

CATS College London

Welfare progress monitoring inspection report for a boarding school

DfE registration number	202/6000
Unique reference number for social care	SC425344
Unique reference number for education	137333
Inspection dates	20/11/2012 to 22/11/2012
Inspector	Angela Hunt

School address	Cats College, 43-45 Bloomsbury Square, LONDON, WC1A 2RA
Telephone number	02078 411580
Email	mlove@catslondon.com
Headteacher	Mr Mark Love

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}

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

CATS College London is an international college run by Cambridge Education Group Limited, which is based in Bloomsbury, Central London. There are other sites in Cambridge and Canterbury. The college provides boarding and education for children and young people from the ages of 15 – 24 years. It specialises in pre-university education at IGCSE and A level. The boarding accommodation for the school is based in North London, Islington. The boarding accommodation can accommodate up to 209 residential students at anyone time.

Context of the inspection

The last welfare inspection was conducted from 6 March 2012 to 8 March 2012. This is the first progress monitoring visit to the school to follow up progress since the action plan, which was evaluated on 14 March 2012 and identified that, although broadly satisfactory, it needed some improvement.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The previous inspection identified a number of weaknesses and the college's welfare provision was judged inadequate in a number of key judgements. Following this, the college's action plan was evaluated on 14 March 2012 and assessed as broadly satisfactory. The purpose of this visit was to assess the amount of progress the college had made with implementing its approved action plan. Although the progress the college has made is sufficient and some unmet national minimum standards are now met, there are some national minimum standards that are not fully met and require further action.

There are currently 176 students residing in the college's boarding accommodation. Following the previous inspection, the arrangements for staffing the college's

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

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

residential provision has been subject to re-evaluation and re-organisation. As part of this: additional staff have been recruited; new job descriptions have been initiated; staffing levels have been increased to support students within the boarding accommodation and to chaperone students to and from the school; a senior tutor group has been established; a staff training plan has been developed and staff shift patterns have changed. A detailed induction programme for pastoral care staff, which includes staff having knowledge of and undertaking to implement the college's missing person policy, is now in place. Daily handovers between shifts, the college's electronic recording systems and the introduction of a team of senior tutors provide a useful link between academic and pastoral care staff. Students say that the care staff teams working in the boarding accommodation are easily approachable and that they are very kind, caring and fully supportive of their needs. Students are extremely complimentary about the senior tutor system recently introduced and say that they are highly effective in ensuring their well-being. The encouraging changes made to staffing results in an integrated approach to care which helps to promote positive outcomes for the students. The support provided by care staff and senior tutors helps students to develop their personal growth towards maturity.

Some good work has been undertaken to improve students' safety by conducting relevant risk assessments and suitable health and safety checks. The college's safeguarding policy has also been updated to include details of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Local Authority Designated Officer, in the area where the accommodation is situated. Students have a range of opportunities to contribute their views to the operation of boarding provision. The recent implementation of regular boarding house council meetings and the introduction of an independent listener provide additional means for students to express their views and raise any concerns they may have. The laundry provision has been increased through the introduction of an external laundry provider who provides a weekly collection and delivery service. Students say that they are appreciative of this additional resource and of the benefits this brings to them.

The original national minimum standards not met include: operating safe recruitment procedures and vetting staff in line with the regulatory requirements and relevant guidance; ensuring appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of students; monitoring and taking action as appropriate in regard to the required records contained in the relevant appendices to the national minimum standards. While the college has taken appropriate action to improve the supervision arrangements of boarders, better supervision of compulsory school age students during the college day at the teaching location at break and lunchtimes is needed.

Checks, such as references, are still not consistently undertaken prior to any person being employed by the college. In addition, there was a lack of clarity among the leadership of boarding as to the role and responsibilities commensurate to the role of designated child protection officer. While significant improvements to staffing have been made, the college's system of monitoring and maintaining an overview of boarding is, however, not sufficiently robust. For example, information about

students' known allergies or health care needs students had not been shared with boarding house staff. In addition, there has not been a proactive approach taken within boarding to ensure that relevant data about health sought at the point of admission has been obtained, and that a record of this is kept in the boarding house to make certain students' health requirements are well met. This results in the health care arrangements in the residential provision not being sufficiently robust in promoting the well-being of all students. Not all the required records in line with the relevant appendices of the national minimum standards were available or sufficiently monitored to identify the possible need for review or change in relevant welfare practice. For example, the systems for and management of medical welfare in the boarding accommodation are not adequate and accident records were unable to be located.

National minimum standards

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

- The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 11)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 (Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards) are maintained and monitored by the school and action taken as appropriate. (NMS 13.3)
- 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)