

Queen's College

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Wendy Anderson
Type of Inspection	Random

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Registered person	Christopher Alcock
Head of care	Christopher Alcock
Head / Principal	Richard Abolins
Date of last inspection	29 January 2007

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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

Queens College is one of the nine schools owned by the Methodist Church and is administered by the board of Management for Methodist Residential Schools. Queens College is a long established, co-educational Independent School. There is boarding provision organised into four boarding houses and one Junior house. All the houses are on the College campus except for one of the Senior girl's houses, which is located a short walk away. At the time of the last full inspection in January 2007 the senior school roll was 554 of which 158 were boarders (80 male and 78 female boarders). The Junior school roll was 160 of which 19 were boarders (11 male and eight female boarders).

Summary

This was an interim visit to follow up on the recommended actions from the inspection carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection on 29 January 2007. One inspector was at the College for two hours. During this time they met with the Head and inspected associated documentation. The inspector also had a brief tour of the campus.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The College has acted upon all three of the recommended actions from the last inspection report. All College staff, including newly appointed staff, have appropriate training in child protection. The recruitment standards have been applied to all staff appointments. Maintenance of all houses is part of the annual development plan and is an on-going process.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

In the school council minutes held in October 2007 it was decided that a food council for the College will be formed. This will involve the students and the catering manager. The College ensure they have up to date information of young people's allergies and intolerances, working in partnership with the young people and their parents. This information is then shared with the appropriate individuals. The Head feels that the College is proactive concerning promoting health and wellbeing amongst the young people. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) meets with the College sister and the Head once a week to discuss the young people's health needs. This has included making individual arrangements for young people at the College. Parental consent for the College to provide first aid for young people has been added to the College's joining instructions. The College has two nurses on duty for rugby matches and these nurses are specifically trained in sports injuries. The College has a resuscitation room in the pavilion. The College has a development plan to move the medical centre to a bungalow site in the future.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

All staff at the College have received child protection training. This was delivered by the Designated Child Protection Officer. Child protection training is regularly refreshed and forms part of the College's training matrix. Attendance records are kept to ensure all staff attend this

training. The College has a robust recruitment system which ensures all the relevant information is gathered for all staff appointments. All staff references are followed up by verbal verification by the Head who then signs and dates the records after this phone call. The College has carried out risk assessment concerning the use of window restrictors on windows above ground floor level. These windows either have restrictors or bar stopper to restrict their opening. At the time of this interim visit the College had no on-going child protection issues. If the College has concerns about a young person these are monitored and in some incidences counselling can be offered. The College has reviewed its complaints procedure. The Head responds to any complaints within 24 hours. There were no complaints at the time of this visit. The Head said those few concerns rather than complaints he had received were related to information sharing and were quickly resolved. The Head regularly writes to parents to ask if they have any concerns about the College or their child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The Head is developing a Queens College Certificate of Recognition of Achievement. This looks across academic, kinaesthetic, aesthetic, inter-personal and intra-personnel skills. The Head said that the College has always recognised these accomplishments but now wishes to acknowledge them formally. This scheme is linked with the College's Duke of Edinburgh Award, Community Service scheme, Prefect system and other responsible roles young people may take on. The Head sees this as part of a rounded education and the College's goal is for their young people to be purposeful, and happy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The College's school council meets on a regular basis, at least monthly. These meetings are minuted. Issues are brought to this meeting by the pupils via their council representative. The council meetings begin with feedback from the Head and senior staff on the issues and proposed actions from the previous meeting. The Head personally travels to the Far East every two years so that he can provide face to face feedback to the parents of students from that area. The College is looking at providing all the boarding houses with WiFi connections. This will be linked through the College's computer system which has the appropriate safeguards.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The College has an ongoing development programme which covers the whole College site. Major works were undertaken this summer 2007 and more are scheduled for the summer of 2008. The school has also replaced some of the windows this summer 2007 and plans to replace the remaining in summer 2008.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Head said the College has produced specific boarding handbooks for staff and young people. The College's crisis management policy is always reviewed on an annual basis, in the light of new information or incident. Such updates have included the use of mobile phones and actions related to a possible Avian flu outbreak.

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):

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.