 119 are in the sixth form, an increase from 98. The college has undertaken much recent improvement in its facilities, including new areas for study and recreation in the sixth form, enhanced provision for music and drama productions in the main hall, and an all-weather play area in the junior school.
- 1.4 Admission to the Early Years Foundation Stage of the junior school is by interview. Entry to Years 1 and 2 is by informal assessment at the school and from Year 3 by formal measures of standardised assessment. The ability range is wide; the average is above the national average of pupils in primary schools in the United Kingdom. Admission to the senior school is by examination in English, mathematics and verbal reasoning. About one-third of new pupils enter as state scholars, funded by the States of Guernsey Education Department, following high performance in island-wide examinations.
- 1.5 The results of standardised tests taken in Year 7 indicate that the average ability of the pupils in the senior school is well above the national average of pupils in secondary schools in the United Kingdom. If pupils are achieving in line with their abilities, their results in the GCSE examinations should be well above the national average for all maintained schools on the mainland but below the average for maintained selective schools. Some pupils leave the school after GCSE to undertake vocational training courses or to enter employment. Other pupils from elsewhere join the school at this stage. The average ability of pupils in the sixth form is above the national average of pupils embarking on A-level courses in the United Kingdom so that, if pupils perform in line with their abilities, their results will be above the average for all maintained secondary schools.
- 1.6 No pupil in the college has a statement of special educational needs. One hundred and twenty-six pupils are currently identified as having a learning difficulty or disability (LDD), mainly associated with dyslexia, 40 in the junior school and 86 in the senior school. Of these, 33 receive specialist support within the college; 24 in the junior school and nine in the senior school. Nine pupils, all in the senior school, have English as an additional language; one receives support in the school for his English. Since the last inspection, the college has begun to identify pupils who are particularly gifted and talented and to provide extension work for them. Almost all pupils who leave the college after A-level study proceed to university or other further education, often to the institution of their first choice. The social

and cultural character of the pupils at the college reflects the local and international community resident on the island, a mix of island families and professional people from around the world.

- 1.7 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **The Educational Experience Provided**

- 2.1 The educational experience provided throughout the college is good, and in some areas of senior school provision it is outstanding. It meets well the college's aims to draw out from the pupils abilities that they did not know they had, to arouse their moral courage to do what is best, and to ensure appropriate care for all by providing a safe and happy environment. It is also carefully organised and managed. It has significantly expanded since the time of the last inspection in November 2000, most notably by providing in the junior school for both girls and boys and by the consolidation and increase of its sixth-form partnership with the college for girls.

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- 2.2 The overall educational experience provided to all pupils is good. Strong and comprehensive provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage of the school enables all pupils to gain good knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. The school builds upon this strongly throughout Years 1 to 6 so that pupils of all abilities develop well their linguistic, mathematical and scientific skills. They also use information and communications technology (ICT) confidently, learn French from Year 2 and explore keenly the geography and history of their island.
- 2.3 Opportunities for pupils to develop their creative talents are wide in music, drama and art, including participation in the island's eisteddfod and regular presentations at school assemblies. Pupil topics within these included the ingredients needed for a healthy school and the qualities of not being boastful. The school provides well for pupils' personal development by a clear programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE), which fosters understanding and tolerance throughout the school. It provides also a strong range of extra-curricular activities so that the aesthetic, cultural, academic and sporting needs of the pupils are very well catered for. Visits beyond the school are carefully selected and managed. They include residential trips to the British mainland and to Europe.
- 2.4 The curriculum is carefully planned and directed to provide for the full range of pupils' abilities within the school. It prepares pupils well for the transition from year to year and for transfer to the senior school. Teachers use regular assessment effectively to plan what pupils need to learn next and to ensure good progress. A specialist teacher supports well those pupils who have LDD, for whom individual education plans have been written. These plans have also been introduced to challenge those identified as gifted and talented, although actual classroom provision is still often informal and varied.

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- 2.5 The educational provision is wide and successful. This includes new sixth-form subjects such as photography, film studies and psychology, taught in a thriving collaboration with the girls' college, outstanding provision for the pupils' PSHE and a significant re-ordering and expansion of its library to the highest standards. The school has created a new sixth-form study centre to encourage more individual learning and the inculcation of personal study habits. It has also widely expanded ICT facilities to allow private research and study and to support all subjects, including full classes in art, design technology, music and modern foreign languages. Overall the curriculum is wide and academically challenging, fostering an ethos of learning and success significantly advanced on standards reported at the time of the last inspection.

- 2.6 The curriculum is carefully planned and explained to both pupils and parents in order to secure the most appropriate selection of subjects and the most beneficial levels of study. It encourages a full range of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human, social, physical, aesthetic and creative development for all pupils. The director of studies provides clear guidance as well as a persistently strong encouragement to academic rigour and success. Skilful careers information and advice, including access to the careers and higher education fairs offered by the States of Guernsey and a comprehensive life skills programme, serve all pupils well.
- 2.7 The school provides an effective and thorough programme of learning support, carefully identified and supplied. Nine pupils receive specialist and regular help; others are given some extra guidance and support as necessary to reinforce specific academic learning. This programme, however, is not yet sufficiently embedded in the planning of regular lessons by all teachers, nor in their appropriate matching of tasks for individual needs throughout the school. Equally, additional challenge for those identified as particularly gifted and talented varies in scope and in practice within subject departments. General academic enrichment is provided successfully through school societies, a programme of visiting speakers and a well-developed course in critical thinking. In Year 7, project-based work has replaced traditional homework in order to encourage more independent learning and research, and a greater variety of outcome.
- 2.8 In meeting its aim to foster in its pupils the moral courage to do what is best, the school provides an outstanding programme of PSHE, identified as life skills and including matters of citizenship and career choice. All pupils also follow a course in religious studies up to Year 11. A community service programme and a strong combined cadet force (CCF) develop well a sense of service to the community, and a work experience programme for Year 10 pupils is successful. A wide range of sports, including a very high standard of fencing and shooting, encourages both participation and leadership. Extra-curricular activities range from music and drama to a grammar club in modern foreign languages, and other subject-based societies. School visits to the British mainland are frequent and language, classical and cultural trips across Europe abound.

### **Pupils' Learning and Achievements**

- 2.9 The quality of pupils' learning and the standard of their achievements across the college are good. They meet well the college's aim to draw out from pupils abilities that they did not know that they had and to lead them on to exploring their potential to the full. They are also significantly advanced on standards recognised at the time of the last inspection. The pupils' levels of knowledge and of skills, as well as their attitudes to work and study, are high across all years. In some lessons, especially in the senior school, the quality of pupils' learning and their levels of understanding and achievement are outstanding.

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- 2.10 All pupils learn and achieve well. They successfully use the opportunities afforded them by the school's ambition to provide the very best educational opportunities for the children through personal attention, a happy atmosphere and a dedicated and caring staff. Pupils are enthusiastic, positive and motivated learners who take a pride in their work. They respond well to the expectations of their teachers that they will focus clearly, engage positively and work hard. They demonstrate a discipline and an enthusiasm for what they are doing and they are guided by clear routines. They work well independently and together, and they respect each other's learning. Collectively, they seek to develop understanding well and to complete answers correctly.

- 2.11 The pupils make good progress at all stages. With an increasing focus on Early Learning Goals, pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn quickly and well. This is consolidated strongly throughout the junior school. Pupils read and write well and they have good mathematical skills. They also demonstrate high levels of speaking and listening, sharing well their experiences of rehearsing a forthcoming school play and speaking openly of concerns and anxieties. They demonstrate good subject knowledge and apply their developed skills keenly to new tasks and challenges. Use of ICT is strong, including its application to cross-curricular activities in science, geography and history. Critical and creative thinking is clear and frequent. Pupils enjoy research tasks and engage well in independent learning, such as planning a fantasy holiday or collating weather conditions world-wide. However, not enough challenge is expected or set for the more able pupils. Some admit that they are rarely given tasks which they find demanding.
- 2.12 Standardised tests indicate a good level of pupil achievement and progress. Individual and team successes cover a wide range of activities, in art and literacy, in music and singing, in games, and in mathematics challenges. The pupils are keen to share what they know. They combine well a strong work ethic with an eagerness to have fun and to achieve.

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- 2.13 Pupils achieve good levels of knowledge as well as strong skills of critical understanding and creative thinking. Projects in Year 7, for example in history, geography, English and the sciences, foster independent learning well and they enhance good use of the library and its resources. Pupils apply these skills extensively and well to all their learning. They enjoy challenge, they make rapid progress and they achieve well in public examinations. The programme of support for pupils with LDD is coherent but it remains insufficiently embedded in the regular teaching within the classroom.
- 2.14 Pupils develop well their abilities of independent learning. They are articulate, they read intelligently and critically, and they respond enthusiastically to their teachers. A Year 12 lesson on the argument for the existence of God evoked vigorous and well-founded debate. ICT is used well to assist learning, for example in art, in design and technology and in language learning. The pupils are accustomed to working on their own and in groups, and they do so successfully. Pupils achieve well also in extra-curricular activities, ranging from drama to music and from sports to service roles such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and the CCF.
- 2.15 Pupils succeed well in making structured notes. They also write well and present their work carefully and neatly. They are polite to each other in and out of class. For example, a drama class explored sensitively issues of bullying and of immigration. The pupils enjoy their learning, being at school and sharing with their fellows. They support each other well.
- 2.16 Standardised measures indicate that pupils' progress to GCSE, and from GCSE to A level, is good and above the national norms for pupils of similar ability on the British mainland. Their attainment in public examinations is good in relation to their abilities. During the last three years for which national comparative data is available, GCSE and A-level results were well above the average for maintained schools in England and in line with the averages for maintained selective schools. The results at both GCSE and A level showed significant improvement during this period, and these higher standards were maintained in 2008. The development of a comprehensive system for academic monitoring has been significant in this improvement of academic attainment.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils**

- 2.17 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding and a real strength. The college is an Anglican foundation and by its articles it has an Anglican chairman of the board of directors, an Anglican principal and an Anglican chaplain. It seeks to foster among all its members an awareness of religious faith and practice as well as a tolerance of diversity and conformity with the law. Pupils should respect themselves, each other and all members of the community. This the college achieves extremely well, matching high standards recognised at the time of the last inspection.

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- 2.18 The spiritual development of all pupils is strong. They respond well to spiritual issues raised in lessons, at the school's assemblies and by its expectations of consideration and care for each other. They endorse the school's PSHE programme which fosters understanding and tolerance. Pupils learn well from lessons in religious studies which arouse an awareness of spiritual values and the development of belief. They appreciate the opportunities for peace and reflection which are provided by displays of art and the experience of music.
- 2.19 Pupils have a well developed moral sense and a clear awareness of right from wrong. They understand the need for rules and they respect the system of rewards and sanctions. Pupils of all ages, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are almost uniformly courteous to each other and to their teachers and visitors. Teachers return that courtesy and respect to their pupils; they are good role models.
- 2.20 The social growth of all pupils is a significant strength, and evident throughout the school. All pupils exercise a clear self-discipline and they accept responsibility for their actions. Year 6 pupils show care for younger pupils; for example, they supervise the development of reading skills and they guide appropriate behaviour in the playground. Pupils in each year accept personal responsibility, and they contribute to the good of the whole community through the school council. They also use well residential courses which foster social experience away from home and the interaction of pupils with each other. Pupils demonstrate a strong appreciation of those in society less fortunate than themselves through the support they give to various charities.
- 2.21 Cultural awareness among the pupils is good. They develop a strong cultural awareness from visits across the island, to Jersey, the United Kingdom and France. They show a concern for those of different backgrounds and in different situations through caring links with a primary school in Tanzania. They recognise cultural diversity from displays, books, stories and songs and by their awareness of the festivals of peoples of different faiths and cultures. For example, Reception pupils made Chinese cakes to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

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- 2.22 The pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They recognise well their own non-material aspect and their responsibility to consider and care for others less fortunate than themselves. Religious studies lessons are taught in every year to the sixth form, where it becomes an option within the A-level provision. In these lessons, pupils explore each of the major faiths, whilst gaining also a clear understanding of Christianity, its beliefs, practices and message. They recognise the impact of religion on the growth and form of civilisation and its importance still in modern society. Discussion in a sixth-form French lesson focussed on marriage in France today.

- 2.23 The pupils respond eagerly to opportunities to discuss the effects of bullying, the damage to health by smoking, by drug and alcohol abuse. In regular tutorial sessions and by a comprehensive PSHE programme, they discuss matters of healthy eating, prudent financial management, and the evils of prejudice and discrimination in society. The pupils accept well a clear code of appropriate conduct. They recognise right behaviour from wrong and that all forms of bullying are hurtful, including cyber abuse and exclusion. Equally they are sensitive to environmental issues of landfill, to alleviating the needs of others by charitable giving and to economic issues such as fair trade. The pupils' sense of moral awareness is strong.
- 2.24 Social interaction among the pupils is outstanding. They recognise their important role in the school, through the school council, chaired by the senior prefect and with elected representatives of each year, and through the system of prefects. They have a significant voice and an active presence in the school's daily life. They support each other very well. The school provides further opportunities for leadership by its competitive house system, based on the location of each pupil's residence on the island. An extensive and active CCF, participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and membership of the Young Enterprise movement fosters well pupils' awareness of the needs of others and develops a tradition of service. Overseas links with a school in Bangladesh and support for a town for orphan boys in Thailand widen the horizons of the pupils and encourage concern and support for those who are disadvantaged and in need.
- 2.25 Cultural opportunities are extensive with a wide programme of musical, dramatic and sports events, a strong art department and frequent opportunities for foreign travel and study. Cultural issues are also discussed well within other curriculum subjects such as history, geography, classical studies and modern foreign languages. The personal experiences of the pupils themselves in foreign travel and residence add to a shared cultural awareness. The school works well to expand pupils' understanding of social and cultural conditions beyond the particular circumstances of their island.

### **The Quality of Teaching (Including Assessment)**

- 2.26 The overall quality of teaching throughout the college is good. It meets well the aim to give pupils the best teaching and instruction so that they achieve the best that they are able to achieve. In some lessons teaching is excellent and it results in significant learning by all pupils. The college uses information from nationally standardised tests very effectively to establish individual benchmarks for pupils and to set personal targets. It communicates to parents whether these achievement and target grades are being met so that information is shared and progress can be monitored closely. This meets well needs identified at the time of the last inspection.

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- 2.27 The quality of teaching is good, and it includes some excellent practice. It stimulates interest well, even at the youngest ages, and it enables pupils of all abilities, including those with LDD, to make good progress. Pupils acquire new knowledge effectively, increase their understanding and develop their skills. Where matching tasks to individual needs is integrated into lesson planning, for example in Reception and Year 1 literacy lessons, pupils of all abilities are obliged to think for themselves and they make rapid progress. In a Year 3 music lesson, pupils were able to analyse their own work and synthesise it with that of others. Pupils in Year 6 considered well the character of justice and identified a number of moral dilemmas. Where more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged by additional or extension work, their progress and learning are limited.

- 2.28 Teaching is well planned and teachers use a range of good strategies and activities to promote good learning and progress. Teaching succeeds in encouraging pupils to behave responsibly and to engage with their learning. Teachers manage time well and secure a highly effective balance of collaborative, investigative and practical work. They also create opportunities for independent study. Teachers know their pupils well and they have a good understanding of individual strengths and areas for development. They are well qualified, with excellent subject knowledge and an evident enthusiasm for teaching. Peer lesson observation is however limited and restricts the exchange of best practice. Resources are excellent and the teachers use them well. Each form room has an interactive whiteboard, which adds significantly to the high quality of teaching. The ICT suite is used well and library use is equally extensive.
- 2.29 Teachers carry out regular assessment of their pupils' work and they use the information gained from this to plan their further teaching and to set targets for enhanced pupil learning. Good questioning skills in class further assess levels of pupil understanding and recall. The school defines its preferred marking practice and routine marking is often, but not always, to a high standard. Centrally, the school uses standardised tests to evaluate performance against national norms, to set targets and to monitor progress.

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- 2.30 The overall quality of teaching is good. A significant amount of it is outstanding, and is directed carefully to the full range of ability within the class. In a minority of lessons however, extension work for the most able and support for the less capable were submerged beneath a common presentation and a shared challenge for all. The school is aware that its provision for the gifted and talented, which includes a course in critical thinking for sixth formers, and that for the less able, is not always carried forward by the teaching within the classroom.
- 2.31 Teaching strongly fosters pupils' interest. It prompts vigorous creative effort in drama, art and music and in many lessons across the curriculum. A wide and strong programme of physical education and games enhances pupils' physical challenge and teamwork. Across the full range of their lessons, pupils are challenged to think for themselves and to offer solutions. Good behaviour is the norm so that all enjoy their learning. The pupils are enthusiastic and take pride in getting things right.
- 2.32 Teachers plan their lessons well and, in doing so, display a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils. Teachers' knowledge and their enthusiasm for their subject are excellent. The teaching is supported by a good range of resources across all areas of the curriculum. The library is excellent and it supports teaching and individual research very well. An ICT suite in modern foreign languages is used to excellent and regular effect. Pupils engage with this and look forward to renewed challenge each lesson. Interactive whiteboards are available throughout the school and teachers use them often and well.
- 2.33 The teaching includes regular and thorough assessment of pupils' work so that all pupils progress well. Information from standardised measures of progress enables individual targets to be set and revised appropriately. New data is used effectively as a fresh benchmark from which revised target grades are set and pursued. Under-performance is recognised promptly and pupils' needs identified. Peer-assessment and self-assessment are also undertaken and encourage pupils to consider the quality of their own and others' work and to take more responsibility for their learning.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **The Quality of Pastoral Care, and the Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils**

- 3.1 The quality of pastoral care, and the welfare, health and safety of pupils throughout the college is outstanding. It meets well the aim to create a safe and happy environment for learning, where pupils respect themselves, each other and all members of the community. It matches well the high standards at the time of the last inspection. Structures for the organisation and management of pastoral care are thorough and comprehensive. Both teaching and non-teaching staff provide the highest standards of care and support for all the pupils. The chaplain has a central role throughout the college, providing spiritual and pastoral guidance. He serves also as a trained counsellor available to all pupils.
- 3.2 Measures to promote good discipline and behaviour are strong throughout the college. They are shared by all teachers so that expectations are high and lapses are dealt with promptly, usually informally but nonetheless effectively. Child protection measures, including a detailed and comprehensive policy, are secure. All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and the island fire service undertakes regular inspection. Arrangements to ensure health and safety, including risk assessments for school visits and trips, are extensive and full; they are routinely undertaken and recorded. A nurse visits the school each week and first aid care is readily available, including a medical room on each site.
- 3.3 Both admission and attendance registers are carefully completed and they are properly maintained. Absences are noted and followed up promptly. Registers are stored centrally and readily available. The college encourages pupils to be healthy, including the development of healthy eating habits. This is well observed in the junior school but dining and catering facilities in the senior school are limited so that some pupils have recourse to commercial outlets of fast food and vending machines, and lapses from high standards of healthy eating there are frequent. The college recognises this difficulty and has plans, both in the short term and in the long term, to change and improve the situation. All pupils take regular exercise in physical education classes and in sports.

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- 3.4 A comprehensive and effective framework encourages and supports an outstanding level of pastoral support throughout the school. Pupils of all ages understand clearly that they can seek and obtain help and guidance from any adult at school. Class teachers are active in their care for all the pupils and they communicate promptly with each other to exchange information. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is outstanding. Equally, the pupils demonstrate a clear sensitivity and understanding towards each other so that support and guidance is shared well and pupils feel comfortable and secure at school. An effective house system reinforces this.
- 3.5 The school's procedures for promoting good discipline and behaviour are comprehensive and effective. Golden rules and a code of conduct encourage the highest standards. A system of rewards such as golden time, house credits and badges, recognises outstanding behaviour and the expected standard of care for one's neighbour and community. A clear anti-bullying policy is in place. Pupils value highly their school council and the house system which further encourages good social behaviour and friendly interaction.

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- 3.6 Outstanding pastoral care is directed by the vice-principal as head of a pastoral board that includes heads of year and the chaplain. Comprehensive help and guidance is provided by all staff, and it is sustained by the practice of the tutor accompanying his or her group from Year 7 to Year 11 and by the head of year operating generally over a two-year cycle. Tutorial support is complemented by a comprehensive PSHE programme of life skills. The house system, based on the location of the pupil's home, provides another membership for each pupil and it carries effectively into social contact outside school hours that involves parents too. Pupils joining the school from the same primary school are often in the same tutor group so that early friendships are readily transferred to the school. For several subjects, house groups provide also the basis for teaching and learning groups. Sixth formers enjoy the newly created sixth-form centre, available for effective private study and for social recreation. The sharing of this facility with sixth-form members of the girls' college is beneficial. Communication between the different providers of pastoral care throughout the college is outstanding; it is regular, frequent and purposeful.
- 3.7 Pupils are strongly engaged in their own pastoral care. A system of prefects care both for pupil houses and for academic years. The senior prefect is chairman of the school council, which includes pupil representatives from each year as well as the vice-principal and a second member of staff. Recent matters have included teasing in school and the proposed solution of enhanced peer support, football, tuck shop prices, games options, charity fund-raising and merit awards. Pupils feel not only valued in their school but also partly responsible for its well-being and success. Year 10 pupils are introduced effectively into school prefect responsibilities during the summer examination period and they discharge their roles with sensitive distinction.
- 3.8 The school operates also a system of pupil contract, whereby all sixth formers and those pupils below the sixth form whose study habits may be a matter for concern undertake formally to observe school practices and expectations. This enhances well pupils' responsibility for their behaviour and success and for the considerate well-being of the whole community. Parents are involved too in the formal acceptance of a contract and consequent responsibility. The vice-principal arranges a support group, of pupils, teachers and outside agencies, for those pupils in particular need.

### **The Quality of Links with Parents and the Community**

- 3.9 The quality of links between the college and parents and the community are outstanding. The college sees itself as part of the island community and there to serve its members well. It successfully meets this aim. Developments since the time of the last inspection have included the establishment of a foundation to connect former pupils with their school, the expansion of community service and the enhanced opening of school events and facilities to the public. The Old Elizabethan Association is active, with a particularly vibrant entry on the school website.
- 3.10 Parents responding to the confidential pre-inspection questionnaire indicated a high level of satisfaction with all areas of the college's provision. They accepted in large number that the college helped their children to make progress, that it offered an appropriate range of subjects and provided parents with good information and clear opportunities to discuss their children's progress. They also expressed satisfaction with the amount of work expected at home, with the help and guidance provided at school and with the attitudes promoted by the school and its provision of extra-curricular activities. Parents felt encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the college and to share their concerns with the staff. They accepted also that the college made good provision for the learning needs of the full range of pupils'

abilities. They valued the increase in email communication to inform them promptly of events at college and for them to express concerns and to seek information. The college responds well to parental concerns and seeks a fair solution to them. The inspectors confirmed these strengths.

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- 3.11 Parents engage themselves actively in the life and work of the school, supporting clubs and activities, listening to reading and accompanying pupil visits beyond school. They receive a weekly newsletter from the school and comprehensive and detailed reports on their children's learning and behaviour each term. Consultation evenings are regular and well attended. The parents association is a major strength in providing a social network for parents and in providing additional and voluntary funds for the school. The school is well aware of its responsibilities to keep parents informed and it has clear structures and guidance to provide relevant documentation. Class teachers readily supply informal access and information.
- 3.12 The school's links with the island community are strong and extensive. The school makes every effort to utilise the full range of educational, social, moral, spiritual and cultural opportunities which the island and its people have to offer. Visits to local sites abound, and participation in community events and sporting fixtures is full. The school supports local charities and seeks to be an important part in concern for the needy. The school's links with the States' education authorities is good and beneficial to both parties.

### ***Senior School***

- 3.13 The quality of reporting to parents and information on grades and targets is frequent and detailed, much improved since the last inspection. Opportunities for parents to discuss their sons' progress are appropriate and the home-school contract is valued as a declaration of shared purpose and intended pursuit. Parents appreciate the advice they receive on careers and on opportunities in higher education, and equally they share with the school their own expertise. Parents are actively engaged in the life of the school by their participation in all public occasions, including concerts and recitals, sports events and fund-raising, and by sharing careers guidance and professional advice.
- 3.14 The school has clear and valued links with the community. Old Elizabethans are highly active in their support of the school, allowing it use of additional land, administering a trust fund to encourage activities beyond the island, attending school functions and sports fixtures, and giving of their advice to the school. Both parents and former pupils are distinguished on the college's governing body. The Elizabeth College Foundation, established in 2007 with the help of former pupils, provides valued advice and support for the school, for example by funding the new sixth-form centre.
- 3.15 The school's PSHE programme includes an awareness of the island community's needs and practices, such as recycling, environmental care, governmental roles and procedures, and road safety. Musical performances, art displays, drama productions and community service in gardens and charity shops, work with adults with disabilities and in primary school clubs illustrate the variety of offering from the school and its concern to be a full member of the community. Sports leadership awards are important qualifications which allow Year 11 pupils to coach both primary school children and some of the college's own younger pupils. The CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme are active and very popular within the school and develop well a tradition of service and respect for the needs of others. The CCF has undertaken a partnership with a state school on the English mainland which it is intended will afford further opportunities of leadership to its members.

## **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **The Quality of Governance**

- 4.1 The quality of governance is outstanding. Its membership is defined by statute. The Dean of Guernsey chairs a board of eight directors, two of whom are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and six elected by the States of Guernsey. That several of these directors are former pupils of the college and parents of current pupils is tribute both to the college and to good appointment practice. The board's structures are equally well defined. Three committees meet regularly: foundation and marketing, finance and general purposes, and a junior school committee. The directors share generously their wide experience. They also consider carefully on annual retreats the needs of the college and update themselves on changes in legal and educational matters. They are regular visitors to the college and they share a vision for its future. The engagement of directors in the school, in planning its development and in assessing its progress, has increased significantly since the time of the last inspection.
- 4.2 The directors set clear goals for Elizabeth College to be a strong and successful academic school, meeting the needs of the island community and contributing to its welfare. They have undergone appropriate training and they address directly the current situation and needs of the college, including legal opinion and advice on educational changes. They have prepared judiciously for the future with a strategic development plan, currently to 2015, which they review regularly. They are also well aware of their responsibilities, for example in health and safety issues, in child protection matters and in enhancing disability access, and they make decisions with careful purpose. The directors have secured compliance in all statutory policies and they monitor financial processes carefully. They appraise the performance of the principal, and they oversee and consult senior managers and faculty heads by a formal process of audit and review. By their own skills and insights, directors contribute in significant and many ways to the current success and the future growth of the college.
- 4.3 The directors are known to teaching and non-teaching staff and they are accessible for consultation. They regularly attend college plays and concerts and they invite senior staff members, for example the director of studies, to attend their committee meetings. Communication between directors and the college is excellent. They have enabled and overseen significant building improvement within the college, the expansion of its ICT facilities and changes in the structure and status of the junior school. They also share in its ambitious development plan.

### **The Quality of Leadership and Management**

- 4.4 The quality of leadership and management throughout the college is good, and in some aspects it is outstanding. It is clearly structured. It is also purposeful in its pursuit of the school's aims and it is shared with the staff. Moreover it is mindful of the college's place on Guernsey and its responsibility to the community there. Since the last inspection it has bound the junior school to the senior more closely, implemented well its sixth-form links with the college for girls and successfully taken on co-education in the junior school. The need for closer links between the pre-preparatory and preparatory parts of the junior school, pointed out at the time of the last inspection, has been addressed but they are not yet complete or wholly effective. Links between the junior and senior schools, affected by the distance between the two sites and the concerns of each head with the separate and daily requirements of their respective schools, are good. Throughout, the college has advanced in

its monitoring of pupils' learning, the setting of regular and specific targets for each pupil, and in its use of technology to facilitate communication, meeting its declared aims and recommendations made at the time of the last inspection. All school policies are comprehensive and formulated carefully. They are reviewed regularly and altered appropriately.

- 4.5 The principal, appointed in September 2001, has strong and clear ambitions for the college and he is equally strong in his pursuit of them. He leads the college purposefully and he consults and delegates carefully. He has during the years 2003 to 2005 directed an internal audit of the college on a faculty basis to identify need, to recognise achievement and to inform further decision-making. This was followed up by a further re-audit of each faculty between 2006 and 2008. The principal meets each week with the head of the junior school, with the bursar informally and frequently, and weekly with a small group of senior managers. These are the vice-principal for pastoral matters, the director of studies, the bursar and the head of sixth form. Together they plan effectively for the current and future needs of the college, as well as review progress. Recent changes have included the introduction of new A-level subjects in the sixth form, a critical thinking course for the most able pupils, and an increase in reporting to parents. The college has introduced home-school contracts for all sixth formers and for pupils of particular concern below the sixth form. It has significantly expanded its facilities such as the library, modern foreign language facilities and drama studio, and it plans development of its playing fields and indoor sports provision.
- 4.6 The college secures and supports high quality staff and ensures their suitability to work with children. They are well qualified, and staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Staff recruitment procedures are secure and effective. All checks are applied fully and correctly, and a centralised record is well-maintained. A staff appraisal system is effective and it includes lesson observation and feedback. The provision of in-service training is good and it is used well. The induction of newly qualified teachers is arranged through the Education Department of the States of Guernsey, supported within the junior school by the head and a mentor and in the senior school by the principal and the head of department or faculty. Formal teacher appraisal follows the two-year cycle of the States of Guernsey, through whom supply teachers are also obtained and checked appropriately.
- 4.7 The administration of the college is highly efficient. Financial management and control by the bursar is excellent. Technical assistance throughout the college is to a high standard. The buildings and grounds are maintained well and provide an atmosphere of inherited tradition complemented by contemporary need. Secretarial service is excellent and all ancillary staff work hard in support of the pupils. Cleaning is good and regular, carried out by staff who are proud of the college and their contribution to it.

### ***Junior School***

- 4.8 The quality of leadership is strong and that of management is good. Both are well matched to the needs of the school. The head provides clear direction and educational vision to the school, including the practice of high quality teaching. She has managed well the school's transition to co-education and carried with her the support of staff, parents and pupils.
- 4.9 The senior managers are committed to the school's aims and practices and they implement them well. The head of the pre-preparatory school establishes among pupils, teachers and assistants a practice of care for each other and an interest in learning that stands all pupils in good stead for passage to the preparatory school. Appropriate policies are in place throughout the junior school, although the roles of subject co-ordinators, recently introduced to the school, are not yet clearly defined or developed. Planning throughout the junior school

is good although teaching assistants are not yet adequately deployed to facilitate pupils' learning according to their individual abilities and needs.

***Senior School***

- 4.10 The quality of leadership and management is good, and in many aspects it is outstanding. The direction by each senior manager of his area of responsibility is clear and purposeful. It is also thorough and comprehensive. The vice-principal provides and directs an excellent programme of pastoral care, delivered through heads of year and tutors. They also monitor the pupils' academic performance well and provide appropriate guidance on choice of subjects.
- 4.11 Academic provision through the director of studies is comprehensive, varied and challenging. It is arranged through eight heads of faculty who consult together regularly. Most faculties include heads of department of related subjects and these members meet formally several times each term. Discussion is open and frank and it is effective on matters such as academic development, pupil attainment, the effectiveness of the school's monitoring system and reporting. Heads of department feel valued within the school and responsible for the academic success of their pupils. They also feel able to communicate promptly and effectively with the head of faculty.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

### **Overall Conclusions**

- 5.1 Elizabeth College meets its aims successfully. It enables all pupils to learn well, and to become socially responsible citizens. It provides a high standard of education for all its pupils, from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the sixth form and passage to university or employment. Its provision is wide, both in the formal curriculum it offers to all pupils and in the range of its extra-curricular activities and visits. The overall quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning and achievement throughout the college are good, and sometimes they are excellent. In the quality of its pastoral care, in the college's links with parents and with the community, and in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils, the college is outstanding. The quality of governance is strong, purposeful and clear, and so too is the leadership and management. The college is confident in the education it offers; it also reviews regularly its provision and its practice to improve these still further. The college's weaknesses, of which they are aware, are few: they lie in the limited exchange of best practice in teaching, and ensuring that all pupils throughout the ability range are catered for in every lesson, according to their prior attainment and their current needs.
- 5.2 Since the last inspection in November 2000, the college has successfully established co-education in the junior school. It has provided a fine new library in the pre-preparatory section. The range of sixth-form subjects has been increased and there is a new sixth-form study centre. It has also increased its use of standardised testing to determine accurately pupils' current attainment, to set new individual targets and to monitor progress to these. The college has improved reporting to parents and set up a system of home-school contracts. It has also undertaken widespread self-review to identify further areas for improvement and change.
- 5.3 The school meets all the English regulatory requirements either directly or through their local equivalents.

### **Next Steps**

- 5.4 The college is clear in its aims for all its pupils. To secure these more fully, it should:
1. develop further the programme of professional development to share best practice in teaching throughout the school;
  2. ensure that all teachers recognise pupils' prior attainment and provide regularly for all different levels of ability, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are gifted and talented.
- 5.5 No action is required in respect of the English regulatory requirements.

## 6. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- 6.1 The inspection was carried out from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> March 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 directors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents to a pre-inspection questionnaire were analysed, and the inspectors examined a range of documentation made available by the school.

### List of Inspectors

Dr Anthony Dachs	Reporting Inspector
Mrs Valerie Clark	Assistant Reporting Inspector
Mr Andrew Colpus	Second Master, HMC School
Mrs Christine Edmundson	Head, GSA School
Mr David Fotheringham	Deputy Head, HMC School
Mrs Elizabeth Hickling	Principal, IAPS School
Ms Heather McKissack	Senior Mistress, HMC School
Mrs Victoria Pugh	Deputy Head, IAPS School
Mr Kevin Riley	Headmaster, HMC School
Mr Jason Whiskerd	Head, IAPS School