

# Badminton School

Inspection report for boarding school

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<b>Inspector</b>	Wendy Anderson / Barbara Davies
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<b>Nominated person</b>	Janet Scarrow
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	20 February 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**

The school is an independent, boarding and day school for girls aged between 11 and 18. This school is a registered charity governed by a board of governors.

The population of boarders is from a rich and diverse background. At the time of inspection there are 189 boarders in three boarding houses. It is located on an attractive 20-acre campus and has excellent sports facilities including tennis courts, an indoor heated swimming pool, a sports hall and a theatre. The school is on the outskirts of a city with good transport links to a wide range of leisure activities. The school is a short walk to the local shops.

### **Summary**

This was an announced inspection against the national minimum standards for Boarding Schools. The school is very pupil focused and provides an excellent standard of care for the boarders. The senior management and the boarding team are very experienced and committed to their roles. The school provides boarders with a high standard of accommodation and a wide range of activities. The behaviour of the pupils was excellent throughout the inspection.

There are some shortfalls which are detailed in the recommendations. These include some gaps in the domestic staff personnel files, updating the staff's knowledge of the whistle blowing policy, updating the child protection training for ancillary staff and adjustments to some of the recording systems. Despite providing a good standard of care to pupils who access the health centre there is a lack of consistent evidence of risk assessments for pupils who self administer their own medication and records of medication disposals. There is also a lack of clarity and consistency where older pupils give consent for medical services and nurses secondary dispensing medication to pupils and staff.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection the school has built a new boarding house which is of exceptional standard and they have relocated one of the boarding houses into another building. Out of the six recommendations made at the last inspection five have been addressed. These include the production of a list of specific sanctions which may be used at the school and the inclusion of this information in the boarders' handbook following agreement by the school management. The school has reviewed how to enable pupils from overseas to contact their parents at appropriate times. This is working well and the school is piloting the use of Skype between pupils and parents overseas in two boarding houses. The school now ensures all areas accessed by boarders are free from hazards and all staff have been made aware of the school policy on hazardous substances. The one recommendation which has not been met is the nurses have not been able to regularly check the first aid kits and boxes across the school site.

The school continues to review and update their policies and procedures in light of changes of law and developing practice. They are also proactive in developing their own practice and skills.

## Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The school has clear written policies on all health matters. The schools Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme is comprehensive and is provided for all pupils. Sixth form pupils are also able to take a certificate in health education. Pupils said that they enjoyed the PSHE course and this course is adapted to reflect current issues.

There are clear records on boarders' health. These records clearly identify the person with parental responsibility, parental consents and emergency numbers. The school manages pupils' health and personal problems very well due to the staff having an in depth knowledge of the pupils they care for. The school has detailed written information on pupils welfare needs in various forms. A new proforma has been developed to collate this information together in one comprehensive document. External professional services are accessed for pupils as and when they are needed. Communication between the medical staff, boarding staff and teaching staff is very good.

The school has a medical centre and employs two qualified nurses with current nursing registration who update their training regularly with the Royal College of Nursing. Nurses and house mistresses dispense prescribed medication to pupils and clear records are kept of all medication dispensed. However the nurses secondary dispense prescribed medication from the pharmacy containers into smaller amounts which are then given to staff or pupils. Pupils are able to self administer their own medication but there is a lack of consistence evidence of a risk assessment having been completed. Also with the older pupils there is a lack of clarity and consistency with their own consent for medical services. Within the health centre there is a lack of evidence on the disposal of medication. The school maintains an appropriate record of any accidents or injuries. Pupils are able to access opticians and dentists as required. The school has developed a comprehensive contingency plan in the event of swine flu.

In the last inspection report a recommendation was raised that the health centre nurses should check all the first aid boxes on the school site. As there are only two nurses to cover the health centre, only one on duty most of the time, this is not practicable.

The accommodation for ill pupils is pleasant and well furnished. If a pupil is accommodated in the medical centre there is always a member of medical staff on duty. Boarders said that if they are ill they are well looked after by staff. The care of boarders when ill is good but there is no call facility in the sick rooms for pupils to summon staff when needed.

Food at the school is good with pupils provided with a varied and balanced diet. The school has a five star award for its food. Pupils comments on food varied depending on the meal time. The dining rooms is pleasantly furnished, light and airy. The cutlery and trays in the dining rooms were found on occasions to be grubby and have food residue on them. The catering staff are provided with up-to-date information on pupils food allergies and intolerances. Boarders are able to make their own food in the boarding house kitchens. These facilities vary appropriately dependant on the age of pupils. Pupils are able to access drinking water and snacks outside of meal times. Boarders did say that there was not enough variety of fruit on offer.

Laundry provisions for boarders, including bedding and clothing are of good quality.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The school has an excellent anti bullying policy which includes definitions of bullying and strategies. Within the pre inspection questionnaire boarders stated that bullying is not an issue at the school. They said that it was the ethos of the school, which is a supportive community, that bullying is discouraged and that they were confident that staff would deal with bullying appropriately should it arise. The issue of bullying forms part of the PSHE programme. The school has a clear procedure in place for recording any incidents of bullying.

The school has an excellent policy and procedure on safeguarding young people. All staff and parents are provided with a copy of the safeguarding policy. All staff receive training on safeguarding which is regularly up dated. Ancillary staff cover safeguarding as part of their induction but they do not receive regular updates to this training despite an annual training programme being in place. Those interviewed were not clear on what actions in line with their roles and responsibilities they should take if they had any concerns. The director of boarding is the identified Safeguarding Designated Person. In her absence arrangements are clearly deputized. There are several points of registration throughout the school day which assist in keeping pupils safe. There is a clear missing pupil policy which provides staff with guidance on what actions they need to take should a pupil go missing.

Staff interviewed are unclear of the school whistle blowing policy. This potentially compromises safety as reporting internal concerns is not fully understood.

The school has clear policies and procedures on behaviour, discipline, sanctions and rewards. There is also comprehensive information within the boarding hand book and the handbooks for the pupils. The information for the pupils is extremely well presented. Pupils and staff said that whilst sanctions are felt to be fair, there can still be a lack of consistency between staff as to what is allowed and what is not. The school focuses on the reinforcement of positive behaviours rather than a punitive approach. The behaviour of the pupils during the inspection was excellent.

Boarders said that sanctions at the school are fair. There are clear records of sanction in the houses and there is a central record of all major punishments such as suspensions or exclusions. Head of house and head girls do not give sanctions.

The school has a robust complaints policy and procedure. A clear record is kept of all complaints made which provided a clear audit trail of the discussions and actions taken. A report on complaints is provided to the school Governors.

The school has head girls, who are appointed through a peer group election process. They have a purely representational function and provide a means of communication between the Headmistress and other senior staff and the day and boarder pupils. The system ensures that a minimum of one boarder is elected. Boarders interviewed were very positive about the girls in these roles.

The school has a robust policy and procedure on fire issues. There are comprehensive records of fire drills, including night time drills, equipment tests and checks. There is also a comprehensive fire risk assessment for the school site. Boarders did say that it can be difficult

to hear the fire alarm whilst in the shower at Sanderson House. The school was aware of this and is making the necessary adjustments.

The school has a robust risk assessment policy and procedure. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and up dated. This extends to the public use of the schools sports facilities.

Staff personnel records inspected contained the majority of the information required. However there were gaps on some of the domestic staff files where the school recruitment process had not been robustly applied. On boarding staff files there was a lack of evidence of interview notes. Personnel files on Gap students contain all the required information.

The school ensure that any adult living on the school site and not employed by the school has an enhanced CRB check and they have a written agreement with these adults.

The school has installed CCTV cameras at strategic points across the site. Security systems at the school are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure safe environment at all times. No unauthorised entry into a boarding house was reported to inspectors. Privacy arrangements are appropriate across all boarding houses.

The school has a robust system for protecting pupils from safety hazards with excellent health and safety processes. There is clear up to date COSHH (Substances Hazardous to Health) information of all the products used on site and the domestic staff demonstrated good knowledge of these.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of activities but some boarders said that they did not feel there was enough choice. The boarders' committee has been asked to get ideas from each of the houses for new activities so that the school can provide a wider range of activities. On-site recreational facilities for boarders to use are of an excellent standard. Boarders have access to the internet which has the appropriate safeguards in place.

There was ample evidence to conclude that the school excels in the area of pastoral support and guidance. This is at the heart of the school's philosophy and approach. Boarders' survey replies indicated they can approach staff for guidance or help with a personal problem. There is also a supportive personal tutor system, access to a counsellor and positive peer support. New boarders say the buddy system is very helpful and assisted them in settling in. The School has links with local psychiatric/psychological services, which can be accessed via the G.P if necessary. Each boarding house displayed contact information for various help lines on their notice boards.

The school accommodates pupils from a wide range of nationalities and cultural backgrounds and the integration for these pupils is excellent. Robust equal opportunities policies ensure boarders do not feel discriminated against and that their cultural and religious needs are well catered for within the school. All of the young people report positive, happy and sociable aspects of their boarding experience. Staff demonstrated expert knowledge in this area and the PSHE programme is an integral part of this commitment.

Boarders do not have any onerous demands placed on them. Staff are acutely aware of the need to monitor this and with their in depth knowledge of the pupils they care for, they are able to quickly identify any signs of stress or concern.

Boarders have a range and choice of safe recreational areas including indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Robust procedures ensure boarders have safe exclusive and well-supervised access separate from the public use of the same facilities. Boarders are provided with excellent private and organised studying facilities.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

There are various committees within the school where pupils are enabled and supported in putting their views forward. These range from the school council, to house meeting to environmental committees. Pupils felt that these forums were effective.

Pupils have various means of communicating with their parents. Pupils have access to pay phones, email, letters and the school is piloting the use of Skype contact in two houses. So far the feedback has been positive from boarders, parents (especially overseas parents) and staff. In their pre inspection responses parents said that they felt well informed by the school and that contact with their daughters was fairly easy.

The induction of new boarders is excellent. Boarder said that they found the written information provided by the school to be very useful. These booklets are developed with input from boarders and are very child- friendly and informative. The boarders said they enjoyed the bonding trips and activities that took place at the start of term. One of the most important things for them was the buddy system which involves them being linked with existing pupils.

The arrangements for boarders to have access to information about the external world and have access to local facilities appropriate to their age are commendable. It was evident that the school's management operates a well researched, supported and implemented scheme to ensure boarders are safe through a number of protective measures and yet have the freedom to access the community. The age appropriateness of the scheme was found to be excellent.

Feedback from boarders indicated that they were very happy with their relationships with staff. In the boarding houses a friendly atmosphere and excellent relationships between staff and boarders were observed. There was no evidence of favouritism

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is outstanding.

Every room provides for a suitable secure place for young people to keep personal possessions safe. Bedroom furniture includes lockable drawers and cupboards for valuables. Valuable items such as tickets and passports must also be handed in to be stored in the house safe.

The boarding accommodation is of an excellent standard. All boarding houses are very well furnished. The school has carried out a lot of research before purchasing furniture, lighting and the design of rooms. Prior to furnishing the new boarding house the school purchased various items and created mock rooms to see how they would look and work. The result is exceptional accommodation which has versatility, warmth and comfort. The standard of cleaning



within the houses is also exceptional. All areas of accommodation felt well cared for and maintained.

Toilet and washing facilities were seen to meet high standards and in the new boarding house, exceed the required standard. The nurses in the health centre do not have their own toilet facilities. Sports changing and showering facilities for boarding pupils are of sufficient size, clean and are well appointed.

The school has a shop which provided stationary and toiletries at competitive prices. Pupils can also have age appropriate access to the local shops.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The School has excellent information on their boarding principles and practice. Both parents and pupils said they found this information clear and informative. The school sends this information to parents and pupils every year. This ensures that pupils and parents are kept up-to-date with changes and developments. These documents do reflect the current boarding practice.

The school has clear leadership and a management structure. Those in the senior management team are very experienced and well qualified for their posts. The senior management team are very committed to the school, have a clear vision for the future and are very pro active in their development and practice. Staff, pupils and parents spoke very positively about the senior management team. The boarding staff at the school are also held in high regard by the pupils and parents. They too are very experienced and well qualified. The boarding houses are very well organised. It is evident that a great deal of thought has gone into this. Boarders, staff and parents feel that the boarding experience safeguards and promotes the welfare of boarders.

The school has a comprehensive crisis management policy. The health and safety committee review this annually. This includes actions to be taken if swine flu infects the school.

There is an excellent system for the monitoring of school records. Evidence of this monitoring is clear within the records where comments and actions are made. There is also a robust monitoring system implemented by the Governors.

There are sufficient numbers of staff on duty both day and night. Two members of staff are on duty in each house to sleep in every night. Boarders confirmed that they were able to contact staff at night if needed and always knew who was on duty. The boarding houses have clear rotas and there is an on call system in place. Supervision of pupils leaving the school site is in line with DfES guidance. Gap students are not left in sole supervision of pupils.

All staff members with boarding duties have accurate job descriptions which clearly explains their role and responsibilities. Staff receive annual appraisals which are linked to their training needs and programmes for the coming year. Staff said they are enabled and supported in accessing training. The Gap students have attended the Boarding Schools Association training. All of the catering staff at the school are NVQ level 3 qualified.

The school carries out extensive checks on any off site accommodation they maybe using. This includes risk assessments, checking instructor's qualifications and checking site insurance details.

Equality and diversity at the school is outstanding. The school is proactive and ensures overseas pupils are integrated into the school community. The issues of equal opportunities and anti discrimination are woven into the ethos of the school and all of its policies and procedures. The school values the individual and supports them in their culture, faith and individualism.

## **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 ancillary staff are provided with regular refresher training on safeguarding issues, including the whistle blowing policy and boarding handbooks are updated with any changes ( NMS 3)
- ensure consent forms guardians complete are clear so they are completed correctly and contain the information required (NMS 15)
- ensure nurses at the school do not secondary dispense prescribed medication (NMS 15)
- ensure that where pupils are assessed as able to administer their own medication ensure that a written risk assessment is completed (NMS 15)
- ensure there is consistency in obtaining consent for medical services from older pupils (NMS 15)
- ensure a record is kept which evidences the medication disposed of and there is an audit system for maintaining first aid boxes (NMS 15)
- ensure staff files contain all the information required under 38.4 (NMS 38)
- ensure the nurses in the health centre do not share the pupils' toilet and bathing facilities (NMS 44)