

Felixstowe International College

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Joanne Vyas
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Date of last inspection	25 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

Felixstowe International College prepares pupils from overseas, exclusively far-eastern countries, and principally Korea, for entry at a suitable stage to an English independent boarding school. Most pupils stay at the college for one year, sometimes more. At the time of the inspection the college had 14 pupils between the ages of 10 and 18 years. The current accommodation is used for boarding, academic study, dining and for social purposes. It is situated in a residential area close to a small row of shops, including a supermarket and newsagent, the coast and is about a mile from the town centre of Felixstowe.

Summary

The overall rating for this school is inadequate as it does not comply with important aspects of the required standards through its documentation and procedures. Despite this pupils at the school report that they feel well cared for and safe. The family atmosphere which pervades all aspects of the pupils' experience at the school provides a strong component of the quality of care in practice. Most of the required policies are in place but the school fails to give adequate attention to making safety checks on staff. There are also issues relating to safeguarding children, the adequacy of fire protection and risk assessment within the school and high risk activities away from the school.

The overall quality rating is inadequate.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Some improvements have been made since the last inspection by The Commission for Social Care Inspection in January 2007. All staff now receive a basic course on safeguarding children. However, boarding staff and the designated child protection officer do not receive more comprehensive training. Most recruitment checks as stated in the National Minimum Standards for Boarding are now required by the school. However, the school does not obtain an appropriate Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificates for staff, which potentially puts pupils at risk. There are good complaints procedures in place.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The provision for being healthy is satisfactory. Pupils boarding at the school are provided with adequate health care. Staff are responsive to the emotional and health care needs of the pupils. Records of healthcare are provided by parents, which includes their consent for medical interventions. Pupils are registered with the local doctor and a school nurse visits as and when necessary. They have access to comprehensive information about health that is age appropriate through their Personal, Health and Social Education (PSHE) classes. The safe handling of medication is not well managed in this school and pupils are potentially at risk of harm. The policy on the safe handling of medication is limited. There is no audit of medication that is kept in the school or returned to the pharmacy. Homely remedies are not securely stored or agreed by a doctor. There are many different types of homely remedies stored and large stocks of Paracetamol and Ibuprofen. The number of pupils requiring this medication does not warrant the amount of medication stored. Some medication is out of date and it is not clear when creams and syrups, once opened, should be disposed of. The school have not provided staff with any training on the safe handling of medication. However, records of administration are appropriate. Medication that comes into the school from parents who are abroad is not used by the school but is stored and returned to the pupil when they leave. Accidents and injuries are appropriately treated and recorded. The boarding staff have a qualification in first aid. The provision for staying safe is inadequate. Staff are concerned about keeping pupils safe. Pupils report that they feel safe at the school and are confident, happy and relaxed around staff. There is an adequate child protection policy in place, but this has not been approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to ensure consistency with their procedures. The designated child protection officer and senior management team have only had basic safeguarding children training and are not up to date with their knowledge in this area. Pupils, although they feel safe, are potentially not protected from harm at this school. All staff have received the same basic training on safeguarding children. However, there are good policies in place, implemented in practice, to safeguard pupils against bullying. Pupils state that bullying occurs rarely and is effectively dealt with by staff. There is a clear expectation of behaviour, which the pupils understand and follow. Sanctions are rarely used but are proportionate and appropriate. Pupils believe that rules and sanctions are fair and consistent. They also feel that their privacy is respected. There are opportunities for pupils to make complaints. Parents and pupils boarding at the school are aware of the complaints procedure. Pupils who board are clear about the fire evacuation procedures. Fire practices are carried out on a regular basis and at different times of the day. The checking of fire safety equipment is carried out. The school does not have a fire risk assessment in place although there has been a recent check of the building with regard to fire and all faults have been rectified. There are no risk assessments written for indoor and outdoor areas of the school and inadequate security arrangements, which potentially put pupils at risk. Risk assessments for activities away from the school have been completed unsatisfactorily as they do not state who is at risk and how the risk can be minimised. The recruitment practice of the school does not reflect their policy. All staff have a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificate but not necessarily one that has been provided for the school at the point of employment. The disclosure certificates that are provided are no longer valid due to the length of time that has elapsed since the certificate was produced. All other safety checks are carried out by the school. Pupils are, therefore, potentially at risk of harm. The provision for enjoying and achieving is good. All pupils can approach a number of staff for help and support. They have met and know how to contact their independent listener.

They do not experience inappropriate discrimination. There is a wide range of activities on offer for pupils who board throughout the week and at the weekend. These include attendance at church each week for all pupils and Sunday school for the younger pupils. Pupils are encouraged to access the local community by using the local leisure centre, auditioning and performing for the local theatre company, accessing clubs such as karate and using the local shops. The provision for positive contribution is good. Pupils are given opportunities to express their views, particularly with regards to activities at the weekends. Pupils who board have opportunities to phone, fax or email their families. Pupils can contact their families at appropriate times but the phone which is for their use is housed in the common room and does not afford pupils adequate privacy. They have access to all appropriate telephone numbers such as the independent listener and Child Line. Pupils are confident in their relationships with staff. The provision for economic wellbeing is good. The boarding accommodation is well maintained and decorated and furnished appropriately. There is a good amount of communal space available to pupils. All pupils have their own bedrooms, which are highly personalised. The school's management does not make adequate arrangements for safeguarding pupils and therefore organisation is judged as inadequate. However, the school provides a wide range of useful information to parents and pupils. Boarding staff are appropriately qualified but receive a limited induction and very little training is offered. Boarding staff feel well supported by their line managers but do not receive formal supervision or appraisal. Pupils are aware of the staff who are on duty and report that there is always sufficient staff on hand to meet their needs. The management team are aware of issues at the school on a day to day basis. However, there are no formal monitoring systems in place for risk assessment, complaints, major punishments or accidents therefore trends may not be acknowledged and the welfare of pupils could be compromised.

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):

- provide a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription 'household' medicines from a qualified medical or nursing professional for pupils (NMS 15.9)
- ensure all medication is kept secure (NMS 15.10)
- ensure the safe handling of medication (NMS 15)
- ensure the written safeguarding children policy is consistent with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures (NMS 3.2)
- provide appropriate training for the designated child protection officer and boarding staff (NMS 3.6)

- provide a fire risk assessment that complies with the local fire service recommendations (NMS 26.1)
- provide written risk assessments for identifiable high risk activities for pupils (NMS 29.2)
- provide written risk assessments to identify and reduce the risk to pupils from inherent hazards in the school buildings, activities or grounds (NMS 47.9)
- ensure all staff have a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Certificate provided for the school, prior to commencement of employment (NMS 38.7)
- provide pupils with private telephone facilities (NMS 19.3)
- provide all staff with boarding duties an induction programme, opportunities for further training and a regular review of their boarding practice (NMS 34.1)
- ensure records of risk assessment, major punishments, complaints and accidents are regularly monitored by the Head or a designated senior member of staff (NMS 23.2)
- ensure there are adequate security measures at the school (NMS 41.5).