

# Kensington Park School

59 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5JP

## Inspection dates

26–28 September 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth-form provision	Inadequate
Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the boarding provision	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- The proprietor and senior leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards and the national minimum standards for boarding schools are met.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. A legacy of disorganisation and lack of attention to detail are now being addressed, but the required change in culture is significant and is in its early stages.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. The recruitment process for staff has historically been poor. Some of the required vetting checks have not been completed. The records of checks on staff are incomplete, unreliable or missing.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are inadequate because of safeguarding failures and weak risk assessment arrangements. Pupils' safety is compromised.
- Sixth-form and boarding provision are inadequate because safeguarding arrangements are ineffective.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are purposeful, independent learners. They are focused on achieving good A-level results and work hard. However, their attendance and punctuality require improvement.
- The quality of teaching is good because teachers have strong subject knowledge, high expectations and plan effectively to help pupils learn well. Consequently, pupils' outcomes are good. The vast majority achieve the grades they are capable of at A level and go on to study at university.

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

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management and pupils' welfare so that:
  - the proprietor and senior leaders work together to rapidly ensure that all the independent school standards and the national minimum standards for boarding schools are met
  - the arrangements for safely recruiting staff are reviewed and improved to meet statutory requirements as quickly as possible
  - the introduction of a risk assessment policy leads to a more consistent approach to minimising risks in school and on trips
  - risks relating to the use of additional premises are reviewed and changes made to ensure that pupils are as safe as possible
  - records are completed accurately and policies reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect actual practice.
- Improve pupils' welfare by ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and are punctual to lessons in order to minimise wasted learning time.
- Improve the welfare and experiences of boarders by:
  - reviewing and clarifying the arrangements for consulting with boarders and for dealing with their complaints, so that their views are encouraged, considered and captured more effectively
  - developing a more detailed procedure for boarding staff to follow when a boarder is missing from the boarding accommodation
  - ensuring that accurate information regarding boarders' cultural and religious needs is recorded and available in their files.

### The school must meet the following independent school standards

- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders while they are accommodated at the school; and such arrangements have regard to the Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraphs 8, 8(a) and 8(b)).
- Ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by drawing up and effectively implementing a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- Ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 12).
- Ensure that the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- Ensure that no person appointed as a member of staff at the school is barred from

regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act 18, or intends to carry out work at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction (paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a) and 18(2)(b)).

- Ensure that the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm qualifications where appropriate (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(c)(iv)).
- Ensure that, where relevant, an enhanced criminal record check is made and the certificate obtained (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(d)).
- In the case of staff who care for, train, supervise or are in charge of boarders, in addition to the matters specified in paragraphs 18(2)(a) to 18(2)(e), the proprietor checks that Standard 14 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools is complied with (paragraphs 18(2) and 18(2)(f)).
- Ensure that the checks referred to in sub-paragraphs 18(2)(c) are completed before a person's appointment (paragraph 18(3)).
- Ensure that the single central register of vetting checks contains the information about all the checks that are required to check that staff members are suitable to work with children (paragraphs 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi) and 21(3)(b)).
- For each member of staff in post on 1 August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1 May 2007, ensure that each check referred to in sub-paragraph 21(3) was made (paragraph 21(4)).
- Ensure that those with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and that they actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

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

- The school identifies at least one person, other than a parent, outside the staff and those responsible for the leadership and governance of the school, whom boarders may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at school. Boarders are informed who this person is and how to contact them, and they are easily accessible. Boarders are provided with one or more appropriate helpline(s) or outside telephone numbers, including the Office of the Children's Commissioner, to contact in case of problems or distress (NMS. 2.3).
- The school ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders while they are accommodated at the school; and such arrangements have regard to the Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS. 11.1).
- 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 (NMS. 13.1).
- There is clear leadership and management of the practice and development of boarding

in the school and effective links are made between academic and residential staff (NMS. 13.2).

- Schools operate safe recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State (NMS. 14.1).
- 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 (NMS. 15.1).

## Inspection judgements

<b>Effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>The effectiveness of leaders and managers in the boarding provision</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>How well young people are helped and protected in the boarding provision</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>

- The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate because leaders have not ensured that all of the independent school standards and national minimum standards for boarding schools are met.
- Since the school's previous inspection in June 2015, there has been substantial staff turnover. New staff include leaders of the boarding provision and an executive principal, who took up his post in September 2017.
- Inspectors identified a legacy of disorganisation, lack of attention to detail and poor record-keeping. Leaders have failed to keep abreast of the many changes in statutory guidance since the school's last full standard inspection, especially in relation to safeguarding. Leaders have also failed to write and implement a risk assessment policy and have not fully considered how to minimise the risks presented to pupils, particularly in relation to trips and the use of additional premises. They have also not assured themselves that the arrangements for health and safety, including fire safety, meet requirements at all the premises used by pupils and staff.
- The links between leaders and staff at the school and the boarding provision are not effective. The employment of an executive leader with responsibility for both aspects and the introduction of regular meetings aims to improve communication and strengthen the unity of approach across the whole school. These changes have lifted the boarding staff's morale and strengthened their commitment to provide good boarding experiences for boarders. However, the effectiveness of these changes is yet to be seen.
- There is no system to check on the overall quality of teachers' work and no targets are set and reviewed to consider their performance and progression. Consequently, teachers do not receive the advice and guidance necessary to improve their work, nor are they held to account for pupils' outcomes.
- There is no system in place for regular review of staff members' practice in the boarding provision, other than through annual appraisals, which are not always carried out on time. Having the opportunity to discuss practice at regular staff meetings is only a very recent feature.
- The school currently operates sixth-form provision for the study of A levels only. In addition, pupils access a weekly personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme with a personal tutor. This includes appropriate coverage of careers options, equality, fundamental British values and preparation for life in modern Britain. Overall, the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is adequate, but is rightly being developed further as the provision changes from focusing primarily on A-level retakes and more on providing a more holistic education.
- The school's complaints procedure explains clearly the process for dealing with complaints

raised by parents. It does not include information on dealing with complaints raised by boarders. This may deter them from raising a complaint. To date, the boarders who have raised informal complaints about boarding have done so through their teachers, rather than boarding staff.

- The few parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were happy with the work of the school, confirming that their children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. All said that they would recommend the school and agreed or strongly agreed that their child enjoys the boarding experience.

## **Governance**

- The governing body, led by the chief executive officer who is also the chair of governors, provides increasingly effective challenge to the school's leaders. Governors are committed to the school's rapid improvement and have shown recent strength and resolve in making difficult staffing decisions to begin the process of moving the school forward.
- However, governors have not worked quickly or effectively enough to ensure that the independent school standards and national minimum standards for boarding schools are met consistently. They have not ensured that safeguarding is effective or that the school has a system for checking staff performance.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective.
- Some checks on the suitability of staff have not been carried out in accordance with statutory guidance. The single central register of vetting checks does not meet statutory requirements because there are omissions, mistakes and some checks are not recorded. For example, during the inspection, a member of teaching staff was found not to have been subject to a prohibition from teaching check, nor had their qualifications been checked. These were completed during the inspection.
- The staff recruitment procedure has not been fit for purpose until very recently. The school has given positions of trust to some staff before having completed all of the required vetting checks. This increases the risk of pupils and boarders having close contact with staff who might not be suitable for their professional roles.
- Some boarding staff do not have safeguarding awareness at a level needed for their roles. In particular, their understanding of grooming and online risks to boarders is inadequate. Some boarding staff are not clear about their duty to safeguard boarders from radicalisation and extreme views. Not all staff have completed 'Prevent' duty training. One staff member said that they have never heard of 'Prevent'.
- The lack of a central safeguarding log undermines monitoring of the frequency and nature of the concerns raised in the boarding provision and of the quality of the school's response to these concerns. Fragmented record-keeping impairs the robustness of the governing body's oversight and reduces accountability.
- The policy on missing boarders provides helpful information. However, it does not provide enough detail on the reporting procedure.
- The school's acceptable safeguarding policy is available alongside all other required

policies and information on the school's new website.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good and enables pupils, who have generally not achieved the grades they had hoped for previously, to succeed in improving their A-level results and proceeding to a university of their choice.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils. They have deep subject knowledge. Lessons are planned carefully to ensure that pupils, including the most able, are engaged and sufficiently challenged. Small classes provide pupils with a high level of support, which they appreciate.
- There are positive working relationships between teachers and pupils, and pupils and their personal tutors, who they say they feel able to seek advice and guidance from when it is needed.
- Pupils receive regular, helpful oral and written feedback on how well they are doing. As all current pupils are studying for A levels in the sixth form, they write notes and record information in a way that suits them. They submit homework assignments and essays or complete mock examinations in line with the requirements of the subjects they study.
- There is no requirement for teachers to manage pupils' behaviour in class. There are no disruptions to learning.
- Although there are appropriate checks on pupils' attainment on entry to the school, a rigorous system that enables staff to track progress over time and use this information to inform their planning has not been consistently available. This year, a new system is designed to track progress more consistently in all subjects on a termly basis. However, it is too early to judge whether this will help leaders and teachers more effectively to ensure that pupils make the maximum possible progress of which they are capable.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Inadequate**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Although pupils say that they feel safe, their welfare is at risk because the arrangements for safeguarding are ineffective.
- In addition to concerns around the vetting checks on staff, there is insufficient oversight of the health, safety and risks presented at all premises used by the school. Risk assessments of trips are too inconsistent and not rooted in any shared guidance, as the school does not have a risk assessment policy.
- Arrangements for the promotion of pupils' personal and social development are adequate; pupils are well rounded, mature and independent learners who enrol at the school because they want to study hard and achieve good grades.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are confident, articulate and independent. They do not misbehave or engage in bullying. Their behaviour for learning is excellent. They listen, respond well to instructions and engage fully in lessons, independent study and homework.
- Some pupils' attendance needs to improve, as a small proportion of pupils are persistently absent. More commonly, pupils are sometimes slightly late for their lessons. Leaders acknowledge that this must improve to minimise wasted learning time.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Pupils achieve good outcomes following their typical study of three A levels, from a choice of 24. They generally arrive at the school with low starting points, as they have often achieved low grades previously or failed their recent examinations and are therefore 'starting afresh'. Some pupils attend the school from other countries and successfully undertake formal study of English language in addition to A-level study.
- The majority achieve A\* to C grades and the vast majority are successful in gaining entry to a university of their choice. Most recently, around a quarter achieved the highest grades available, around half achieved a 'B' grade or above and almost every pupil achieved a pass grade. Although there is some variability in the grades achieved across the subject areas, these typically represent small cohorts.
- In addition to academic success and progression to universities, some pupils successfully complete work placements in medical practices, hospitals and businesses. This helps to prepare them for life in the workplace.
- Although it is clear that pupils make good progress, their starting points were only identified for the first time in the last academic year. As a result, there is limited information available to consider pupils' progress over time, as the focus has consistently been on attainment. The school's system is being strengthened further this year to track progress on a termly basis against pupils' starting points.

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

**Inadequate**

- Boarders access a boarding provision that does not meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools. Inadequate leadership and management of boarding provision and inadequate safeguarding arrangements underpin the overall inadequate judgement of the experiences and progress of young people in the provision.
- Inadequate safeguarding arrangements increase risks to boarders' safety and welfare. Incidents in the boarding environment are rare, but the safeguarding arrangements are not demonstrably effective.
- Until recently, the boarding set-up and routines did not effectively facilitate the development of close relationships between boarders and staff. Limited contact between boarding staff and boarders resulted in staff not knowing their young people well. For example, some boarding staff said that sometimes they did not get to know boarders, even by the end of their first year of boarding.



- Records do not show that boarding staff provide boarders with individualised support. For example, the information regarding boarders' religions and diets is not always recorded or accurate.
- Some boarders cannot identify a trusted adult within the boarding environment to whom they can talk about concerns. For example, a boarder said that they felt safe in the boarding house, in terms of security, but did not trust the staff.
- Boarders and boarding staff do not know who the school's independent listening person is.
- Some boarders say that they do not trust the school's complaints procedure. One boarder said that the staff would 'always back each other'.
- The majority of boarders talk very positively about their experience of boarding and, in particular, about their teachers at school.
- An effective procedure for the induction of new boarders means that they settle quickly in their new environment.
- The boarding house provides a safe, well-maintained and high-quality physical environment in an excellent location.
- The food is delicious, nutritious, varied and plentiful. Boarders say that catering staff are very kind. One boarder highlighted how well their religious needs were taken into account during Ramadan.
- The relationships between boarders are positive. They have developed friendships. The boarding provision offers a friendly environment, free from bullying and intimidation.
- The rules in the boarding house are clear and implemented consistently. Boarders' behaviour is usually of a very high standard. Boarders report that the rules are usually sensible and that sanctions are fair. However, the recent roll-call at 7pm was introduced without any consultation with them. Many boarders were unhappy about this.
- The school has an experienced nurse who has developed and implemented an effective policy for maintaining and promoting boarders' health. Boarders receive good health support and advice when they need it. This includes use of external specialist services.
- Boarders come to school to learn and develop. Boarding makes an effective contribution to maximising their development and independence; they are prepared well for their futures.

## School details

Unique reference number	100526
Social care unique reference number	SC482934
DfE registration number	207/6262
Inspection number	10034187

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.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	13 to 20
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	125
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	124
Number of part-time pupils	None
Number of boarders on roll	31
Proprietor	Astrum Education
Chair	Mark Labovitch
Executive principal	Marwan Mikdadi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£16,00 to £24,000
Annual fees (boarders)	£43,000 to £47,000
Telephone number	020 7225 0577
Website	<a href="http://www.kps.co.uk/">www.kps.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:reception@kps.co.uk">reception@kps.co.uk</a>

## Information about this school

- Kensington Park School, previously known as Duff Miller College, is an independent, co-educational boarding school for up to 360 pupils aged 13 to 20 years.
- At the time of the inspection, 124 of the 125 pupils on roll were students aged 16 to 19, and all pupils on roll were accessing the school's sixth-form provision and studying for their A levels.
- The school's main premises are located in South Kensington, London. The school also makes use of leased classrooms in an adjacent building at Baden Powell House, 65–67 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 5JS.
- The school's boarding provision, shared with other schools under the ownership of the proprietor, Astrum Education, is located nearby in Earl's Court, London.
- The school's last inspection of its boarding provision was in June 2015.
- The school's last full standard inspection was in February 2012.
- Sixth-form students have optional access to off-site sports facilities at Imperial College London's Ethos gym in nearby Knightsbridge, London. The school does not make use of any other alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This integrated inspection took place with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and boarders formally and informally throughout the inspection. The social care regulatory inspector also spent time meeting with boarders during an evening in the boarding provision.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and the school's information about pupils' progress.
- The inspection took account of the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors held several meetings with senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors, who is also the chief executive officer of Astrum Education.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including all school policies, logs, evidence of staff training and information related to safeguarding and health and safety.
- The inspection considered the 19 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Both the lead inspector and the social care regulatory inspector spoke with the local authority's designated officer for safeguarding (LADO).
- The inspectors also considered additional information and evidence in relation to the independent school standards and toured all premises.

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Seka Graovac

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

Denise James-Mason

Ofsted Inspector

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