

# Advice note for an emergency inspection

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School name	Abbey College Cambridge
DfE registration number	873/6049
Unique reference number (URN)	136083
Inspection number	10006642
Inspection dates	6 October 2015
Lead inspector	John Daniell HMI



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## Information about the inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.<sup>1</sup>
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, members of the teaching staff and students.
- The inspector reviewed the college's policies relating the pupils' welfare and health and safety and, in particular, the use of information and communication technology by pupils and members of staff.

## Information about the school

- Abbey College Cambridge is located on six sites in the centre of Cambridge. It is part of the Alpha Plus Group Ltd, which also operates colleges elsewhere in the country.
- It provides GCSE and A level courses, together with a university foundation course, for students in the age range 14 to 21 years.
- The college does not use any alternative provision.
- The college provides boarding accommodation for a number of students. The last report on the boarding provision was published by Ofsted in April 2013.

## Reason of the inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE because of concerns about the welfare, health and safety of pupils at the college. The inspector paid particular attention to the college's policy on the use of social media sites and the interaction of staff and pupils using them.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents).

## **Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014<sup>2</sup>**

### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- The policies relating to pupils' welfare, health and safety are implemented well by members of staff in the college. The standards relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils are met.
- The college's safeguarding policy has been reviewed to reflect current requirements and is readily accessible on the college's website and on request in paper form.
- The inspector questioned staff and pupils about their use of social media sites. Staff and pupils are clear about the safe use of the internet, and in particular, the use of social media sites. Staff are clearly aware that they are not to make use of any personal social media accounts to communicate with pupils. Equally, pupils are aware that they may only communicate with staff through professional social media accounts or by emailing teachers on their college email accounts.
- New members of staff have received detailed information and training on safeguarding young people and all staff regularly receive updated safeguarding training.
- All pupils are made aware of the safe use of the internet and sign a document when joining the college which states they will adhere to the college's guidelines.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using the internet through assemblies and a comprehensive personal, health, social and educational (PHSE) programme.
- The college makes use of social media sites for teachers and pupils to engage in academic discussions and debates. Guidance for teachers in setting up professional social media sites is clear. The Vice Principal, who is also the designated lead for child protection, insists that she be a member of every discussion forum set up by teachers, and she regularly monitors the content of discussions between teachers and pupils.
- The inspector and the Vice Principal reviewed the content of these discussions between pupils and their teachers. All discussions relate to academic work. The advantages of such activities outweigh any

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<sup>2</sup>[www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made).

disadvantages and clearly contribute to students' outstanding achievement.

## **Advice to the registration authority for independent schools**

<b>Overall outcome</b>	No unmet independent school standards identified
<b>Report recommendation</b>	A report on the findings of the inspection is not recommended to be published on the Ofsted website