

Kings Oxford

Touchload Ltd

St Joseph's Hall, Temple Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX4 2UJ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Kings Oxford is part of the Kings Education group, which runs international colleges in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The aim of the school is to help students prepare for attending universities in the United Kingdom and America. Courses for these students and a small number of GCSE students are provided at the college's St Joseph's campus and St Michael's campus. The college is registered to accept up to 370 students aged from 15 upwards. The students attending the college are from a wide range of countries around the world.

Students are accommodated in the residential facility (Wavy Gate), with homestay families or through private fostering arrangements. The residential facility is within walking distance of the school or a short bus journey. Another international college, inspected by Ofsted, accommodates students in a separate building on the same site. There is a shared common room and laundry facilities in buildings that are separate from all sleeping accommodation.

An education inspection took place in February 2019, and the school was judged as good. A separate report is available for this inspection.

Inspection dates: 15 to 17 October 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 good

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

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 5 October 2016

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is a fully inclusive culture, with students from 20 different countries living in harmony in a peaceful environment. Students are happy. They feel like they are living in a family. They have fun while learning about themselves and others. Boarding fully underpins their learning, and academic success is good, with most students going on to British universities.

Students say they can speak to staff about any concerns. As well as the daily dialogue, there are regular 'flat meetings'. These are important to the students, as they provide a formal forum in which students can express their concerns and preferences.

Staff arrange areas where students can go for some quiet time if they choose, or for a one-to-one meeting. An independent listener is also available to students. A high-quality, effective and efficient complaints system is also in place that students know how to use. A student said, 'People pay enough attention to me, so I always feel safe and I'm always sure that there is somebody if I need some help.' Students' voice is alive, listened to and responded to.

Staff demonstrate a strong enthusiasm for students to experience British culture and offer a range of activities in the local community and beyond. They support students to be involved in charity work in the local community and overseas. For example, students raised money for the Mexican earthquake relief fund. Some students go to the Kings School in Cambodia to help tutor other students and support the work there.

Catering is of an exceedingly high standard. It is noteworthy that the catering staff meet the dietary needs and requests for students from over 20 different countries without complaint. Staff have a good oversight of student nutrition and well-being. Mealtimes are social occasions when students enjoy each other's company across the age ranges. A real sense of the school community develops.

Staff plan inductions well. They are clear about who takes responsibility for transfers to and from the airport. Students arrive safely at the school or host family where they are warmly greeted.

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

Staff, with specific responsibilities for safeguarding, work well with other agencies. They share any necessary information and contribute to strategy meetings to agree approaches to keep students as safe as possible. Staff are confident to make dynamic risk assessments, when necessary, in the best interests of each student individually.

Staff have plans ready on the arrival of students to show how they will promote students' physical, mental and emotional well-being during their time in the United Kingdom. The principal has recently introduced pastoral meetings in which key staff identify any students in need of extra support. However, the designated safeguarding lead does not currently take a lead to offer guidance and support to formulate and review welfare plans when required.

Staff manage health and safety well. Practice is underpinned by meticulous policies, risk assessments and procedures to address all identified hazards and risks. There is a sincere desire to provide a safe environment for all students, and the standard is guided by 'what would I want for my own child?'

Staff expect a high standard of behaviour from students, who, equally, have high expectations of themselves. The 'ladder of behaviour' is a useful tool to promote this culture. Students are exceptionally well behaved.

Staff address e-safety well, with education being a strong focus. Staff deliver this in a fun and interactive way that helps students from overseas understand British law. Staff also educate host families in e-safety and ensure that they have appropriate safeguards in place, as recommended at the last inspection.

Senior leaders have made a considerable investment to improve the security of the building by introducing a fob system. There are appropriate safeguards in place for over-18s or visitors accessing the student accommodation, as required at the last inspection.

Staff follow the medication policy that clearly details the way in which they manage medication from overseas in the boarding facility. The policy does not include host families so, on occasion, it is unclear exactly what medication some young people from overseas have bought in and are storing in the host family's house.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The newly appointed accommodation manager has a good grasp on the overall operation of safely accommodating groups of foreign students. She is sensitive to the needs of students and maternal in approach. This enables students to feel settled and happy, confident that they have a trusted adult they can turn to if necessary. She has identified the issues in relation to retaining suitable residential staff and, working with the principal, is acting to improve this.

The head is a good leader. He is ambitious and confident, eager for professional dialogue and challenge. He has identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school within a short timeframe. He has used the national minimum standards and social care common inspection framework as a framework from which to develop clear

plans for future improvement and development. He has effective monitoring systems in place, such as the quarterly senior leaders' review that evaluates progress against the strategic plan.

Key staff liaise with the host families. They develop a good relationship, and many host families are long serving. Host families are complimentary about the support from the school, the communication and the training that they receive. Equally, key staff develop good relationships with agents and education guardians who are often the link to parents, and especially when parents do not speak English.

Staff like spending time with students. There is a genuine sense of enjoyment of the different personalities and cultures. Staff have high expectations of students who embrace and accept the standards expected of them. Staff understand their roles and receive regular training to ensure that they are competent and knowledgeable. They work as a team. A member of staff said, 'We are very much a team. We develop practices through shared discussions. We involve students, such as in the interview process and in choosing activities.' A student said, 'The staff are absolutely amazing people.' Line managers give termly supervision to staff and keep written supervision records, as required at the last inspection.

Students in the boarding accommodation live in a university-style facility. The rooms are of good quality and they can personalise them. Some communal areas would benefit from some soft furnishings, a repaint and other finishing touches to make them into a homelier environment.

What does the boarding school need to do to improve?

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Recommendations

- Utilise the designated safeguarding lead as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff and especially in the formulation and review of welfare plans.
- Expand the medication policy to include the arrangements for host families.
- Consider how to improve communal areas to make them a homely environment.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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: 1159262

Headteacher/teacher in charge: John Gale

Type of school: Boarding school

Telephone number: 01865 711829

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Inspectors

Keith Riley, social care inspector (lead)

John Pledger, social care inspector



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