

Hordle Walhampton School

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Brian Mcquoid
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Date of last inspection	9 June 2004

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Hordle Walhampton School is a co-educational independent preparatory school that operates as a charitable trust, and which offers day and boarding places for children aged from two to 13 years old. There is a Pre-Prep department within the school grounds directly adjacent to the main school which provides day places for children up to the age of seven years. The main school has day and boarding places available for children aged from seven years. Boarding provision consists of three distinct boarding houses, one for younger pupils that is located in a building separate but close to the main school, and two senior boarding houses that are segregated by gender and situated within the main school building. The school has extensive grounds that provide for a wide range of activities. Facilities include a swimming pool, a lake where sailing and canoeing take place, a large sports hall, and stables that provide riding lessons.

Summary

The standard of care provided for boarders at the school is extremely good. They are looked after within a caring environment where they feel safe and well cared for by staff with whom they have positive and respectful relationships. There is excellent healthcare provision at the school provided by an extremely well qualified team of matrons who have a very good working relationship with the local surgery. There are clear systems in place which are effective in providing a safe physical environment for boarders. Bullying is not a problem at the school, boarders get on extremely well with one another and overseas boarders are very well integrated into the boarding community. The school's recruitment procedures however are not being rigorously applied in accordance with the National Minimum Standards. There is very good provision at the school for providing individual support for boarders, and effective systems that allow them to have a voice within the school. Boarders are able to communicate with their families on a regular basis, and there is extremely good communication between the school and parents. The standard of accommodation provided within boarding houses is good. The changing facilities provided for use during the day however are woefully inadequate. The school provide very good written information for boarders and their parents. Clear policies and procedures underpin the school's practice and this includes good provision for recording and monitoring matters in relation to the welfare of boarders. There are always sufficient staff on duty to care for and supervise boarders, and staff are provided with suitable opportunities for training specific to boarding. The staff group at the school are extremely supportive of one another and operate very effectively as a team for the benefit of boarders.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were 30 recommended actions arising from the school's previous inspection carried out on 09/06/2004. Of these there was evidence that 25 had been satisfactorily addressed, that one was no longer applicable, that one had been partially addressed, and that three had not been satisfactorily addressed. There is now effective monitoring of boarders welfare by the school's governing body, and boarders now have appropriate access to the school's independent person. Staff have received child protection training and there are clear systems for the recording and monitoring of sanctions and complaints. There is improved consultation with boarders and there has been significant work carried out to improve the accommodation within boarding

houses. Recommendations of a security review have been implemented and there is now very good provision for carrying out and monitoring risk assessments.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There is excellent good provision at the school for ensuring the health needs of boarders are satisfactorily addressed. A team of matrons, which includes a qualified paediatric nurse, provide 24 hour cover for boarders during term time and including week ends. Effective systems are in place for obtaining relevant information about the health needs of boarders and there is excellent monitoring and recording of illnesses, accidents, injuries, medication administration, and other health related matters. The school benefits from an established relationship with the local surgery where boarders are registered, and there is easy access to the school GP who visits weekly. An annual report is produced jointly by the school's GP and senior matron, which is used to monitor health matters and identify possible areas for development. Medication is stored securely within the matron's surgery and policies and procedures relevant to the management and administration of medication provide suitable safeguards for the welfare of boarders. All staff at the school receive first aid training. Boarders at the school benefit from good provision in relation to health promotion and health education. Pupils are provided with a healthy diet, are encouraged to exercise regularly and there is excellent support and advice on health related matters from the team of matrons, and the pastoral staff. Suitable policies are in place concerning smoking and alcohol, the school's Personal, Social, and Health Education programme is being developed in line with the standards and is to include the involvement of external agencies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Boarders feel safe at the school and do not identify bullying as a problem. Isolated incidents do occur, but these are dealt with effectively by staff who provide appropriate support for those involved. The school is not complacent however, there is a countering bullying policy in place, staff are acutely aware of the potential for bullying to occur, and are suitably vigilant. Boarders' welfare at the school is suitably protected by staff who have a sound understanding of 'Safeguarding Children' procedures, who have received relevant training, and who have easy access to the school's supporting policy and procedures documents. There is a designated senior staff member with responsibility for liaising with the Children's Services department and the person concerned has undertaken training specific to the role. Clear guidelines are provided for staff to follow in the event of a boarder being missing from the school. There is a clear understanding by boarders of the school's expectations in relation to their behaviour, and of the system of rewards and sanctions that operates. Boarders feel fairly treated by staff and are not subject to any inappropriate sanctions. A suitable log of any major sanctions imposed is maintained by the school. The standard of behaviour of boarders is generally excellent. Boarders and their parents are able to discuss any concerns they may have, with staff at the school, and parents are made aware of the school's complaints procedure. There is however no formal procedure for making a complaint that boarders are made aware of, and neither parents or boarders are made aware of how to contact Ofsted in relation to a complaint concerning a welfare issue. A suitable log is maintained of any complaints received by the school, and this is monitored by the school's head. There is good provision at the school for protecting boarders from the risk of fire. Tests and checks of fire safety systems and equipment are carried out as

required and recorded, and there are no outstanding recommendations from the fire safety department. Boarders are aware of the fire evacuation procedures and practise evacuations are performed regularly. Staff at the school are aware of the need to respect the privacy of boarders, and act accordingly. There is no concern about lack of privacy, or inappropriate supervision by staff, being expressed by boarders. Not all baths available to boarders however are able to be used in private. The school has written recruitment procedures which are out of date and are not being fully implemented in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. There is evidence of staff being appropriately vetted, but not all records contain evidence of two references, of references being verified, or evidence of qualifications. In addition, there is no evidence of 'gap students' being subject to all possible elements of the recruitment process. Boarders at the school are suitably protected from unsupervised contact with adults who have not been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau. Procedures are in place for visitors and contractors which provide adequate safeguards for boarders, and taxi drivers used by the school to transport boarders are appropriately vetted. The three boarding houses at the school provide designated accommodation for boarders only and are suitably secure from public intrusion. Coded keypads, restricted window openings, and intruder alarms are utilised to prevent unauthorised access. In addition there are procedures for locking up at night, and a night time security patrol in operation. The school site is relatively open and the school are taking all reasonable measures to prevent and deter unauthorised access to the school grounds. The school has excellent provision for protecting boarders from safety hazards. There is an up to date health and safety policy in place and all staff are made aware of their responsibility to maintain a safe environment for staff and pupils. The school employs an external specialist who ensures the school complies with health and safety legislation, who conducts an annual health and safety audit, and who reviews and revises the school's risk assessments. There is an effective system of risk assessment in place for the school premises and for activities undertaken by boarders, both on and off site. Policies and procedures are in place for the control and supervision of high risk areas within the school grounds such as the swimming pool, adventure play facility, and the fishing lakes, and boarders are aware of which areas within the school grounds are out of bounds

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Boarders at the school benefit from systems that provide them with personal support on an individual basis according to their needs. An effective tutor system operates within school, house-parents are available within the boarding provision, the school's independent person visits regularly and is also able to be contacted by telephone. In addition there is extremely good provision for devising and monitoring individual welfare plans when necessary. Boarders are well cared for by a staff group with whom they feel able to talk freely about any concerns or problems they may have. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all of its pupils and boarders are not subject to inappropriate discrimination of any kind. Overseas boarders receive extremely good support upon arrival at the school and are soon fully integrated into the boarding community. Suitable support is provided for boarders for whom English is not their first language, and provision is made for boarders of differing religions to attend services.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The school has good provision for enabling boarders to be able to contribute to the operation of boarding. A school council operates effectively with representatives from across the school, there are weekly meetings of boarders within all three boarding houses, and a suggestion box is also available to all pupils. Boarders are happy with these opportunities allowing them to contribute, and feel listened to by staff. All three boarding houses at the school provide suitable access to a telephone for boarders which is able to be used in private. The facility to e-mail is also available, and boarders write home regularly as well. Communication between the school and parents is extremely good and parents are kept suitably informed of matters related to their child's welfare. Boarders are provided with the contact details of childline and the school's independent person.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The school's three boarding houses provide a good standard of accommodation for boarders. There has been a significant improvement to the toilet and washing facilities since the previous inspection, new beds have been installed in a number of dormitories and there has been extensive redecoration. The changing facilities used during the day however, are of an unacceptable standard. The school acknowledge the facilities need to be improved and there is ongoing discussion about how to address the issue.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school provides detailed information for boarders and their parents about the school, including the aims it has for pupils, the provision made for the boarding community, and the principles that underpin its operation. Parents are pleased with the written information provided for them. The school has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures that support how they operate on a day to day basis, and these are currently being reviewed and updated. Staff are provided with easy access to the school's documentation, all of which accurately reflects how the school operates in practice. The school has very good provision for recording and monitoring matters affecting the welfare of boarders. The school's head maintains and monitors records of complaints and major sanctions, and the school's senior matron has extremely effective systems for monitoring all health related matters including illnesses, accidents and injuries. The school employs an external specialist company to regularly review and revise all of the risk assessments in place and this process is overseen and monitored by the school's business manager. There are effective systems in operation at the school which ensure boarders are well supervised by staff at all times. Staff are clear about their responsibilities and are happy with the levels of staffing provided. Boarders are aware of what staff are on duty at any one time, and how to contact them. The staff group responsible for boarders is well balanced in terms of gender, operate extremely well as a team, and provide support from within the group to cover for sickness and absences. Staff at the school have job descriptions which clearly outline their responsibilities and lines of accountability. There is good support provided for newly appointed staff undergoing their induction, and this includes guidance on safeguarding as an issue. A performance management system which includes appraisal of boarding duties is in operation and there is good access to further training specific to boarding.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that a suitable complaints procedure be made available to boarders.
- ensure that boarders and their parents are informed by the school how to contact Ofsted in relation to any complaint concerning a welfare issue.
- enable all baths provided for boarders to be able to be used in private.
- ensure that the school's recruitment procedures comply fully with Standard 38 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.
- provide boarders with suitable changing and washing provision for use by day.

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for boarding school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' health is promoted (NMS 6)
- safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 15)
- boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill (NMS 16)
- boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 17)
- boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 25)
- boarders are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 48)
- boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 49).

Ofsted considers 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are protected from bullying (NMS 2)
- boarders are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- boarders' complaints are responded to appropriately (NMS 5)
- the operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school (NMS 22)
- boarders are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 26)
- the welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school (NMS 28)
- boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 29)
- boarders' personal privacy is respected (NMS 37)
- there is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders (NMS 38)
- boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures; all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises are supervised (NMS 39)
- boarders have their own accommodation, which is secure from public intrusion (NMS 41)
- boarders are protected from safety hazards (NMS 47)

Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 18)
- boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 27)
- boarders have satisfactory provision to study (NMS 43)
- boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas (NMS 46)

Ofsted considers 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school (NMS 12)
- boarders receive personal support from staff (NMS 14)
- boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 19)
- new boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in (NMS 21)
- boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school (NMS 30)
- there are sound relationships between staff and boarders (NMS 36)

Ofsted considers 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' possessions and money are protected (NMS 20)
- boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation (NMS 40)
- boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 42)
- boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 44)
- boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day (NMS 45)
- boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school (NMS 50)

Ofsted considers 51 the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- a suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- there is clear leadership of boarding in the school (NMS 8)
- crises affecting boarders' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- the school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare (NMS 10)
- risk assessment and school record-keeping contribute to boarders' welfare (NMS 23)
- boarders are supervised adequately by staff (NMS 31)
- staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site (NMS 32)
- boarders are adequately supervised at night (NMS 33)
- boarders are looked after by staff which have specific boarding duties, and have received adequate induction and continued training (NMS 34)
- boarders are looked after by staff which follow clear boarding policies and practice (NMS 35)
- the welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 51)
- the welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

Ofsted considers 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.