

Chase Academy International Study Centre

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michael Best
Social care inspector	Michelle Moss

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, and under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.^{1,2,3}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Chase Academy International Study Centre is an independent school with boarding provision. It opened in September 2000 and is located in Cannock. The principal is also the proprietor of the school. All of the students come from overseas, mainly from Hong Kong, although a few are from other countries such as China, Spain and Turkey. Nearly all speak English as an additional language.

International students are taught alongside Chase Academy day school students for much of their time. Chase Academy day school is a separate school that is also registered as an independent school; it was not inspected on this occasion. In the International Study Centre, students receive specialist individual and/or group tuition to improve their English skills. The school admits students between the ages of 10 and 19 years. No students have a statement of special educational needs. There are currently 100 students on roll, all but two of whom are boarders. The vast majority are aged 14 years and above.

The school's mission is to:

- provide a high quality, affordable, independent education in a supportive, congenial and family-based community
- educate in an international setting, so that students can better appreciate other cultures and their role in the global community
- offer pastoral care for each student that is encouraging, supportive and disciplined
- develop the academic and other talents of each student in order to educate the whole person
- enable school leavers to be confident, capable and compassionate people, with independent minds and a proper sense of personal responsibility.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000014_en_1

Context of the inspection

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2010 in an integrated inspection of the education and boarding provision. Following this inspection, the school submitted an action plan to address the regulations and national minimum standards that were not met. This was evaluated by Ofsted and the proposals were judged to be unsatisfactory.

An integrated progress monitoring visit by an education inspector and a social care inspector was announced for 6 December 2011. While the education inspection went ahead, the social care inspection had to be delayed and was undertaken by another social care inspector on 13 and 14 December 2011.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and now meets all the independent school regulations and national minimum standards for boarding schools. The school provides students with an increasingly safe and nurturing environment, in which students report feeling safe.

The inspection in June 2010 found that the school's child protection policy included incorrect information, and boarding students were not aware of either the identify or the role of the independent listener. As a result, students were not properly safeguarded at all times. Furthermore, there were insufficient staff available during evening study periods. The inspection found that while there was a written health and safety policy, it was not effectively implemented. Risk assessments for the premises and grounds were not robust enough and this meant that significant health and safety hazards had not been identified and rectified. Site security was inadequate. Electrical equipment was not adequately checked. The school drew up an action plan outlining its proposals to review and revise its procedures for health and safety and for safeguarding and supporting students.

This inspection found that the school now has adequate risk assessments and a clear written policies on keeping students safe. These make clear to everyone that students must be protected from abuse and other forms of harm. Policies also help to create a safe and positive environment for students by clearly setting out the school's duties of care, including working within inter-agency protocols. These are known by staff who take their duty to protect students very seriously. Students are now sufficiently aware of their rights to stay safe. This includes having contact details readily available for independent listeners and Childline. Importantly, students know they can contact these services without getting approval from the school. Regular contact with the independent visitor ensures that students are able to build up trust with someone they can approach if they have any concerns over their boarding experience. The school has revised staffing levels to provide students with sufficient access to support during evening study periods. Students confirm that they

are provided with adequate staff support and are equally confident that staff they know are always available if they need any help or guidance. This enables students to experience a consistent, stable and secure relationship with staff they trust and respect. The school has reviewed and improved its arrangements for the security of students, which are now adequate. The balance of keeping students safe, while not restricting their access to the local amenities surrounding the school, is appropriate. The school has established an electrical equipment register listing the periodic technical checks made on portable electrical appliances. This is enhanced by frequent visual checks. Staff training in this area has been thorough and students have clear guidance about their use of electrical appliances in their rooms.

This inspection also considered the progress made by the school in addressing two aspects of its work that did not result in a failure of the national minimum standards at the time of the last inspection. These involved a poor match of meals to the preferences of some students and students' limited access to the internet. Since then, the school has taken active steps to ensure that students are consulted when planning meals and students value this first-hand involvement. All students now have wireless (wi-fi) access to the internet to aid their studies and to enable them to sustain regular contact with families and friends.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary and secondary boarding school		
Date school opened	September 2000		
Age range of pupils	10-18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 55	Girls: 45	Total: 100
Number of boarders	Boys: 54	Girls: 44	Total: 98
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,324		
Annual fees (boarders)	£18,600–£21,600		
Address of school	Convent Close Cannock WS11 0UR		
Telephone number	01543 501800		
Email address	info@chaseacaemy.com		
Headteacher	Mark Else		
Proprietor	Mark Else		