

Edgehill College

Inspection report for boarding school

Unique reference number	SC022213
Inspection date	7 November 2007
Inspector	Michelle Oxley / Jon Swift
Type of Inspection	Key

Address	Edgehill College Northdown Road BIDEFORD Devon EX39 3LY
Telephone number	01237 471701
Email	
Registered person	Edgehill College
Head of care	Stuart Nicholson
Head / Principal	Stuart Nicholson
Date of last inspection	30 November 2004

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

Edgehill College is an independent co-educational day and boarding school with a Methodist Church foundation. It has a kindergarten, junior and senior school. The college occupies a fifty acre site, facilities include sports hall, theatre and field studies centre. Two houses are currently being used for boarding provision, one for boys, the other for girls and younger boys. Further properties are available for use as boarding houses should these be required.

Summary

The purpose of this visit is to assess the boarding provision against key National Minimum Standards. This inspection identifies some areas of considerable concern, particularly under the heading 'staying safe'. The school must also pay close attention to its management systems. These require urgent attention in order to develop a strategy to successfully carry out the recommendations made in this report. However, on the whole, children and young people who board at Edgehill College enjoy their time there. They are supervised by a committed and enthusiastic team of staff.

The overall quality rating is inadequate.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There have been improvements to the quality and quantity of food. New showers have been installed in the girls boarding house.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

The school holds policies regarding health promotion and countering major risks to health. These policies are currently under review. Staff are aware of how health policies relate to their work with boarders and know how to access individual policy documents. Individual health records are held securely by the registered nurse in the medical centre. The nurse ensures that these are held methodically and securely and that they contain relevant contact details and information about specific needs. Boarders have access to a GP at two weekly surgeries. These are held at the school, a male and a female doctor is available. In addition, the nurse can arrange appointments for a boarder to attend the GP's practice. Dental appointments are attended frequently, all boarders subscribe to private dentistry. A communication book is used to pass information about health needs between the boarding houses and the nurse. This new system is working well. First aid training has taken place at the school, but senior boarding staff had not received it. In one case, a senior member of the boarding staff said he had received training from another employer, but the school held no documentary evidence to verify this. Medication is held securely in the boarding houses and in the medical centre. Prescription medication is held primarily by the nurse at the medical centre. A small stock of homely remedies is held at each boarding house. There is a record of non prescription pain killers, held and administered but there is no clear audit trail of other prescription and non prescription medication entering and leaving the medical centre and the boarding houses. A form is now available for this purpose. When boarders are ill they can be cared for by the nurse in the medical centre. There are two rooms, one each for boys and girls. These cater for a total of five boarders. In the medical centre, there is no means of immediate communication between the nurse station and the

bedrooms, this means that ill boarders may not be able to summon staff readily and rapidly. Meals are taken in the dining hall which is situated in the main school building. Catering is sourced out to an external company. Menus set out a healthy balance of fresh fruit, vegetables, carbohydrate and protein. There is a choice of main meal including a vegetarian option. In addition a salad bar with baked potatoes is available. Meal times are a relaxed affair with students helping themselves. Staff are on hand to encourage the younger children to choose a well balanced meal. Catering staff are aware of special dietary needs, as they have a list with the child's name, but not a photo. The catering team are accessible and approachable to children. The catering team manager has just started to have meetings with boarders to ensure that improvements are made. Boarders feel that they are listened to by the catering team and feel happy to use the comments box in the dining room should they need to. Provision is made on site for boarders clothing to be laundered. In addition to this in the girls boarding house there is a washing machine and tumble dryer, the boys would also like these facilities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Staff are aware that a counter bullying procedure is in place. They take a realistic approach, in recognising that vigilance is required in order identify and counter bullying. When bullying occurs both parties receive support and assistance. Boarders did not report that bullying is a problem. The school has recently appointed a child protection coordinator. The coordinator has not yet received child protection training. Links with local safeguarding board in order to develop a policy which reflects local procedures, have not yet been made. The lack of staff induction or ongoing staff training in child protection means that the team are not consistently provided with clear information about how to proceed, should they suspect abuse or receive an allegation. On occasions when children have stayed at a member of staff's home. Relevant checks and vetting procedures to protect children, have not been carried out. The teaching staff are provided with clear information about discipline and have implemented an effective system which involves the use of positive and negative action forms. Information about this system has not been transmitted to boarding house staff. They are not aware of the intended overall approach. This has led to inconsistencies in approach between home and school, with boarding staff creating their own disciplinary measures. Nevertheless, boarders felt that overall they were treated fairly. The lack of a formal written complaints procedure means that the school is unable to evidence actions taken in response to boarders dissatisfaction or concerns. Fire drills are held at frequent intervals and an external company is contacted to maintain fire equipment. However, the overall testing of fire safety equipment is insufficient, for example, emergency lights are not being tested, alarms are not always tested weekly and there is no visual check of fire safety equipment. Staff routinely supervise boarders in a way that respects privacy. For instance, staff knock on bedroom doors and do not intrude unnecessarily when boarders are showering. There is now an awareness at the school regarding the need to implement more rigorous recruitment and selection procedures. In the past there have been delays in carrying out criminal record bureau checks, particularly for staff from abroad, who have been employed on clearance from their own country. Interviews for the post of security officer were taking place during the inspection. It is envisaged that this post will incorporate the tasks currently undertaken by older students. These involve checking that the building is secure at night. These tasks are considered to be unsuitable for students. In both boarding houses there are booking in systems which are well managed and overseen by house parents. There are some concerns about the lack of risk assessment in relation to window locks and restrictors on vulnerable windows. Boarders are not sufficiently protected from reasonable

hazards because limited consideration has been given to health and safety. For example, fire doors are routinely wedged open, trailing electrical leads, over loaded sockets, continental adaptors and compromised fire doors. There is no overall health and safety risk assessments of the boarding houses and portable electrical appliances have not been tested.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Boarders participate in a wide range of activities with day pupils at the end of each school day, up until 17.15. An activities programme is in place at weekends and boarders have experienced a good range of off site activities. However, there are some concerns that boarders had limited access to school facilities during the week. This is due to limited free time, and as a result of the facilities being used by local groups from outside of school. In the houses young people are provided with TV, games station and pool table, boarders noted that there were no board games. Each boarder has a tutor who they can go to if they have any concerns or worries. The tutor also acts as parent-pupil link. The tutors role is to oversee the total wellbeing of borders by providing a direct link to individual young people, also a point of contact for parents and a coordinator of information regarding individual welfare concerns. Boarders have positive relations with boarding house staff and will approach them directly should they have a problem. Boarders do not experience discrimination. Support is given to learners of English as a second language. Cultural festivals are such as Chinese New Year and Moon festival are openly discussed with interest and celebrated.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Boarders are able to express their views either directly to key members of staff or through school council meetings. Boarders gave examples of when they felt they had been listened to. For instance, there had been an improvement in the provision of food, following consultation. However, there is a lack formalised systems to record and evidence that young peoples views are incorporated in to development and practice of boarding. The Head is very keen to support and promote private contact between boarders and their parents, recognising the importance of this in ensuring the wellbeing of the young person. Email and mobile phones are the main means of contact used. There is no internet service in the boarding houses, so boarders have a designated time in which they are able to mail home. There are land lines available to boarders in both houses.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

The boarding houses are situated in the school grounds which cover some 50 acres. There two houses currently occupied, both houses are period buildings offering accommodation to boarders over two floors. Rooms vary in size, smaller rooms in the boys house tend to be single occupancy and larger rooms are shared by up to three boarders but more often by two. Boarding houses are clean, adequately lit and centrally heated. The furnishings and fittings are adequate. Boarders have personalised their own areas, with photographs and trinkets, posters are allowed. Beds are sufficient in size and of stable construction, bedding is clean and warm with each boarder has suitable storage facilities for their belongings. In some rooms boarders had introduced tables which butt up close to the bed. This has the effect of limiting usable floor space and inhibits the occupants ability to get in and out of the bed, posing potential difficulties in an

emergency evacuation situation. There are sufficient toilet and shower facilities in relation to the number of boarders. In the girls house there is a new shower block. Here there is a preference for using one shower block which offers significantly more privacy than the other. Girls feel comfortable using individual cubicles which offer the privacy of a changing area. Overall, the standard of accommodation is acceptable in terms of décor and furnishing but there are a number of health and safety concerns which relate to these buildings. These are set out under the staying safe section of this report

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The Head of the school has been in post for about a year, he leads a dedicated team of staff, who expressed commitment to ensuring that the school succeeds. The Head and the Bursar have attended recent training. This has improved their knowledge of Health and Safety and recruitment procedures, further training is planned through the Boarding Schools Association. The two boarding houses are currently operated by a couple who live in the boys house and the Head and his wife who have moved out of the Head masters house to live in the other boarding house. It is unclear how long this arrangement will continue. It is apparent that there have been some difficulties in creating clear leadership or management of practice and development in boarding. For instance, roles and responsibilities of senior staff working in boarding are not clearly defined. This has led to a lack of clarity about what is expected of them. There is a lack of direction and a lack of understanding about the parameters of the job. Staff have not been provided with a detailed job descriptions, induction programme or an ongoing training programme. The Head has recognised these issues, and staff have recently received some information which includes advice about their roles. Gap year students are provided with more information than other staff, this sets out expectations regarding their behaviour in boarding and their responsibilities. There is no identifiable system to monitor records that contribute to boarders welfare such as risk assessment punishments, complaints or accidents. Boarders are supervised in each house by two house parents and at least two gap year students. An up to date statement including the boarding school's aims and objectives is available to parents and boarders.

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
----------	--------	----------

Recommendations

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

- maintain an accurate record signed by staff, of all medication administered (NMS15)
- ensure that boarders can access staff in their houses, who are first aid trained (NMS15)
- ensure that boarders are able to summon assistance readily when ill (NMS16)

- install a washing machine in the boys boarding house (NMS49)
- ensure that all staff receive training in child protection (NMS3)
- ensure that the child protection policy is consistent with local safeguarding board procedures (NMS3)
- ensure that appropriate vetting and risk assessments are carried out should staff continue to take boarders home (NMS3)
- ensure that consistent disciplinary measures are used across boarding houses and that these are known to both staff and boarders (NMS4)
- implement a formal complaints procedure; ensure that boarders have access to this (NMS5)
- improve fire safety, ensure comprehensive test are carried out on all fire safety equipment (NMS26)
- improve fire safety; ensure that the risk of fire is assessed (NMS26)
- implement recruitment and selection procedures which ensure that staff are adequately vetted before they start work (NMS38)
- ensure that comprehensive risk assessments and risk management strategies are devised for boarding houses, including, electrical safety, and security of premises and use of window restrictors (NMS47)
- ensure that portable electrical appliances are tested (PAT) (NMS47)
- ensure that boarders are not given responsibility for security of the site (NMS41)
- ensure that boarders have sufficient free time each day (NMS11)
- ensure that boarders have sufficient appropriate access to sports hall, recreational and hobby facilities outside of class time (NMS11)
- implement formal processes to ascertain the views of boarders, regarding relevant aspects of boarding provision (NMS12)
- ensure that all beds have adequate space around them (NMS42)
- improve management of the boarding houses to ensure clear leadership of practice and development (NMS8)
- implement a system to ensure that records relating to boarders welfare are monitored (NMS23)
- ensure that all staff have job descriptions and induction training, with opportunities for continuing training. (NMS34)

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.