

Liverpool College

Inspection report for Boarding School

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Inspector	Julia Toller
Type of inspection	Key

Setting address	Queen`s Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 8BG
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Telephone number

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Registered person

Liverpool College

Head/ Principal

Nominated person

Hans Van Mourik Broekman

Date of last inspection

N/A

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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

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

Boarding provision is for young people aged between 15 to 19 years. The school utilises part of the local university student residence accommodation which is adjacent to the school site. This has recently undergone major refurbishment providing boarders with homely accommodation that meets all national minimum standards. Its close proximity to school provides easy access for boarders travelling to and from school.

All accommodation is in single bedrooms, with sufficient toilets, bathrooms and showers to meet national minimum standards. There are two communal areas that have recreational facilities for young people to enjoy.

In addition, there are satisfactory security systems in place to protect the safety of boarders and staff, including close circuit television cameras.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an announced key inspection and formed part of an aligned inspection with the Independent Schools Inspectorate. The purpose of the visit was to monitor the provision of boarding in line with national minimum standards and to assess how their systems promote the welfare of boarders. All key standards were inspected. This is a good service overall.

Boarding has only been provided at this school since September 2010. The school has made good progress to the provision of boarding at the school, including the introduction of effective systems to monitor the health and welfare of boarders. There are some shortfalls with regard to medication training for staff, and the standard and choice of meals for boarders. However, these shortfalls are already acknowledged by staff and steps are being taken to address these.

Boarders do however benefit from positive relationships with staff, they are afforded a range of facilities and opportunities to encourage and support a healthy lifestyle, to develop their life skills and to reach good outcomes from education.

As part of the inspection the inspector spoke to all boarders, the boarding staff team and head of care. All young people completed a questionnaire which on the whole reflected positive opinions about the boarding provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

A 'suitability visit' was made to the school in April 2010 to assess the standard of boarding provision in line with national minimum standards. This inspection was used to monitor whether all issues identified at this visit have been met. There are no outstanding issues.

As this was the first inspection of boarding provision at the school, there are no previous recommendations to monitor at this inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Boarders experience a caring, and secure relationship with care staff that are committed and supportive. Boarders have a good understanding about matters relating to their health.

Boarders are made aware of how to keep themselves safe by providing them with information about issues such as substance misuse, sexual health and smoking. In addition, the head of boarding is working hard to develop links with the local community to enable 'guest speakers' to visit the boarders and discuss health related issues with them. This provides boarders with the necessary information to lead a healthy lifestyle and to keep themselves safe.

There are suitable safe storage facilities for medications and medication records are maintained appropriately. This helps to make sure that the health care needs of young people are met safely. However, staff are not yet trained in the safe administration of medicines.

Boarders are encouraged to have healthy and active lifestyles while attending the school. Medication is tightly managed to ensure that young people receive their prescribed medicines in accordance with their prescribing doctor's instructions. Medicines are securely kept and there is a complete audit trail of medicines into and out of the school.

Mealtimes are sociable occasions. Menus are planned with young people who are offered advice and guidance on how to follow a healthy lifestyle and eat a balanced nutritious diet. However, there have been issues with food such as a limited choice of foods and poor standard of meal. Staff continue to work with the catering manager to improve standards for boarders.

Boarders have access to snacks and fruit after school hours and can help themselves to these throughout the evening. There are also basic cooking facilities for boarders to prepare themselves hot meals if they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff respect boarders' privacy and confidentiality in a way that is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect young people. Young people can make and receive telephone calls in private and are given space and time to be alone when they wish. There is a written policy and a system for the recording of complaints. This shows the nature of complaints made, action taken to resolve the issue and an outcome.

All staff have received training in how to safeguard young people including recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to promote and safeguard young people's welfare. Boarders are clear about who to go to if they need help or assistance and safeguarding procedures are well displayed throughout the school and boarding provision.

Staff provide a good level of supervision for young people, based on their age and understanding, to make sure they are safe in the home and in the community. They give young people good advice about personal safety. Staff respond appropriately to any serious concerns about young people's safety and let parents know about serious events involving young people.

The school and boarding provision have clear policies and procedures about bullying. Boarders are provided with information about bullying. Bullying is not tolerated at the school; young people say that bullying does not take place. If it does happen, young people are clear about who they could go to within boarding and the school staff team for help and guidance. This helps to keep young people safe.

There are clear policies and procedures for young people and staff regarding behaviour management. Young people receive information about the standard of behaviour expected of them as a boarder at the school and the consequences they can expect if their behaviour is unacceptable. Boarders are clear about what is acceptable and unacceptable. They receive rewards when appropriate. Where their behaviour is unacceptable they receive sanctions such as not being allowed to attend outings or activities. Parents are kept fully informed of any behavioural issues that give the school cause for concern.

Staff reassure young people when they are upset and help them deal with their anxieties and frustrations in a positive way. Staff do not condone unacceptable behaviour and assist young people to learn to manage their behaviour and solve problems.

Staff have started to develop a range of effective risk assessments that identify risks pertinent to young people. A fire safety risk assessment is in place for the boarding accommodation, boarding staff are provided with ongoing fire safety training and there are systems in place for regular checks of the fire alarm system. This helps to ensure that the accommodation is a safe place for young people to live.

There are suitably robust recruitment procedures in place to safeguard young people and to protect them from abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Boarders are afforded good opportunities to enjoy a range of activities and attend clubs within the community. Boarding staff ensure that every student receives individualised support and care, with good recording systems that demonstrate the work carried out by boarding staff to safeguard young people and promote their welfare.

Boarders have the opportunity to make choices, form friendships and enhance independence to maximise their health and well-being. Boarding staff treat students with courtesy and respect. There is a good rapport between boarders and staff which enables boarders to develop their confidence.

Boarders speak highly of the support they receive from staff and that they are enjoying their time at boarding school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff recognise the importance of contact with family and friends and offer support as necessary. Young people say they use a variety of methods of communication to keep in touch with home including social network sites. Although there have been some issues with internet access these have now been resolved with systems in place to monitor the use of internet by young people to ensure their safety. This helps to safeguard young people.

There is good rapport between boarders and staff that is effective in maintaining good communication between boarders and staff. There are good written systems for consultation between boarders the staff and school. This helps to make sure that the opinions and views of boarders are heard and acted upon.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Staff prepare young people for adult life. They are encouraged to take more responsibility for themselves, suitable to their age and understanding. They routinely learn skills, such as shopping, cooking, using money and household tasks. They are also encouraged to develop their personal care and their organisational and social skills.

Students are able to personalise their bedrooms to increase their comfort and sustain their identity during their stays. Students are provided with sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs, to be able to socialise and to enable them to have private time.

The boarding provision has undergone a major refurbishment programme to produce accommodation that is warm and homely. Boarders have access to areas where they can socialise with each other and also have bedrooms that are large enough to include study space.

Security systems and closed circuit television cameras help to keep young people safe and reduce the risk of intruders.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. There is evidence to demonstrate that the individual needs of young people are identified, and assistance provided when necessary. This ensures that the individual needs of young people are met.

The school's Statement of Boarding Principles and practice are up to date and reflect the ethos of boarding provision. This means that young people and their parents are provided with appropriate information about the school and boarding provision.

Staff are not as yet receiving regular supervision. However, the school has only been operating for a limited period of time, and systems are in place to address this at the end of term. Staff team meetings are taking place regularly; staff also say that they meet regularly with the head of school. This helps to identify any issues within boarding and identify how they are to be addressed.

The boarding provision is being monitored by a member of the board of governors who has responsibility for the boarding provision. While monitoring by the head of school has not yet taken place, the boarding provision has been in operation for a limited period of time. Systems are in place to monitor this at the end of term. This helps to promote and monitor the welfare and safety of boarders.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Compliance with national minimum standards

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure that staff receive medication training (breach of NMS 15.7)
- ensure that meals are adequate in quantity, quality, and choice. (breach of NMS

24.1)