

Malvern College

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Dawn Taylor / Trevor Hall
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Date of last inspection	21 November 2005

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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

Malvern College (the College) was founded in 1865 as a boys' school with two houses. The school had expanded to nearly 600 boys by the 1890s with 10 boarding houses. During the Second World War the school moved temporarily to Blenheim Palace and then Harrow School until July 1946. In 1992 Malvern College became co-educational by the fusion of three schools to form the current senior College (on the original boys' school site), a junior school and a prep-prep school on nearby sites. Malvern College is situated within the town of Malvern. It provides boarding and day education to boys and girls from 12 to 19 years of age.

Summary

This was an announced inspection undertaken by two Ofsted inspectors and a boarding school additional inspector (BSAI). The inspection looked at the key Boarding School National Minimum Standards under the Every Child Matters outcome groups. There were 600 students at the College. There were 477 boarders aged 12 up to 19 years old on the week of the inspection.

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 undertaken significant work to meet all recommendations from the previous Commission for Social Care inspection report. The College was asked to review and develop policies and procedures relating to students being safe and healthy. Policies including the medication procedure, pocket money policy, missing person policy, whistle blowing procedure, child protection policy and complaints procedure have been reviewed, developed and are now included in written information that is available to students, parents and staff. These steps help to keep students safe from risks by informing staff, boarders and parents of current practice. The College was asked to ensure all staff, including ancillary staff, receive child protection training on a regular basis. Appropriate steps have been taken and a programme of regular training is in place. The College was asked to review and develop the staff recruitment and vetting procedure, staff job descriptions, written agreements with spouses, adult children or partners, induction and appraisals for boarding staff. This work has all been undertaken and systems are in place. The College was asked to develop systems for monitoring records to identify any issues requiring action. Systems are now in place to monitor practice and safeguard students. Development plans address the further development of boarding at Malvern College including significant building and refurbishment work, which is now underway.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Students' health and well-being needs are being promoted through established and effective services. Information regarding the health and medical histories of each student is gained as part of the College's admission process through proactive contact with agents and families. Students receive professional medical care from a team of registered nurses based at a newly refurbished and well-resourced medical facility. They hold up-to-date and detailed records and, where appropriate, health care plans on students. They liaise on a regular basis with a team of trained counsellors, a GP practice with whom they work in partnership, college staff and parents. Boarders have full access to medical, dental and optical treatments as necessary, in full

consultation with parents. Nursing staff ensure a clear record is maintained of all medical appointments and any ongoing concerns are addressed. Effective lines of communication exist between the medical centre staff team and boarding house staff. The planned development of the College intranet will further enhance this professional relationship linking the medical centre and boarding house's medical records and reports. Policies and procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of medication. Boarder's health and welfare is safeguarded because staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to follow. Staff demonstrate that they maintain clear and accurate records that follow the College's procedure. Students have access to information and guidance with regard to health and social issues. Students are supported to communicate their needs through a range of methods including house based staff, academic tutors and a team of health care professionals. Appropriate policies are in place to help educate boarders about healthy lifestyles, relationships, substance abuse, alcohol and smoking, helped by a strong and effective focus by staff in these areas. The staff know the College's health education policies and apply these in their daily contact with students. Staff discuss personal, health and social matters with all boarders. This helps students to gain a deeper awareness of healthy living. Health needs which may impact on future outcomes for the students are identified at the earliest opportunity and staff, in partnership with parents, actively seek out the services needed to address these. This means boarders receive care that actively promotes their wellbeing and health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students safety is promoted because staff listen and take appropriate actions to protect them from harm. Students state that the College respect their privacy and confidentiality, that their concerns are listened to and they are supported to behave well. Staff and students know that bullying is not tolerated. Positive behaviour is rewarded and inappropriate behaviour is addressed in a fair and measured way. The College have a strong focus on promoting effective ways of communicating, for example, students are positive about the implementation of a peer mentoring system that promotes peer support and guidance. Student's welfare is protected because staff receive refresher training in child protection and demonstrate a good knowledge of policies and procedures. However, a small number of house assistants and house based chefs have missed the programme of child protection training. There are good arrangements in place to safeguard boarders from possible abuse because the College's child protection policy follows the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the College maintains clear links with the local authority. Students are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour. There is a very evident warmth in the relationship between the boarding staff and students. Boarders have a strong sense of right and wrong and understand the importance of respect for others. Good monitoring effectively enables the College to identify any patterns and trends and enables staff to effectively encourage students to talk about any issues that maybe troubling them. However, if a consequence results in a task being undertaken with the college porter, records do not show the detail of the work the student is required to carry out. This potentially puts the student and porter at risk and does not enable the College to monitor the appropriateness of this specific sanction. The College has a complaints policy that is also available on the College website to parents, students and other significant stakeholders. Students explained that they can talk to staff if they are unhappy about any aspect of their boarding. Records demonstrate that staff are professional and sensitive in their response to resolving any concern that is raised. Malvern College has clear procedures in place to manage health and

safety across the boarding site and takes positive steps to reduce risks to students. The process used for risk management is well implemented across the boarding provision. Students are protected from the risk of fire. There is good awareness amongst staff and boarders of the fire safety precautions. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis, at different times of the day and fire safety equipment is checked regularly and a record kept. This ensures that boarders can exit swiftly and calmly in the event of a fire. Boarding staff ensure the boarding provision is safe and secure. Good procedures are in place to monitor and supervise all visitors to the boarding houses. There is a clear visitors policy, that ensures that any adults who have access to boarders and boarding accommodation are kept under staff supervision. However, not all departments are ensuring visitors report to reception and issued with an identifying badge before being sent onto a boarding house. The College operates a robust staff vetting procedure and staff demonstrate awareness of the need to safeguard students. All files hold evidence of recruitment checks having taken place prior to staff being deployed, which includes an appropriate enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Students receive outstanding support when they need it. Students live in a college that values both the spiritual and moral development of each person and fosters supportive, caring relationships. Students are encouraged to make the best of their social and educational opportunities. The values of the College are embraced by the students and as a result they explore their potential and develop their personal interests. Staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner and consequently the care, social opportunities and activities are outstanding. There is an emphasis within the College on good relationships, individual care and a sense of community, which enables the College to fulfil its aim to show concern for students as individuals, with great success. Students are clear which members of staff they can go to for personal support and freely initiate interaction and seek help from various staff members on duty. These include an allocated academic tutor who ensures their continual care needs are met. In the sixth form students are able to request which tutor will support them through their final two years. Students are happy and show great loyalty to their houses and speak warmly of the care and guidance they receive from staff. The ethos of the houses is very positive and relaxed; students refer to environments that promote mutual trust, respect and friendship. Housemasters and housemistresses, supported by their tutors and house assistants, are committed to the wellbeing of students. Students expressed confidence that any problems or issues that might arise would be dealt with sensitively and constructively. Students say that the College, peer mentors and house prefects are excellent role models who are always readily available to listen and help them if they have any concerns or worries. The College provides an environment where the value of quality and diversity is understood and promoted. The College has an approach that values the diverse needs of its boarders and vigorously addresses any discrimination based on gender, race, religion, cultural or linguistic background. The College makes good arrangements to assist those students whose first language is not English. Students present an excellent attitude to accepting diversity and celebrating difference. All students appear to be well integrated within each boarding house.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Students are actively encouraged to contribute to the running of the College because their views and opinions are valued, which results in social cohesion and strong college identity. Students consider that they benefit from a supportive and educational system, which is open and inclusive. They also believe that by effectively communicating with them about matters concerning their own lives, progress and future, the College is helping them to be responsible and independent. The College's systems gain student's views about matters affecting their daily lives and the general running of the College. This includes student representation on the College's health and safety committee as well as a range of established student's forums. This helps students to feel ownership of the setting and to be part of college life. Students are encouraged and supported to have appropriate contact with friends and family. The College understands the value and importance of communication and contact with parents. The College provides sufficient payphones and internet access, although most boarders have mobile phones and this is their primary means of communicating with parents. The College has good, productive links with the local and wider community and with parents. Parents are actively involved in the development and future of the College and strongly support the attitudes and values that the College holds towards boarding.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Students enriched care and educational experience is underpinned by the College's coherent philosophy and values. Malvern College has a Statement of Boarding Practice and Principles, which is clear and made available to parents and students. The student guides give all required information to young people and their families on the services available. This includes the philosophy of care and the expectations of the College. The acting headmistress and senior management team provide strong leadership to the students and staff teams. They are actively involved in the day to day operation of the College and regularly consult with students. The headmistress chairs and facilitates a range of key meetings including the health and safety committee and the heads of house meeting. Students are making good progress because staffing in the College is well organised and effectively managed. Their welfare is monitored with regular discussions within staff meetings. The strong house tradition lies at the heart of the College, ensuring both boarding and day students are valued and feel secure. The housemaster or housemistress has key responsibility for a student's personal and academic development. They are supported by a team of house based staff and academic tutors, who know the students for whom they have particular concern well, through timetabled tutorials and regular contact in the house. The senior mistress has the primary concern for the oversight of pastoral care and for disciplinary policies and consequences. An effective framework is in place, with clearly outlined responsibilities for relevant staff and well defined, efficient channels of communication. Staff with boarding responsibilities are supported by the College to meet the needs of the students through induction, appraisal and professional development training. Significant work is underway to improve the involvement and professional status of house assistants, however, formal opportunities for regular training commensurate with their role and experience is not in place. The acting headmistress provides effective monitoring of relevant records such as the complaints, child protection and discipline logs. This ensures proper scrutiny of all aspects of the student's care. Any shortfalls in these areas are identified and addressed. This quality

monitoring and other similar initiatives contribute to periodic reports to the College Council and the College's overall strategic plan.

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 alternative training is run for any staff at any level (including newly appointed and ancillary staff) who have missed the training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse (NMS 3.5)
- ensure that the detail of any consequence administered by the porter is recorded in writing to demonstrate it is acceptable and in line with College procedures (NMS 4.4 and 4.6)
- ensure all adults visiting boarding accommodation (e.g. visitors, outside delivery and maintenance personnel) are kept under sufficient staff supervision to prevent their substantial unsupervised access to boarders or their accommodation (NMS 39.2)
- ensure opportunities are provided for house assistants to undertake and up date training in boarding practice that is commensurate with their role, experience and the rate of turnover (NMS 34.7).

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.