

Stanborough School

Stanborough School, Stanborough Park, Watford WD25 9JT

Inspection dates	15 June 2016 to 17 June 2016	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good	2
The quality of care and support	Good	2
How well children and young people are protected	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings

The boarding provision is good because

- Young people benefit from the boarding experience and in particular the dedicated staff and individual support. This supports their academic progress, the experience of being away from home and their overall enjoyment.
- Young people build independence, study skills and self-reliance while boarding.
- Safeguarding arrangements at the school are understood and prioritised by all staff. Young people are supervised and supported well by staff.
- Young people treat staff and one another with respect and courtesy. Behaviour and conduct are very good, and promote an environment where all young people feel respected equally.
- The records of behavioural incidents are not managed with a streamlined approach. This does not fully support the behaviour management policy.
- Risk assessments have been recently introduced for sleeping accommodation. These have not been updated to reflect the actions taken by staff to ensure that young people are safe.
- The monitoring of boarding by the governing body is tokenistic and does not provide a rigorous overview.

- There are not enough light and healthy food options or snacks provided during the day.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools:

- Ensure that the school's governing body and/or proprietor monitors the effectiveness of the leadership, management and delivery of the boarding and welfare provision in the school, and takes appropriate action where necessary (Boarding schools national minimum standard 13.1).
- Ensure that the school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in appendix 1 (Boarding schools national minimum standard 13.7).
- Ensure that any staff member or volunteer employed or volunteering in a position working with boarders has a job description reflecting their duties, receives induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receives regular reviews of their boarding practice, with opportunities for training and continual professional development in boarding (Boarding schools national minimum standard 15.1).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to review and improve the range and consistent quality of meals provided and consider the provision of healthy snacks for young people.
- Update the risk assessments to provide live documents that reflect the work undertaken to reduce risks to young people.

Information about this inspection

This inspection was carried out within four hours of telephone notification to the school. The inspection took place over three days. Discussions with young people, staff and volunteers informed the inspection judgments. Documents, records and surveys were scrutinised. Feedback from the designated officer at the local authority was obtained prior to the inspection.

Inspection team

Deirdra Keating

lead social care inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

International Stanborough School is an independent faith day and boarding school located in the outskirts of Watford. The school offers boarding provision for 70 young people aged between 11 and 18 years. The school operates on the principles established by the Seventh Day Adventist Church and is owned and operated by the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The boarding house is situated in one wing of the main school building. The school and boarding provision were last inspected in October 2015.

Inspection Judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Young people make good academic progress at the school, often leading to further education. They gain fluency in spoken and written English, while also gaining experience of British culture and the value system.

Young people enjoy boarding responsibilities and embrace the religious ethos of the school. They say that they are very happy in the school. They make good friendships and they have a warm and good humoured rapport with the staff.

Young people relish appointed boarding roles such as house brother and house sister, and there are also spiritual leaders elected in the boarding facility. A good blend of age and gender promotes an inclusive and caring atmosphere. There is an embedded culture of kindness and support of one another. This helps those new to boarding feel welcome and supported while away from home.

Young people are positive about how the boarding experience has supported their studies and command of spoken and written English. They feel positive about the progress that they have made. Young people are motivated and focused on exam preparation. They say that they feel they are making good progress while learning English as an additional language. Several international students are taking eight or more GCSEs. The director of English foreign language students has tracked their academic progress. This is measured from their initial starting points on arrival using feedback from schemes of work, teacher's observations and the young people's views. Tracking methods show that they are making consistent and steady progress that is closely monitored. This ensures that barriers to learning are identified and support can be provided where required.

Young people's views are heard and valued. These views are taken forward by staff, who work hard to provide consultation opportunities to address areas raised by young people, such a food choices. Feedback is used to make changes, and this helps young people feel their views are important and valued.

The quality of care and support

Good

Young people enjoy the boarding experience and the extra-curricular clubs. Physical and social activities include table tennis and snooker as well as cinema and town trips. There are bicycles and large grounds for ball games. This helps young people stay fit and gives them opportunities to socialise. Young people develop their spirituality and maturity while

boarding. They practise self-discipline and self-management as they organise their time around exam revision, daily worship, lessons and activities.

Staff are responsive and sensitive to young people's diverse cultural backgrounds and religion. They embrace the aims of the school, which reflect the religious ethos. The school also provides positive adult role models. The staff work hard to ensure that young people's individual needs are met and that they receive support that is nurturing and parental.

Young people share bedrooms, and full consideration is given to relationships and dynamics, including age and nationality. Young people engage with enthusiasm and pride in reward schemes that encourage them to keep their rooms clean and tidy. The rooms are large and equipped to meet their study needs. Many rooms are nicely decorated and highly personalised. Communal areas are vibrant and modern, representing young people's tastes and preferences. There is an array of photographs of young people and staff displayed throughout the boarding. These photographs also show those young people with extra responsibility, including boarder of the month.

Some changes in menus are evident, including a well presented and replenished salad bar and fresh fruits pots. Menus reflect an international cuisine while maintaining a strict vegetarian diet. However, there continues to be dissatisfaction with the food. There is no provision of healthy snacks at any time during the day. The only option is for young people to use their own money to buy processed food from the tuck shop.

Young people are registered with local health professionals and specific support is accessed when required. There are new systems for the storage and administration of medication. This is a radical change overseen by a member of staff with a registered nursing background. Systems are audited and a database provides a running stock tally. Young people able to self-medicate sign an agreement to ensure safe management and storage. This ensures that medication administration and storage is safe and orderly.

Almost all young people own smart phones or laptops and these enable them to contact home. Communal telephones, office telephones and computers are available to support young people to stay in touch with families and friends. Young people say: 'It is never a problem to keep in touch with my family. I speak to them every day.'

How well children and young people are protected

Good

The boarding environment is safe and maintained to a good standard. Environmental safety checks and appliance servicing is routinely carried out. This minimises potential hazards and ensures young people's physical safety.

Support and care of young people is good. A consistent emphasis on safe conduct and adhering to the boarding rules supports young people's safety. Staff monitor young people's whereabouts using electronic boarding software. This provides an ongoing

record of who is in the building and immediately flags a late return.

Young people spoken to are clear about the number of adults they can go to if they have concerns. Additionally, the school has appointed a new independent person who is not connected with the school but is a community pastor. This reflects the religious ethos of the school. Young people are made aware of the pastor's role during their induction. They are also introduced to him and there are posters around the boarding wing that explain his role. This provides additional safeguards for young people.

There are very few safeguarding incidents. There was one serious incident, which was picked up quickly. Action was taken immediately to ensure all young people's safety. There are no incidents of young people feeling or being bullied and no instances of young people going missing or returning late. There is an established culture of adherence to curfew times and taking responsibility for personal safety.

Students' behaviour and conduct is exemplary and they respect each other's differences and embrace cultural diversity. This promotes a welcome and inclusive provision where all young people are equally valued and respected.

Staff ensure that vulnerable young people are monitored carefully. Meticulous records demonstrate this. Concerns about young people's welfare are reported quickly and tailored support is provided.

Discussion with the designated officer raises no concerns. A reviewed safeguarding policy defines how the school will manage allegations. Volunteers and staff receive safeguarding and 'Prevent' training. This provides knowledge of risks to young people from a diverse international cohort and includes supporting staff to be alert to radicalisation, self-harmful behaviours and female genital mutilation. Consequently, staff are alert to the signs of potential risk.

There have been no new safeguarding referrals or allegations. Follow-up work on the ineffective safeguarding arrangements identified at the last inspection has been completed. There is a new designated safeguarding person and an improved focus on managing allegations and concerns in accordance with the safeguarding policy. An external audit undertaken by the local authority describes the procedures and systems that are in place to safeguard young people. This demonstrates an openness and willingness by the school to make changes and improve their safeguarding practice.

Risk assessments for sleeping accommodation and room sharing are new and have been introduced for all those sharing a room. While young people's safety has been prioritised and actions taken to mitigate against risks, the recording of this is not consistently reflected in these risk assessments.

Staff recruitment files sampled include those of two new staff appointed since the last inspection. These files contain all required checks and information. Staff living onsite have agreements in place and those adults not working in the school have disclosure and barring checks to confirm their suitability.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers Requires improvement

Management and oversight of the boarding has improved, although there remain several areas that require work to ensure compliance with the national minimum standards and the school's policies.

The monitoring of the boarding provision remains weak. Monitoring reports provide one section, which fails to cover the management and delivery of boarding or to detail action points to address shortfalls. Monitoring of boarding is encompassed in a whole school visit, resulting in boarding being summarised in a short general paragraph. This does not provide robust scrutiny of the practice and supporting records and does not help to drive improvement.

There is still no formalised supervision or review of individual boarding practice for volunteers, although permanent staff meet with the headteacher and head of boarding regularly. This does not provide enough opportunity to reflect on practice and identify training needs for volunteers. Appraisal of individual performance is not carried out. This makes practice and performance issues difficult to address. The graduate volunteer scheme provides volunteers from the Seventh-day Adventist church programme to work in the school for one year. This amounts to a full-time role that carries duties and the responsibility of supervising boarders. The volunteers receive no formal supervision. Lack of formal supervision does not help to ensure the robust review of practice required.

The recording and managing of behavioural incidents does not consistently reflect the policy to provide a clear chronology of incidents. Records can be electronic, written and verbal. Scattered records and different approaches from staff make monitoring and oversight difficult. This could lead to an inconsistent approach in managing behaviour.

Despite the shortfalls, the senior management team have invested commitment, time and resources in addressing the number of shortfalls raised at the previous inspection. While this is acknowledged, the management team are realistic that there remains work to be done. The headteacher is realistic in her understanding of the weaknesses and has taken decisive action to make improvements.

The aims and ethos of the school are embraced. There is a strong promotion of spiritual development. This has resulted in a united community that share the same values. The school is successful in preparing young people for exams while enabling them to learn spoken English and understand the British values system.

Parental feedback is extremely difficult to obtain due to the scope of the international cohort. A link to the Parent View survey was sent out and there was one response. The school has developed survey questionnaires, although there were no responses at the time of inspection.

There is a stable and established staff team that is supported by the volunteer scheme. Staff provide stability and consistency for young people. Numbers of staff were increased

last year to add to the supervision and support of young people. Staff are trained and new training needs are identified to reflect the individual needs of young people.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework.'

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	134933
Social care unique reference number	SC019554
DfE registration number	919/6209

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.

Type of school	Boarding School
Number of boarders on roll	10
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	11 to 18
Headteacher	Lorraine Dixon
Date of previous boarding inspection	20–22 October 2016
Telephone number	01923 673268
Email address	ldixon@spsch.org

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