

Kingswood School

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Paul Clark
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Address	Kingswood School Lansdown Road BATH BA1 5RG
Telephone number	01225 734200
Email	
Registered person	Kingswood School Ltd
Head / Principal	
Nominated person	Mike Wilkinson
Date of last inspection	14 September 2009

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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

Kingswood School is an independent boarding and day co-educational school for pupils aged from three to 18 years. The school is run by a governing body and is a registered charity. The campus is situated in the Lansdown area of Bath and comprises of Kingswood School and Kingswood Preparatory School. There are seven boarding houses and an on-site medical centre, available 24 hours a day. The school offers full time, weekly and flexi-boarding.

Summary

This announced inspection, which looked at the key standards in all the Every Child Matters outcome areas, found that Kingswood School provides a high level of pastoral and social care for boarders. The quality of the premises and the available activities for boarders is of a high standard. The quality of care is well supported by a comprehensive range of clearly written policies and procedures. Boarders enjoy a warm, supportive living arrangement supported by a caring dedicated staff group.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The school has addressed all of the recommendations made at the previous inspection. The school now benefits from the upgrading of the furnishing and décor of the boarding houses through an internal development programme. Regular house meetings are now held where boarders can express their views about their care and the school has an independent listener. A written agreement is now in place for all adults who reside at the school and vetting enquiries are completed before gap year students work in the school. The complaints procedure contains the contact details of Ofsted. All staff have been trained in first aid, food hygiene, fire safety, and physical intervention and the school keeps a record of this training.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The school takes effective steps to ensure that the health of young people is promoted. There is a fully equipped health centre staffed by qualified nurses on call at all times. A local GP conducts two weekly surgeries. There is adequate provision for the overnight care of ailing boarders and adequate toilet and bathroom facilities for infectious patients. Parents complete a health history for each child and sign their agreement for the school to provide medical care and medication. All boarding housemasters and housemistresses are trained in first aid but no matrons have received this training. There are well stocked first aid boxes in each boarding house and in all key areas of the school and sporting areas. Specialist first aid equipment is always in place in the more remote sporting areas of the school. Ambulance services are always on hand during formal weekend sporting events.

Boarding house staff correctly store, administer and record the giving of prescribed and household medication. However, they have not received training in this. Older boarders may self administer.

Bed linen is changed fortnightly. The school has its own laundry service. Heads of house advise boarding staff about the need for a sympathetic and discreet approach when dealing with bedwetting and the changing of soiled linen. Older boarders have facilities available to do their own laundry should they chose to do so.

The school has an in-house catering service. The four week menu plan indicates that a varied and nutritious diet is provided. The school menu provides choice and the opportunity for young people to experience international cuisine. Special diets are individually catered for. Children commented that the standard of food provided was good and food sampled was of a high standard. Facilities are in place in each boarding house for the provision of evening snacks. Drinking water is not made readily available in the sleeping areas of the boarding houses.

A personal, health and social education programme includes advice and information on general and sexual health and staying safe for all pupils.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

All boarding houses and school buildings are protected by entry key codes. Day pupils may enter boarding houses, but not bedrooms, with staff permission. External areas of the school are monitored by CCTV. Older boarders may 'sleep-over' with the families of day pupils with written permission from parents and the host family. Some boarders feel unsafe in walking along the road leading to Fonthill House during the dark winter evenings. The school has requested permission from the local council to put lighting in this area. The school makes several of its resources available to the local community, clubs and societies. There is a formal risk assessment in place to advise staff and boarders on safety and conduct with respect to boarders having contact with members of the general public who use resources on the site.

The school employs maintenance staff to ensure that all parts of the building are safe and in good order. Risk assessments are in place for most high risk activities and areas of safety concern. However, the stairway in Westwood House has an open banister and a written risk assessment is not in place for this.

There are effective methods of ensuring fire safety. There are records of fire drills, alarm tests and equipment maintenance. Staff receive training in fire safety.

The school has a written child protection policy and there is online access to the Local Safeguarding Children Board's policy and procedure. All staff receive training in the area of child protection and this is appropriately updated. There is a designated child protection officer and deputy in both the senior and preparatory school to whom all staff will refer any disclosure of child abuse.

The school has a written policy on dealing with bullying which involves a 'zero tolerance' application. Very low concerns about bullying were evident from conversations with boarders and from their questionnaire survey returns. Shower and bathing changing facilities in the boarding houses have suitable arrangements which ensure that children have privacy when showering and changing.

There is a clearly written complaints policy which details the school's procedure. A record is kept of complaints received and the actions taken by the school. These appear to have been

appropriate. The guidance documentation given to boarders and parents on making a complaint advises them of their right to make representation directly to Ofsted.

The school has opted not to provide staff with training in particular methods of physical restraint. However, there is a written policy on the use of physical restraint and a method for recording any such incidents. Young people spoken to felt that disciplinary methods applied were fair and equitable. Prefects support staff in the care of younger pupils but do not have the power to administer discipline or sanctions.

The school maintains a central single record which details that all staff personnel and gap students recruitment and vetting enquiries have been carried out. However, the school does not keep complete files on each appointed individual member of staff which contains written evidence and/or original, or copy details of all of the items required by national minimum standards.

The school leases five minibuses which are maintained by the leasing company. The school conduct a weekly vehicle check on vehicle safety. All staff who drive the minibuses have to pass a test of competence and make a check on the safety of the vehicle they are driving. Their driving licences are seen by the school who check on the status of the licence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders have access to a wide range of activities, sport and leisure pursuits during evenings and weekends. There is a fully equipped weights room, swimming pool, hockey and tennis courts with astro-turf surfaces. Although some of the sporting facilities are some distance from the main school campus, staff are provided with mobile phones and appropriate first aid resources. All staff supervising sporting activities are trained in first aid and trained lifeguards oversee the pool. Younger pupils can only use the weights room under supervision. Older pupils have to undergo tests of competence in using the equipment and must not work out in the room alone.

Although the school has a strong ethos in sporting achievement, boarders do not feel pressurized into achieving above their capabilities and can enjoy competitive or individual sporting activity on their own terms.

The boarding houses all contain a wide range of educational and leisure facilities such as wide screen television and DVD, books, games, puzzles, pool tables and table football. Music and drama are high profile areas within the school in which boarders actively participate.

Each boarder's bedroom has study facilities. There are study areas in each boarding house where boarders can access the internet through suitably safeguarded sites. Each boarder has a school email address and can contact home via this facility. Each boarding house has phone booths which boarders can use and which are situated in a manner that provides privacy. Within each booth there are information posters which give the contact details of helping agencies.

School information documents advise boarders where they can access personal support. Personal tutors and house parents are available to boarders for first line support and the raising of concerns. The head of pastoral care was identified by boarders as another person they would

contact if they had any personal worries or concerns. All boarders spoken to felt that they would be able to discuss areas of personal concern with the school nurse in complete confidence.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Each boarding house has a boarder who is elected as the head of house who represents the views of the other boarders within that house and feeds them back to the house management group. There are regular house meetings where boarders can raise any concerns. There is a house representative at the weekly School Council meeting. This was seen to be an active forum within the school.

All boarders spoken to have a good relationship with boarding house staff and would readily go to them if they had concerns or needed help or advice. Most boarders have mobile phones on which they can communicate with their parents. Different rules of usage are in place for the various age of boarder but these rules appear appropriate.

The school's general information documentation provides young people with information about the boarding provision. Apart from individual house brochures there is no distinct brochure on boarding. Boarders of an appropriate age can visit Bath City on weekends subject to parental permission and the school's curfew requirements.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Boarders have a lockable facility within their rooms, or they have lockers where they may keep personal possessions. They may also leave monies or valuables with the house parents who will keep this under secure conditions and there is a suitable recording system in place for this.

Sleeping accommodation in each of the seven boarding house is provided in a variety of bedrooms; for example, single bedrooms with or without en suite facilities, double, three, four or more sharing bedrooms. There are an abundance of lounges, rest and study areas and kitchens and kitchenettes in all boarding houses. All are of a good standard of furnishing and décor. There are a sufficient number of showers, bathrooms and toilets in each boarding houses. However, the shower base in the ground floor bathroom of Middle House is detached from the wall and there is a danger of bacteria growth here. Boarders in Fonthill House complained that the walls between bedrooms were thin and this created disturbance and bad feelings between boarders. This was fed back to the management team.

The external areas around the boarding houses are all pleasantly maintained.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity in the school is good. This is evidenced by the freedom of access by both genders to the sporting, leisure and recreational facilities within the school and the social engagement of boys and girls in all aspects of school life. While Kingswood School fully embraces its commitment to being a Methodist faith school, the religious observance includes a multi-faith approach based on various religious and moral teachings; boarders spoken to felt that this was a strength of the school. The school offers multi-cultural cuisine and

welcomes boarders from numerous countries and religious faiths. The school has clearly written policies on disability, gender equality and racial equality.

The school has an array of general information documentation available to parents, pupils, and boarders which identifies key service leaders within the school and which clearly outline the school's principles, policies and procedures. The contact details of Ofsted are contained within this documentation.

Boarders are supervised by a dedicated and well trained staff group both within and outside of the school site. Each member of the boarding staff has a job description that outlines their duties, role and responsibility and they are subject to a two yearly personal development appraisal. There is a clear induction process in place for each member of staff.

The school policies and procedures are comprehensive and clearly written and these are frequently monitored and updated. There are risk assessments in place for all potentially hazardous activities undertaken in the school. A disaster recovery plan has been produced by the school.

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 that all staff who administer medication have received formal training and that this training is appropriately updated (NMS 15.12)
- ensure that risk assessments are in place for all parts of the building that have a risk potential (NMS 47)
- ensure that the personnel records for all staff contain evidence (original or copy) that all recruitment and vetting items included in the standards have been addressed (NMS 32.8)
- ensure that the defective shower tray in Middle House is attended to. (NMS 40)