

# Bishopstrow College

Bishopstrow Road, Bishopstrow, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 9HU

## Inspection dates

30 September – 2 October 2015

## Overall effectiveness

**Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding provision	Good
Quality of care and support in the boarding provision	Good
How well children and young people are protected in the boarding provision	Good
Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the boarding provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The college has made significant progress in all areas of its work since the last inspection.
- The Principal, who is new in post, is ambitious for the college. She leads a committed and hard-working staff team who share her vision for continued improvement. Both the quality of teaching and students' outcomes have improved since the previous inspection.
- Good teaching successfully engages students, who arrive at the college with little English. They settle quickly and make good progress from their different starting points.
- The directors have worked tirelessly to improve the education and boarding provision. They have ensured that all the independent school standards are met in full.
- The college has developed and implemented effective systems for regularly checking students' learning and progress. As a result, teachers plan work which enables students to achieve well and make good progress.
- Relationships between staff and students are strong. This ensures students feel safe and secure when away from their home. The college meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.
- All staff have a deep understanding of their responsibility in keeping students safe. They act immediately to follow up concerns to ensure students are safe and well cared for.
- The college provides a calm and nurturing environment. Staff deliver strong academic and pastoral support to enable each student to achieve well.
- Students are polite and courteous. They behave well and show respect to each other and to all adults.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. On occasion, tasks lack sufficient challenge to ensure all students make good progress.
- Students are not able to improve their work equally well because not all teachers follow the agreed systems for providing feedback.
- Students do not always have sufficient furniture and storage space in the boarding provision.
- Targets in action plans lack precise and measurable objectives to enable leaders to frequently check and evaluate the college's performance.
- Some leaders, including those new to their roles, do not yet have the skills to check students' learning and progress in their specialist subjects.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements and national minimum standards for boarding schools**

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards'), the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring:
  - teachers provide a high level of challenge in all lessons so that students make the best possible progress
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of what students can achieve in their learning
  - all students are able to improve their work by following the college's agreed systems for providing feedback.
  
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring:
  - plans to improve the college's education and boarding provision set out precise and measurable targets so that leaders and directors can regularly check and evaluate the impact of their actions
  - all teachers have the training and skills to enable them to check the learning and progress of students in their specialist subjects
  - students have sufficient furniture and storage to meet their needs in the boarding provision.

## Inspection judgements

**Effectiveness of leadership and management** is good

**Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers in the boarding provision** is good

**How well children and young people are protected in the boarding provision** is good

- Leaders are ambitious for Bishopstrow College. Senior leaders and directors have driven improvement at a fast rate since the previous inspection. As a result, the college is now set to move forward. Its capacity for continued improvement is strong.
- Staff work together effectively and provide good support to each other. They offer strong academic and pastoral support for the students. This promotes a culture where students are nurtured so they make good progress in their academic and personal achievement.
- Leaders and all staff are uncompromising in their work to ensure safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively. The safeguarding policy is openly available on the college website and meets statutory requirements. Recruitment practice is robust. Directors work closely with the college and are on site during the school term. All concerns are followed up assiduously. Staff receive appropriate and regular training to enable them to undertake their roles effectively. Staff quickly build positive relationships with students when they arrive at the college from overseas. This helps students to settle quickly and feel safe and secure.
- The Director of Studies has implemented rigorous systems to check and analyse information about students' academic and personal achievement. Teachers use this to swiftly identify gaps in learning and understanding. Leaders then implement effective personalised support to help students catch up quickly. Detailed information is given to parents each term. Staff engage with parents regularly to ensure students are supported and feel safe. Any concerns are handled with care and sensitivity. The college has received no formal complaints.
- The directors and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the college's strengths and those aspects that still need to improve. They provide helpful feedback to staff to identify the strengths in their practice and give them support to improve. Leaders tackle any underperformance and recognise good teaching at the college.
- Senior management carefully plan the curriculum to ensure students experience a broad range of subjects. The 'Bishopstrow College curriculum' successfully supports students who have come to the college to learn English and gain entry to an English boarding school.
- The college places a high priority on developing students' personal, social and health education. Students learn to be part of the 'Bishopstrow College team' and to be 'polite', 'hard working' and 'kind'. As a result, students show great respect to their peers and all adults. They learn to develop respect, tolerance and an understanding of other cultures and religions. The college successfully fosters good relations and tackles discrimination positively.
- The college promotes high-quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Students are welcomed into the local village and attend the Harvest Festival service and Remembrance Sunday ceremonies in the neighbouring church. A recent visit from the local Member of Parliament, together with learning about British history, enables students to learn about life in modern, democratic Britain.
- Students usually spend a maximum of four terms at the college. Nonetheless, leaders take great care to ensure students are well prepared for their next stage of education. Students are immersed in English from the moment of arrival. Leaders prepare them for forthcoming interviews at their chosen schools. They also ensure that students sit externally accredited examinations and follow internationally recognised courses. This supports students in successfully gaining entry to their next school of choice. The personalised nature of this support ensures all students have an equal chance to succeed at this college.
- The directors and Principal ensure the premises are maintained at a high standard. The college provides a welcoming learning and boarding environment.
- The head of boarding leads an enthusiastic team delivering the principles and practice of the boarding provision as detailed in the mission statement. There are effective links between boarding and academic staff to provide consistency and stability to students.

- The roles of prefects and junior captains provide opportunities for young leadership. Students in these roles manage responsibilities, develop confidence and promote students' views and opinions.
- All teachers are leaders in this small college. However, some teachers have not fully developed the skills and experience to thoroughly check students' learning and progress in their specialist subjects. Students' progress is not as rapid where this is the case.
- Senior management have drawn up detailed action plans, focusing on improving outcomes for students in the education and boarding provision. However, these plans lack precise and measurable targets, making it harder for leaders to check how successful they have been.
- The college meets all the independent school standards and the national minimum standards for boarding.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The directors are determined to continue to improve the education and boarding provision at Bishopstrow College. This was evident in their well-planned and rigorous approach to appointing the new Principal. The directors have secured planning permission to build a new boarding house on site to further enhance this provision.
  - The directors work closely with the Principal and leaders to check the performance of the college and the welfare, health and safety of the students. They check that all concerns are followed up immediately. As a result, students like attending the college and feel safe and secure.
  - The directors are well informed and know where teaching is strong and where the college's leaders need to provide additional professional support. They implement effective systems to check the performance of staff. The directors work closely with leaders to ensure students benefit from a high-quality education.
  - The directors manage financial resources efficiently. Consequently, the premises are of high quality.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. As a result, students make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Students are entirely positive about their teachers and the teaching they receive. Work in books and records of teaching confirm that students achieve well.
- Teachers thoroughly check students' knowledge, skills and understanding in English and mathematics when they arrive from overseas. Teachers use the information they collect to plan lessons which focus appropriately on developing students' use of spoken and written English across the curriculum. All staff have high expectations of students' use of English. As a result, students make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers plan lessons to take account of the wide range of students' needs and starting points. As a result students settle and experience success in their learning quickly. Detailed assessment of learning ensures teachers continually adapt their planning to suit students' changing needs. Consequently, students make good progress, including the most able and those needing support to catch up.
- Teachers encourage students to read regularly. The well-resourced library supports good progress in reading. Students read confidently. They discuss their favourite authors and clearly enjoy the challenging class texts available to them.
- Teachers use the impressive information and communication technology well to support learning across the curriculum. The high quality of the visual images and presentation of information engage and interest students. This supports their acquisition of English skills and also enables them to achieve well across the range of subjects.
- Teachers plan opportunities to develop students' English and mathematics in subjects across the curriculum. Younger students, new to the college, were seen confidently ordering numbers and practising writing sentences when learning about ancient Egypt. Over time, students learn to write effectively and at length, such as that seen in their well-crafted writing when examining 'Traditions, cultures and identity'.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to check students' understanding and move learning on just when they are ready. However, on occasion, teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are not high enough. When this occurs, the level of challenge offered is insufficient, and some students do not make the progress they are capable of.
- The college has developed a detailed approach to providing feedback to students. One student stated, 'I read the teachers' comments and try not to make the same mistake again'. However, leaders recognise

this approach is not yet being consistently implemented across the college. Consequently, students are not always sure how to improve their work.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is good. All staff are committed to ensuring every student receives high-quality care and support. Students build very positive relationships with the academic and boarding staff and with each other. They settle quickly and become role models for new students who join the college throughout the year. As a result, this is a harmonious community where students feel valued and cared for.
- In lessons, students are keen to learn. They are eager to join in discussions and respond with confidence to teachers' instructions and support. They apply themselves to their tasks and are keen to succeed. The positive culture of praise and rewards supports students in developing self-confidence and good attitudes to learning.
- All staff are vigilant in identifying any possible signs of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. They act swiftly and appropriately if they have even the slightest concern. As a result of good teaching and pastoral support, students are knowledgeable about all forms of bullying. They have a good understanding of e-safety and how to identify potential risks. Students told inspectors that they feel safe and they are aware of the systems in place such as registration, fire safety, site security and internet restrictions.
- Students have a range of adults who they can talk to about any concerns. Independent listeners and national helplines are available in addition to leaders, and academic and boarding staff. The staff ensure colourful information posters are displayed in several languages for students if needed.
- Collaborative working between academic and boarding staff leads to prompt identification of additional support needs. Welfare plans identify actions and who is responsible for them. Students engage with their welfare plans and reviews of progress in order that they quickly overcome any difficulties and no longer need them.
- The health and safety of students are given high priority. Students know what to do on hearing the fire alarm. They have experienced evacuation drills early in the morning and late into the evening. A thorough approach to risk assessment ensures that students are in a safe environment when they are learning, doing sports and activities, and when residing in the boarding accommodation. The premises are subject to regular scrutiny by external consultants, for example, with regard to fire risks.
- Staff attend a wide range of training. They keep up to date with all current legislation including their responsibility for protecting children from risks of radicalisation. As a result, they are very knowledgeable about keeping students safe and free from harm.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good. They are polite and courteous to all adults and to each other. Staff treat the students with respect, dignity and understanding. Students greet visitors respectfully. They understand the importance of good manners and behaving appropriately.
- Students take pride in achieving 'stars' for good work and behaviour. The college's house system is well established. This helps students belong and feel part of a team. In the Friday celebration assembly which took place during the inspection, students took huge pride from winning 'student of the week' on behalf of their house. This warm and supportive culture ensures students are keen to come to school. Lessons start promptly and attendance is good. Exclusions are extremely rare.
- Students walk around the college calmly. They enjoy taking the opportunity between lessons to chat to their new friends. Strong friendships are built quickly. This supports their well-being when away from home for long periods.
- Break and lunchtimes are sociable occasions. Students behave well and enjoy nutritious and delicious meals which they greatly appreciate.
- Students behave well in lessons. This is because they want to learn and teachers plan work which interests them. However, where the level of challenge dips, students' attitudes to learning are less strong.
- Activities in boarding time are structured sufficiently to provide a good routine and help develop students' social skills. Students respond well to the boundaries that are set for them outside of the classroom, managing their personal behaviour as they adjust to being away from home and in a boarding

environment.

- Staff ensure students are motivated to keep their dormitories tidy by awarding 'stars and stripes'. Incidents of disruptive behaviour are minimal. Encouragement and support is provided by boarding staff to ensure students adhere to the expectations of the college. The comprehensive student handbook provides clear guidelines on the standard of behaviour required.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- Students achieve well during their time at the college. Their progress is good because teaching is good. Students learn effectively and they quickly close gaps in their learning.
- As a result of intensive teaching, students make good progress in relation to their starting points. Their spoken English improves rapidly. All students spoke willingly and with confidence to inspectors. Students know and understand their individual targets, as one student typically commented, 'I have gone up a level this term. I want to keep improving'.
- Information kept by the college shows students make good progress over time. As a result of carefully planned, targeted teaching, students make particularly strong progress in English and mathematics. Following a fractions lesson, students said, 'we have learnt fractions in our home country but now we fully understand and can do them'.
- Students use and improve their developing knowledge of English in other subjects. Although they make good progress in humanities and the sciences, on occasion students need greater challenge to extend their learning further. In some lessons, students do not make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Results in the international GCSE compare extremely favourably to results achieved by 'the rest of the world' particularly in English and mathematics. This confirms good progress from students' starting points. The most-able students are encouraged to sit examinations in a range of subjects with success. Students leave the college well prepared for the next stage of their education. They successfully gain entry to a wide range of English boarding schools.
- All students take part in high-quality sports activities, led by well-qualified staff. They quickly learn the skills needed to play previously unknown sports, such as rugby and lacrosse. This enables them to take part in tournaments with other schools, experience teamwork and develop their communication and social skills.
- Students develop their creative and aesthetic skills through well-planned lessons and activities. Inspectors observed good-quality art work in the assembly room. Teachers expertly use drama in lessons to develop students' communication skills. This makes a significant contribution to developing students' communication skills and their self-confidence.

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding provision**

**are good**

- Students make good progress in their understanding and use of English. The language skills they quickly develop enable students to gain in confidence and interact well with each other, with adults within the college and with the wider community. The wide range of sports and other activities make a strong contribution to the good overall development of students.
- Boarding matters are regularly discussed and integrated into school plans. Students benefit from staff who are qualified in sports coaching and who receive effective training in pastoral care and safeguarding.
- The international culture of the college is a strength. Students, irrespective of their own background, fully embrace this boarding experience, valuing the diversity of their environment. Students confidently develop the skills required to successfully gain a place at their next choice of school.

### **Quality of care and support in the boarding provision**

**is good**

- The well-structured induction provides students with a warm welcome to the college and to the United Kingdom. They quickly settle into boarding life. Staff allocate students to shared dormitories and plan group activities and mealtimes. As a result, students of different nationalities mix happily. This helps them

to quickly develop their language skills, gain confidence and increase their friendship groups.

- Staff deliver strong pastoral care to students. All staff maintain students' welfare at the centre of their practice. Boarding staff are sensitive in their approach as they support students with homesickness, medical matters and the challenge of learning English as an additional language. Students report that staff are 'all very kind'.
- Boarding accommodation is provided on the main college site, and for senior boys there is a boarding house less than a mile away. There are plans to build a new boarding house as the college develops. Students like their dormitories. They report that they are comfortable and they can decorate their personal space with posters. Some dormitories have minimal furnishings and students would like more storage and shelves for their possessions.
- Students benefit from the knowledge that staff have attained through training on resilience, mental health, first aid and the management of medication. Senior boarding staff monitor the emotional well-being of students through team meetings and good record-keeping. The health of students is promoted extremely well through diet and physical activity. Meals are nutritious and home-made, and students are provided with three cooked meals a day, offering an extensive menu. The high-quality range of sports and other activities provides students with a very varied balance of good alternative opportunities during their free time and relaxation periods.
- Students enjoy the planned activities and outings. The planning given to these events ensures that they are purposeful with clear outcomes. For example, staff use activities such as playing games using word association or 'wink murder' well to promote the use of English language skills. These also help to raise students' self-esteem and integrate the various age groups and nationalities of students. The college has good facilities and grounds for sports and outdoor play. Students integrate with the local community through their use of sports and leisure facilities. Students make use of opportunities to attend and engage with local youth groups.
- Students are encouraged to share any concerns or ideas. Suggestion boxes, regular surveys and the student council provide useful forums for students to give their views and opinions. When students have raised a concern, records show that the matter is dealt with promptly and they are satisfied with the outcome. For example, the college chef responded to students' requesting sushi to be put on the menu when it was raised at the student council. Leaders and seniors monitor these records to review practice.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135486
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC367610
<b>Inspection number</b>	100004163
<b>DfE registration number</b>	865/6041

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The inspection of boarding provision 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	International study centre
<b>School status</b>	Independent boarding school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–17
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	18
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Number of children and young people on roll</b>	24
<b>Proprietors</b>	Mr M R Jeynes and Mr R C Freer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lorraine Atkins
<b>Termly fees (children and young people)</b>	£10,800
<b>Telephone number</b>	01985 219210
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bishopstrow.com">www.bishopstrow.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:principal@bishopstrow.com">principal@bishopstrow.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8–10 October 2013

## Information about this school

- Bishopstrow College is an international study centre for boys and girls whose first language is not English and who plan to enter a boarding school in the United Kingdom.
- The college offers intensive English tuition from elementary to advanced level, combined with teaching in other subjects.
- The proprietors took over ownership and governance of the college in August 2014.
- The Principal took up post in September 2015.
- The college is fully accredited by the British Council for the provision of English courses. It operates a four-term year and students attend between one and four terms. Students come from a range of countries and the majority have little or no English when admitted. No current student is disabled or has a statement of special educational needs.
- The college opened in 2006 and is registered for 104 children and young people aged seven to 17 years. There are currently 24 students on roll. None are day students and none attend part time.
- The college had its last full inspection combined with a social care inspection in October 2013. At this time, the overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. A progress monitoring inspection of the school and boarding provision took place on 8–9 May 2014. This inspection found the college was making

'good progress' in implementing the action plan.

- The college aims to 'enable students to fulfil their potential and foster the shared values of respect for others and the environment'.
- There are currently no students in the sixth form.
- The college uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed students' learning in eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by staff, and looked at students' work, teachers' planning and information about students' progress. The Director of Studies observed all lessons jointly with the inspector.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior leaders, staff and the proprietor. Informal discussions were held with students and staff throughout the inspection to seek their views.
- The lead inspector and social care regulatory inspector observed two assemblies attended by all students.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance, bullying and safeguarding were examined. College policies and the college's documentation were scrutinised to check compliance with the independent school standards. The inspector also checked the college's documentation relating to the curriculum and schemes of work.
- The inspectors took account of 17 staff questionnaires and a boarding survey completed in November 2014 by 34 children and young people. The inspector also took account of the views of parents' correspondence to the college and three responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clare Davies

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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