

Felixstowe International College

Maybush Lane, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7NA

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Felixstowe International College is an independent boarding school located in a residential area on the outskirts of Felixstowe. The boarding accommodation and the school are now on the same site. The college accommodates up to 32 students, aged nine to 19. At the time of the inspection, the college had 18 boarders. The last full inspection of the boarding provision was in April 2018.

Inspection dates: 2 to 4 April 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good

The boarding school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 17 April 2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Boarders benefit from attending this college. Although shortfalls exist, in particular in relation to the quality of the accommodation, boarders are happy, make progress and feel safe. A boarder said, 'Kind friends and teachers make it fun.'

Boarders have good relationships with the staff, who know the boarders well.

Boarders said that they can contact their families whenever they want. Feedback from families is very positive. Feedback from families included:

- 'I'm strongly satisfied with this school.'
- 'I think that this college is one of the best boarding schools in England. We are perfectly satisfied as parents.'
- 'I think that it's very lucky that my child can attend the college. As a parent, I am satisfied with every part of the school.'

Boarders make progress in their education. Attendance at the college is good. Boarders have high aspirations; many have moved on to universities. Academic staff work with the boarders to equip them with the skills that they need to succeed at university interviews.

Boarders' behaviour is very good. Boarders reported a familial atmosphere at the college. One boarder, speaking about how boarders get on well, said, 'If someone is lonely, we talk and make it happy.'

Boarders can offer their thoughts and views to staff. Consultations take place. Boarders said that they can raise concerns with staff. As a result, there have been no formal complaints.

Despite some improvements, the quality of the accommodation remains poor. Leaders and managers reported serious financial difficulties having an impact on their current capacity to make the necessary improvements. Doors remain damaged, the carpet is in a very poor condition, including in boarders' rooms, a window is broken in a communal area and some window frames are in a poor condition. This long-standing repeated shortfall significantly affects the quality of the boarding environment.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Boarders feel safe. They said that staff are approachable and look out for them. There have been no safeguarding concerns.

Boarders said that they can talk to staff if they are worried or upset. One boarder said, '[The staff] make us so comfortable.' Another boarder said, 'It is very safe here. We have known each other for a long time so know each other really well. We all get along and are friends.' Boarders get on well with one another. Inspectors observed easy, good-humoured interactions between boarders. Boarders are clear that bullying is not an issue.

No boarders have gone missing from the college. Behaviour is very good. No physical interventions have been used since the last inspection.

Designated safeguarding staff have appropriate training. Changes to safeguarding guidance are discussed at team meetings.

The college accommodates boarders aged 18 and over. These boarders share accommodation, although not rooms, with boarders aged under 18. Boarders said that they enjoy sharing the accommodation. However, although managers can articulate their belief that these arrangements are safe, no risk assessment has been recorded to demonstrate the risks, rationale and response.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers articulate high aspirations for the boarders. Boarders also have high expectations. The staff are sensitive to the pressures that these aspirations bring and ensure that boarders can manage these pressures.

The staff are sensitive to boarders' cultural needs. Leaders and managers liaised with the police and a neighbouring school following an incident of racist abuse in the local community.

Leaders and managers understand the academic progress that boarders make. However, understanding of individual independence skills is limited. Boarding contributes little to the development of independence skills. This affects the college's ability to meet the aims of the statement of boarding principles.

The deputy principal feels supported. However, they have not had an appraisal for almost two years and have not received regular reviews of their boarding practice. This member of staff is managing the boarding provision and has significant safeguarding responsibilities. Lack of regular practice review and appraisal means that they are not provided with the full support that they need to carry out their role.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that policies and procedures are up to date. The culture has been to adapt policies from other schools. This has resulted in a situation in which some policies refer to significantly out-of-date guidance or do not contain pertinent information. In addition, some records lack sufficient information. This shortfall has the potential to lessen the value of records when they are accessed in the future.

Management monitoring has become more established since the last inspection. Five of the six previously unmet minimum standards are now met. However, management monitoring has not prevented the use of door stoppers on fire doors, despite fire risk assessments prohibiting this.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standard(s) for boarding schools:

- 5.4 Boarding houses and other accommodation provided for boarders are appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide adequate accessible accommodation for any boarders with restricted mobility.
- 13.7 The school follows and maintains the policies and documents described in Appendix 1.
- 15.1 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.

Recommendations

- Support boarders to develop their independence skills.
- Make a record of risk assessments in respect of boarders aged over 18 sharing accommodation with boarders aged under 18.
- Ensure that, in line with the fire risk assessment, fire doors are not wedged open.
- Ensure that records are clear and provide sufficient evaluation and overview of incidents.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the school knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Boarding school details

Social care unique reference number: SC024579

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Rev Seung Kim

Type of school: Boarding school

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Inspectors

Ashley Hinson: social care inspector

Ricky D'Arcy: social care inspector



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