



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Queen`s College

**Queen`s College
Trull Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4QS**

Lead Inspector
Jon Swift

Announced Inspection
29th January 2007 09:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Boarding Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school Queen`s College

Address Queen`s College
Trull Road
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Email address lynn_dimery@queenscollege.org.uk

Provider Web address

**Name of Governing body,
Person or Authority
responsible for the
school**

Name of Head Mr C Alcock (Senior school) and Mr J Backhouse
(Junior School)

Name of Head of Care

**Age range of boarding
pupils** 9 to 18 years

**Date of last welfare
inspection** 22 October 2002

Brief Description of the School:

Queens College is one of nine schools owned by the Methodist church and administered by the Board of Management for Methodist Residential Schools. Queens College is a long established, co-educational Independent School. There is boarding provision organised into four boarding houses and one Junior house. All of the houses are on the college campus except for one of the Senior girl's houses, which is located a short walk away.

At the time of the inspection the senior school school roll was 554 of which 158 were boarders (80 male and 78 female boarders). The Junior school roll was 160 of which 19 were boarders (11 Male and 8 female boarders).

SUMMARY

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

This inspection took place alongside two teams of inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate who were present throughout our time at the College. The two inspectors from the Commission for Social Care Inspection were accompanied by a Boarding School Professional Inspector.

Representatives of the Board of Governors joined key staff for the feedback session of this inspection

The College continues to provide a warm and caring atmosphere for meeting the needs of the young people who are boarding. The houseparents provide a safe and secure living environment for the boarders.

The boarders were all very positive about their lives as boarders and the support they were receiving from boarding staff. All of the houses had a homely atmosphere and the relationships between boarders themselves, and staff and boarders were of a 'family' style.

What the school does well:

The college has continued to develop its practices in the boarding houses and now has a senior houseparent. The family style boarding arrangements are long standing and enable boarders to develop as young adults within a caring and safe environment.

A clear framework of fair rules and expectations further supports this for all boarders. These rules and expectations are fully understood and accepted by the boarders and fairly administered. The boarders in the sixth form who are trained and supported to undertake their prefectorial roles further support these arrangements.

The College has a proactive approach to anti bullying practices. Boarders reported minimal concerns with regard to bullying.

A team of qualified nurses and separate medical centre provides a good range of support to the boarders which was positively commented upon.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The College has addressed all of the items highlighted in the last inspection report. The programme of refurbishment of boarding houses has included two houses being completed and plans are in place for the remaining to be completed.

What they could do better:

Although there is a programme of refurbishment in place there is a need to monitor existing arrangements to ensure that they continue to provide an acceptable standard of furnishing and decoration.

The current written documentation produced for boarding purposes needs some minor amendments to ensure that all of the National Minimum Standards are met.

The recording of staff recruitment processes including the vetting requirements must meet the national Minimum Standards for all staff working at the College regardless of designation.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

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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)

The Commission considers Standards 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

6,7,15,16,17,24,25,48 & 49

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

A good range of provision is in place that is well understood by the boarders. However, some further developments are needed in the documentation that is required to support these arrangements.

EVIDENCE:

There is an effective and innovative PHSME programme operating with years 7 to 9. The programme co-coordinator plans to extend this to years 10,11 and sixth form; in a modular style that will support preparation for adulthood and its responsibilities.

There is an effective system in place that obtains and records the boarders' individual healthcare information. Access to this information is on a strict need to know basis. The medical team promote and maintain systems that protect confidentiality of personal information.

The College accepts that the medical consents that are currently obtained need to be extended to cover permission to give first aid.

Boarders have access to both male and female doctors and can be unaccompanied if that is the boarder's wish.

The medical centre takes responsibility for the administration of all prescribed medication for those under 16 years and, as appropriate, will continue to support those over 16 years.

All new boarders and their parents are supplied with a letter explaining boarding arrangements and expectations. The information in this letter covering medical consent and information should be amended to acknowledge the Fraser / Gillick competence requirements. This was acknowledged by the College.

There is appropriate provision for the care of ill boarders within the medical centre. It was confirmed that re-decoration of these areas is in the rolling maintenance plan.

The medical centre is a well used resource and highly regarded and trusted by the boarders.

The boarders' questionnaires confirmed an overall satisfaction with the catering but this aspect of the schools provision did attract considerable comment. These comments included a high degree of satisfaction with lunches but concern regarding weekend teas and packed meals provided for trips.

The school dining room is restricted in space. This is acknowledged by the College and a congestion report is being prepared to consider this matter.

Since the last inspection the availability of drinking water throughout the College has been improved and meets the needs of the young people.

All boarding houses receive daily provisions for snacks and facilities are available to make hot snacks.

The laundry arrangements within the College were confirmed as being good and sixth form boarders had access to laundry facilities.

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 appropriately responded to.(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 and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

The Commission considers Standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

2,3,4,5,13,26,37,38,39,41 and 47

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The boarders are being cared for in a safe and caring environment.

The recruitment process is not meeting the full National Minimum Standards for all staff employed.

EVIDENCE:

The boarders' questionnaires reported a very low incidence of bullying. Discussions with boarders revealed that isolated issues raised could be viewed as 'high jinx' or living as part of a group. This outcome is commended.

Both the senior and junior schools have designated staff as the child protection liaison person. There is a clear child protection policy and allied physical contact.

The 'inset training' prior to the start of this academic year included child protection and use of physical contact (restraint). This training was for academic staff and senior ancillary staff with an expectation that this information would be cascaded to their respective team members. The inspectors were unable to find documentary evidence of this cascading to each ancillary member of staff. The inspectors advised the College of the expectation that any person over 18 years of age, who is not a boarder, and lives in staff accommodation with boarder access should be CRB checked.

Boarders had a good knowledge of the rules and the consequences of not adhering to these. The overall views expressed to the inspectors were that these were fairly applied. This included those given by boarding house prefects. All house punishments are recorded and are regularly reviewed by a member of the senior staff.

Written guidance and training is provided to prefects to assist them in their supervision of younger pupils.

The senior school record of serious complaints had no entries. The junior school records were not inspected. The College have agreed to include the contact details of the inspecting body as per National Minimum Standard 5.4 in the information provided to parents and boarders.

Time and thought is put into the process of boarding house prefect selection. Both staff and boarders have input into these selections. All heads of boarding houses and prefects spoken with confirmed that they were well supported and supervised. Inspectors observed many examples of prefects' care and concern, and positive relationships with younger pupils.

The school have recently been inspected by the local Fire and Rescue service. Advice had been provided to the school which will be implemented. The houses are carrying out regular checks of fire equipment and drills take place. The college acknowledged that there are some inconsistencies in how these activities are recorded.

There is good practice in both schools with respect to the management of privacy.

A range of recently appointed staff's files was sampled. These demonstrated that there was some good practices taking place but this was not being consistently applied for all appointments. The Headmasters confirmed that the expectations of National Minimum Standard 38.2 would be applied to all appointments. It was also confirmed that in the case of joint appointments for houseparents, each houseparent would be treated as an individual in regard to the checks detailed above.

The taxi providers are reported to be checking all of their drivers' suitability for transporting young people.

The Headmasters recognised that staff provided by an employment agency should also have proof that appropriate checks had been made.

All boarding houses are accessed through a keypad system and these codes are changed periodically. Both schools operate a system for registering visitors to the school which was applied to the inspectors.

Boarders are protected from safety hazards through school systems that include the use of external agencies. Some windows were identified in the boarding houses at both schools as requiring risk assessments.

Portable appliance testing is taking place and a member of staff has been appropriately trained to undertake this task. The college acknowledges that new appliances are continually being brought into the colleges. The inspectors provide advice on how ancillary staff could contribute to these safety checks and maintain a safe environment.

Boarders were clear on out of bound areas and activities.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- 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)

The Commission considers Standards 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

14 and 18

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The college provides a wide range of people who can offer personal support to boarders.

The College actively promotes anti discrimination and equal opportunities throughout all aspects of the boarding provision.

EVIDENCE:

Boarders questionnaires showed a wide range of persons both being available and being used. Information provide to boarders is good and an independent person is available.

The arrangements in place support and promote equal opportunities. This aspect of the College's provision was not raised as an issue by any boarders or staff involved in boarding.

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 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)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

12 and 19

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The College has a range of means for securing boarders views; and ensuring parental contact facilities are available.

EVIDENCE:

Each boarding house has a regular meeting between house staff and boarders. The school council has boarding representation and meets monthly. The circulation of the notes from these meetings would benefit from clarification for the boarders.

Telephones are provided in all boarding houses. The privacy arrangements are good and helpful telephone numbers were displayed in most houses. There is also general access to an email provision and mobile telephones are widely used.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

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)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)

The Commission considers Standard 51 the key standard to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

40 and 51

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The boarding provision is generally satisfactory but there are significant variations in some aspects of this provision between boarding houses.

The National Minimum Standard 51 does not apply, as this school does not place boarders in lodgings.

EVIDENCE:

Since the last inspection a refurbishment programme of the boarding houses has commenced. Two senior houses have been refurbished. The improvements to the decoration and furnishings in these houses was reported as being much appreciated by the boarders.

It was confirmed that work on the Junior House will commence at Easter 2007, and the remaining senior boarding houses are include within the school's rolling planned major improvements plan.

It is recognised that the fabric, décor and furnishings in any boarding house incur considerable wear and tear. In light of this, the College does have an on-going maintenance programme. The inspectors highlighted that one boarding house requires attention through this programme.

Management

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 effectively managed.(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 adequately supervised 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 with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.(NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.(NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1,8,23,31,34 and 35

Quality in this outcome area is **good**. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The College has produced a comprehensive boarding handbook for staff involved in boarding. The contents are designed to ensure that staff are aware of the College's expectations. It was agreed with the Headmasters that some items would benefit from review.

There are arrangements for the support and development of staff but these appear to be more formalised for some staff groups compared with others.

EVIDENCE:

A parent's handbook is available that describes boarding arrangements but the boarding principles need to be developed in order to fully meet the National Minimum Standard.

A senior houseparent is in post and provides support to newly appointed staff. The post holder has also put considerable effort into standardising boarding house practice. A draft handbook for boarding parents and a guide for boarding prefects have resulted from this. This draft handbook for boarding parents supplements the existing college Boarding handbook. The inspectors consider that the documents produced by the senior houseparent should be adopted by all houses to further standardise boarding practices across houses.

As required, all of the required records are monitored by the Deputy Head who advises the Headmaster of any trends or issues requiring his attention.

In all houses boarders are adequately supervised and there are sufficient staff to achieve this. Boarders spoken with reported satisfaction with the staffing levels and the continuity these arrangements provided. There were clear signing in and out arrangements in boarding houses, and in each house the staff on duty was clearly displayed.

Boarding house staff and GAP students have job descriptions.

The new position of senior houseparent has yet to have a similar document.

The induction of Gap students is provided by the school and this includes their attendance at a relevant external training event. Boarding house parent's induction would benefit from standardisation that includes a record of this taking place.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

4 Standard Exceeded (Commendable) **3** Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
2 Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls) **1** Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
6	3
7	3
15	3
16	3
17	3
24	3
25	3
48	3
49	3

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	4
3	3
4	3
5	3
13	3
22	x
26	3
28	x
29	x
37	3
38	2
39	x
41	3
47	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	x
14	3
18	3
27	x
43	x
46	x

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3
19	3
21	x
30	x
36	x

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	x
40	2
42	x
44	x
45	x
50	x
51	N/A

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	3
9	X
10	X
23	3
31	3
32	X
33	X
34	3
35	3
52	X

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	BS3	All college staff, including newly appointed staff, receive appropriate training in child protection.	
2	BS38	The recruitment standards should be applied to all staff appointments	
3	BS40	Maintenance of all houses should be an ongoing process	

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