

Skegness Grammar School

Welfare inspection report for a boarding school

Unique reference number for social care	SC060655
Unique reference number for education	120696
Inspection dates	21/05/2012 to 23/05/2012
Inspector	Elaine Cray

School address	Skegness Grammar School, Vernon Road, SKEGNESS, Lincolnshire, PE25 2QS
Telephone number	01754 610000
Email	
Headteacher	Mr David Ward

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{1,2}

Information about the school

Skegness Grammar School is a co-educational, selective, foundation day and boarding school based in the town of Skegness. The school caters for boys and girls aged 11 – 18 years and there are currently 675 pupils on roll. 44 pupils are boarders. The boarding community caters for boarders from different cultures and ethnicities. The boarding house is located on the edge of the market town of Wainfleet. The boarding provision was last inspected in March 2011.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	satisfactory
Outcomes for boarders	satisfactory
Quality of boarding provision and care	satisfactory
Boarders' safety	inadequate
Leadership and management of boarding	satisfactory

Overall effectiveness

The key findings of the boarding inspection are as follows.

- The overall effectiveness of the boarding provision is satisfactory. There is an inadequate judgement for boarders' safety, due to inconsistent recording in recruitment and safety check documentation.
- The boarding provision is significantly improved since the last inspection. The extensive list of recommendations is fully addressed, with one exception. While recruitment procedures are extensively developed, but the final confirmation of reference checks has not been consistently implemented. Robust action has been taken by the leaders of school. This action ensures this shortfall has no direct negative impact on the boarders' safety.
- The extensive improvements made since the last inspection include refurbishment of the boarding house, improved recruitment procedures, increases in staffing and developments in staff training.
- Boarders enjoy the boarding environment. They grow in self esteem and personal development because they enjoy spending additional time with personal tutors and benefit from support with education.
- Boarders live in a multi-national and inclusive boarding community. Boarders develop due to the positive respect and celebration of individuality, cultural cohesion and commitment to meaningful integration. Boarders are encouraged to learn about the diverse cultures and nationalities which make up the boarding community.
- The boarding provision is a welcoming and nurturing environment. Boarders develop meaningful relationships, extend their achievements and feel safe and

secure.

- Boarders' welfare is promoted because boarding staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding. They are well trained in child protection and are mindful that boarders are supervised appropriately so that they feel safe. Bullying is dealt with effectively and boarders have a good level of respect and tolerance for each other.
- There are excellent arrangements for health care with sound procedures in place for the administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication. Boarders find the school nurse easily accessible and easy to talk to. Boarders and staff are extremely positive about the improvements in the medical and health service available at the boarding house.
- The leadership team demonstrates a firm commitment to establish effective systems and monitoring processes to manage the boarding provision. This strategic approach to drive forward improvement acknowledges the need for further robustness in terms of accountable record keeping.
- Some shortfalls against the national minimum standards are identified; for example, recruitment and safety records and further staff development. These matters do not have a direct negative impact on the boarders using the provision.

Outcomes for boarders

Outcomes for boarders are satisfactory. Boarders grow in self-esteem and confidence as the boarding experience enhances their educational, personal and social development. They grow in maturity, develop skills and broaden their social awareness to prepare them for transition to adult life or the next stage for education. Boarders have a clear sense of identity and belonging because their individuality and cultural backgrounds are respected and celebrated. They have positive relationships with each other; often choosing to share bedrooms. They do activities in groups and look out for the new and younger boarders.

Boarders enjoy their experience in the boarding community and value the improvements that have been made over the recent months. They feel more empowered as individuals as they are given vehicles to represent their views. This is achieved through several boarders' committees, talking to their personal tutors and having a suggestion box.

Boarders say they are safe and their behaviour is generally positive. They understand the rules and say there are fair consequences when behaviour is not so good. The ongoing process of consultation and sense of empowerment is evidenced by recent steps to discuss sanctions. Boarders have the opportunity to have their views represented in terms of possible consequences of poor behaviour. Boarders have a sense of investment in their relationships with staff and each other. Their behaviour is positively managed through a community approach with shared responsibility.

Boarders feel more secure and in touch with their friends and families, due to improvement in computer technology and internet connection. Boarders benefit from the effective and proactive approach to their health and medical needs. There are good outcomes for boarders' physical and emotional health, because they have easy access to the health services in the boarding house and the local community. They can drop in to see the school nurse at the medical centre and the nurse regularly pops into the boarding house for a chat. Boarders can access the health service in a discreet, informal and confidential way.

Boarders enjoy their boarding time, they say they are more confident, less shy, and develop a good sense of responsibility. They develop trusting relationships, use free time positively, learn new skills and try new experiences.

Quality of boarding provision and care

The quality of boarding provision and care is satisfactory. Boarders develop in confidence and skills. Boarding staff are committed to meeting and promoting the boarders' development. They closely monitor the boarders' education, health and welfare. Boarders enjoy and extend their academic and social opportunities with a range of after-school activities and weekend leisure pursuits.

Boarding staff have a good knowledge of the boarders' individual needs. The boarders' induction process includes obtaining basic information from parents. Recently completed boarders' surveys have asked about their likes, dislikes, the support they would like and what is important to them. This consultation has resulted in greater boarder participation in catering arrangements and selecting activities.

Staff take time to talk to boarders and check on their welfare. All boarders have a health care plan. Some have specific written medical protocols and welfare plans. However the boarders do not have care plans. Leaders and staff are committed to developing this area as a part of the framework for care. A new care plan format has been drawn up and is in the process of being implemented for each boarder.

Boarders are supported by staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of the international profile of the boarding community. Boarders' self-esteem and confidence develops because there is respect for their individuality, cultural cohesion and multi-cultural integration. Arrangements to promote privacy for male and female boarders are in place. The routines and preferences of different age groups are also addressed in terms of bedroom allocation, watching television programmes and activities.

Boarders live in a well-maintained boarding house. Bedrooms are well furnished, including secure storage for personal possessions. There are mortice-type locks on some bedroom, bathroom and lounge doors. These devices are reported to only be

used to provide security when boarders are away from the boarding house during school holidays. However, these types of locks may present a level of risk, as individuals can be locked in without independent means of escape. Boarders are able to personalise their own space. There is a good selection of communal areas, including a large television room, smaller lounges, a music room and a large activities lounge. Boarders can also enjoy recreational pursuits in the garden where they can also sit, relax and enjoy barbeques.

Relationships between boarders and the new staff are developing well. Staff place good emphasis on providing time and support to boarders. Leaders identify the importance of relationships between staff and boarders as key to the developments of the boarding community. While there are key administrative tasks to develop; leaders have given a clear commitment to staffing levels, in order for time to be spent with boarders. Recent developments include a personal tutor process which provides one-to-one discussion time for each boarder with a selected member of the boarding staff.

There is an emerging theme of empowering boarders to contribute and feel fully included in the running of the boarding house. Consultation with boarders is supported with a variety of committees. The leaders' boarding committee invites boarding representatives to meetings. Boarders have also been involved in recruitment of boarding staff.

There are excellent arrangements in place to meet and promote the medical and health care needs of the boarders. This part of the framework of care for boarders is a pocket of excellence. Facilities are of a high standard. Systems and monitoring processes are effective and robust. The nurse and boarding staff maintain effective and meaningful processes for communication about boarders' needs. There is a high respect for the privacy and confidentiality of boarders and they fully value and positively engage the healthcare services available.

Boarders receive good quality and quantity of food. Catering staff have an in-depth understanding of the boarders' needs and preferences. Menus reach across a broad multi-cultural range and special dietary needs. There is a choice of two meals at the evening meal and a salad bar. The food committee canvasses the views of boarders and this is now attended by the boarding house cook. The process for boarders to select their choices is set over a four week period. This process does not realistically impact on choices boarders are able to make, in terms of what they would like to eat on a day-to-day basis.

Boarders' safety

The safety of boarders is inadequate. While the infrastructure for promoting the safety of boarders is supported with clear procedures and safeguarding training for staff, recording is inconsistent. For example, the boarding house presents as well maintained and in a good state of repair. However, health and safety procedures are

poorly monitored. Safety checks are not supported with consistent and accountable records.

Fire safety is practically managed and boarders and staff know what to do should there be a fire. However, staff practice is not supported with up-to-date and thorough fire safety training.

Systems and procedures for the recruitment of staff have been updated and significantly improved. However, reference checks and telephone confirmation are not consistently implemented and recorded. New leaders have ensured that staff files have been audited and new and robust recruitment procedures documented. Deficits in records were rectified on this inspection, with robust action taken by the senior leaders in school in order to safeguard boarders.

Boarders say they feel safe. They value relationships with staff, including the school nurse, the independent visitor and the buddy system where they have an identified senior student for support.

There are clear anti-bullying procedures, good information available to boarders and practical strategies such as a confidential 'bullying box' where boarders may discreetly post concerns. Bullying is not a concern for boarders. They say that they are safe and reassured by the information and procedures available.

Safeguarding procedures are given a clear profile in the boarding community. All staff are trained in safeguarding. They show good awareness of reporting procedures, should they have concerns. Senior students have also received safeguarding training. Boarders' safety is facilitated and supported with leaflets and posters informing them of who they should contact should they have concerns.

There are clear procedures for managing behaviour. Behaviour is generally positive because there is a clear focus on promoting positive and respectful relationships amongst boarders and staff. Expectations for behaviour are made clear to boarders, sanctions are recorded in the boarding house and there is a clear line for reporting more serious incidents to leaders in the school. Effective management of behaviour is demonstrated by the exemplary behaviour observed on this inspection and low levels of incidents and sanctions recorded in the boarding house.

Leadership and management of boarding

The leadership and management of the boarding provision are satisfactory. Strong leadership is emerging and becoming established with new recording processes and more robust monitoring strategies. Boarders acknowledge and value the improvements in the fabric of the house and increased staffing levels. Staff performance is enhanced with clearer procedures and recording processes.

There is a clear set of boarding aims and principles. Leaders and the governors

demonstrate a strong commitment to boarding, not least with the considerable investment in the fabric of the boarding house and staffing arrangements. This commitment to raising and improving the profile of boarding at the school is evidenced by the current plans to build an additional boarding house.

Changes and developments in staffing demonstrate an effective focus on improving leadership, administrative expertise and quality of care for the boarding community. The headteacher for the school is outward looking and forward thinking. Leaders are clearly committed to establishing and maintaining effective liaison with agencies. There is now an effective process to promote and monitor recruitment, boarding services and health and safety procedures.

The numbers of boarding staff have increased. Boarders receive a good level of support and can summon assistance when required. There two sets of house parents living in, additional boarding staff, including a resident tutor and day tutors who support boarders with prep, after-school and weekend activities.

Staffing levels and arrangements support the running of the boarding house effectively. Some staff have been recently recruited to the boarding team, with a new head of boarding. The staff team project an enthusiastic commitment to working as a team. They have developed communication and recording systems to provide an emerging and meaningful framework for care.

The promotion of equality and diversity is soundly embedded in running of the school and boarding provision. There is a culture of understanding, identification and celebration of difference. The boarding house is managed to respond to the individual, group and multi-cultural and gender needs of the boarding community.

Staff are supported with training and appraisal of their performance. They are highly motivated to access training. They are keen to promote their professional development and continue to improve how they meet the needs of the boarders. The changes in recruitment and systems are reinforced with an induction package for the new staff. This updated training has not been extended to the more experienced staff in post before the recent changes.

Despite some shortfalls as identified, leaders and administrative staff show an excellent approach to driving improvement by providing new frameworks, clear systems and robust monitoring processes. These new systems are yet to fully embed in the organisation of the school.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools.

- The school has regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State, 'Health and Safety: Department for Education Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies⁵' (as referenced in 'Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 6.2)
- The school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as referenced in 'Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards') and any requirements set out in regulations relating to school premises. (NMS 7.1)
- Schools operate safe recruitment procedures and vet staff in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance (as referenced in 'Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards') issued by the Secretary of State. (NMS 14.1)
- Senior boarding staff have an adequate level of experience and/or training. (NMS 13.2)

What should the school do to improve further?

- Extend and further implement care plans for boarders.
- Review and risk-assess the use of mortice-type locks in the boarding house.
- Review the four-weekly process for boarders to select their choices for the evening meal at the boarding house.
- Extend the new induction training package to all staff working in the boarding house.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21/05/2012

To all the boarders at Skegness grammar School

Inspection of Skegness Grammar School

The boarding provision at Skegness Grammar School has been judged to be satisfactory overall.

Outcomes for boarders, quality of boarding and leadership and management are individually judged as satisfactory. Some recording systems in staff recruitment and safety checks are poor and safeguarding is therefore judged as inadequate.

You told Ofsted the boarding provision has gone through several changes and you are pleased with the improvements that have been made.

Some of the key strengths you identified are the improved range of activities and improvement in computer technology. You are very pleased with the efforts to make the house more homely and comfortable. You appreciate the increase in staffing and your developing relationships with staff. You greatly value the school nurse and the new medical centre and services at the boarding house.

The school has been asked to improve record keeping in recruitment, health and safety and to complete care plans for boarders. We have also asked that all staff receive induction training as there have been considerable changes and improvements in the running of the boarding house. Staff are also asked to update their fire safety training. We have asked that staff review the safety of locks in the boarding house. We have also asked the process for boarders choosing meals is changed; as four weeks seems to be long time.

Ofsted acknowledges the hard work invested in improving the boarding house. We identify a clear drive for further improvement and for this to include the involvement of boarders.

Yours sincerely,

Elaine Cray

