



Office for Standards
in Education

Felixstowe International College

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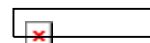
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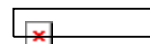
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Introduction and summary

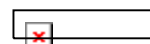


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the college



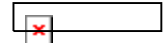
Felixstowe International College prepares students from overseas, predominantly Asian countries and principally Korea, for entry at a suitable stage to English independent boarding schools. No students have English as their mother tongue. The college endeavours to improve the English language skills of its students and their study skills in all academic subjects so that they can take advantage of educational opportunities elsewhere and, in due course, return to their country with a good working knowledge of English and with some British examination qualifications. Most students stay at the college for one academic year before proceeding to other independent boarding schools in the United Kingdom. A few continue their studies in the United States of America or return home.

The philosophy of the college is clearly set out in its prospectus: 'Friendship through education'. The college ethos is based on the principles and tradition of the Church of England and respect for the students' own cultures.

At the time of the inspection there were 23 students, 15 were male and 7 female, aged between the ages of 9 and 17 years and one adult female. All were Korean nationals apart from two Chinese students. Additionally, two adult Czech students were attending the college on a part-time basis, following a course to assist in their preparation for university entrance. All students of compulsory school age receive full-time education. There are no students with statements of special educational need. Students, including those over compulsory school age, prepare for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) or the GCSE in mathematics, English and science. Alternatively, in English they may prepare for the Cambridge Preliminary English Test or the Key English Test, according to aptitude and progress.

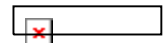
The college is situated in the seaside town of Felixstowe, in accommodation previously used by a boarding college for girls, which closed in 1994. This accommodation is used for boarding, academic study, dining and social purposes. The site is in a pleasant residential area about one mile from the town centre. The buildings date from 1830 with the dormitories housed in the new extension built in 1981 and are surrounded by a small grassed area and a playground. The college uses the facilities of the adjacent sports centre. The college underwent a full inspection of boarding conducted by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) in November 2003. No major concerns were identified.

Summary of main findings



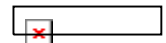
Felixstowe College provides a good education for students within an English context. Students make good progress whilst at the college, particularly in their knowledge of English, because they are well taught and keen to learn. The quality of the boarding environment is very good and contributes strongly to their personal development. The college is successful in its aims.

What the college does well



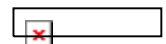
- It makes very good provision for the students' social and educational development within an English context;
- teaching and planning are good and are a major factor in the good progress which students make, particularly in English;
- the students have good attitudes to their work and are very well behaved;
- the provision for boarding is very good; it contributes strongly to the students' personal development;
- the students' spiritual and moral development is promoted well and a good emphasis is placed on their welfare, health and safety and
- the college provides good opportunities for creative and aesthetic development through students' involvement in music and drama.

What the college must do in order to comply with the regulations



- Maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995;
- ensure that all staff at the college have been subject, prior to confirmation of their appointments, to a check on their medical fitness and with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) to confirm their suitability to work with children;
- ensure that all staff who train, supervise or are in charge of children in boarding accommodation comply with Standard 38 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Colleges;
- the college should attend to all the matters detailed in section 6 regarding the information provided on request to parents and parents of prospective pupils
- ensure that the format of the college's complaints procedure complies with the detail of regulations specified in section 7.

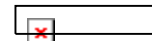
What must the college do in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA):



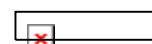
- produce a policy in line with the Act, including a three-year plan to improve disabled

access within affordable resources.

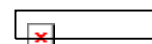
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the college



The quality of the curriculum



The overall curriculum provided for students is sound, with some good features, in particular the quality of the core curriculum of English, mathematics and science. The curriculum prepares students well for transfer to other independent schools. It is broad, but with a strong emphasis on the college's stated aim of developing English skills. Other subjects, for example humanities and home economics, are taught which reinforce this development by extending the range of vocabulary students meet and use. The content of these lessons is sometimes restricted because students are working in a second language, but it provides a useful introduction to college and the British way of life.

The curriculum provides all students with experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, creative and aesthetic aspects of education. It is enriched by business studies and an emphasis on drama and music.

Students are grouped into classes related to their age and ability in English. This is efficient, but results in mixed-age classes, although without an unduly wide age spread in any one class.

All students follow a course of study to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills, including touch-typing, and younger students study home economics, which features aspects of healthy lifestyles. Humanities usefully introduces students to some features of British geography and ancient history and contributes to their cultural awareness, but time allocation and the constraints of working in a second language do not permit study in depth.

There is good provision for music, led by a specialist teacher. Weekly whole-college music rehearsals prepare all students for performances at assemblies, termly concerts and theatrical productions. Additionally many students develop individual talents and interests in music through optional instrumental lessons. Timetabled provision for drama leads to theatrical productions and students enter the English Speaking Board examinations, with good results, including several distinctions.

Topics relevant to young people are covered in personal, social and health education (PSHE). The amount of time allocated to the discrete teaching of PSHE varies from class to class. Students' preparation for adult life is developed through stressing the importance of independence, self-organisation and work routines. This is reinforced by the experience of living and working co-operatively together in the boarding house. Students receive careers advice from the college management and through English lessons on subject choices and suitable routes through the British education systems.

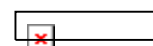
The college uses the facilities of the adjacent sports centre, although there are restrictions on the range of sporting activities the college can offer because of the numbers and mixed age of groups. However, students have opportunities to play cricket, football and basketball. Some competitive fixtures between college houses and with other schools are arranged. Optional extra subjects are available in evenings and at weekends. These include beginners' French and Spanish and extra-curricular activities such as golf and horse riding.

Curriculum planning relates closely to the college's aims, in particular the development of skills in English and awareness of British culture. The director of studies ensures its effective implementation. The timetable is organised efficiently. There are appropriate schemes of work in all subjects, tailored in the core curriculum to examination syllabuses and textbooks. Teachers' planning draws on students' previous learning and provides for regular assessment of their work, ensuring that the lessons are well focused, with clear outcomes. There are adequate resources to support the curriculum and some specialist facilities, for example, for home economics, art, music and ICT. Facilities for practical science are limited, but this does not prevent most students obtaining GCSE grades A*-C.

Most students stay for one academic year only, yet progress well in the short time they are at the college. International GCSE examinations are often taken after less than one year's study and therefore represent good achievement and, for some, very good achievement. Results in mathematics and science indicate good achievement, and for the English as a foreign language (EFL) tests results include several distinctions.

Students arrive with varying levels of competence in English. Written work and lessons observed show that all make good progress in written and spoken English; they are able to write at length and take care over spelling and presentation. Some students use sophisticated sentence structures and idiom. However, in general, the students' pronunciation lacks authenticity. Students' numeracy skills progress well over the time spent in the college and they are able to apply these skills in science and humanities. Within mathematics, students' progress is good and some were seen to make rapid progress. Students develop a sound theoretical scientific knowledge and an understanding of applications of science in life. They learn to use ICT software in all years; they apply this knowledge also in music and are able to touch-type competently.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching is good and is a major factor in the good progress which students make, most noticeably in the core subjects. No students have English as their first language. The quality of teaching in all subjects has a considerable impact on their acquisition of the language. All teachers either have specialist training in EFL or relevant experience. There are many specialist teachers, with good subject knowledge and sound methodology, suitable for EFL students. They provide very good subject-related vocabulary sheets or revision notes, written in ways which students find easy to understand and which assist progress in all subjects. However, a wider range and variety of teaching and learning methods would further assist students' assimilation of new material. Small class sizes allow teachers to give individual attention to students. Lessons have a clear focus and time is well managed. Resources are adequate but often supplemented by the teachers' own prepared materials. Facilities for the teaching of science allow for some practical experiments but the lack of a science laboratory room restricts the range.

Students are keen to learn and behave responsibly. They show interest in their lessons and good concentration over long periods of time. However, a wider range of teaching methods would facilitate their assimilation of new material and enhance their enjoyment of lessons. Best practice could be shared.

Students work hard to get to grips with difficulties they face working in a second language, showing

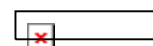
determination to succeed. They participate well in lessons and work conscientiously in class and in 'prep' time. They show enthusiasm for the creative opportunities afforded by the regular concerts and productions.

The quality of assessment is good. The college's assessment framework is based on its stated aims for acquisition of skills in English and therefore relates closely to public examination requirements. Regular assessment, particularly of subject-related vocabulary, is college policy for all classes. This ensures that students are aware of how they are progressing and teachers use assessment to inform their lesson planning. Students are given prompt feedback on their work, which is regularly marked and annotated with helpful comment. There are formal, written tests of progress in subjects and practice tests for examinations.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students



The college makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students.

The promotion of students' spiritual development is effective within the framework of the Anglican tradition, with a religious service every Monday and a visit to the local church on Sunday mornings. Many of the students have a well-developed aesthetic sense through their participation in music and they increase their visual sensitivity through art.

The college makes good provision for the students' moral development through the example set by the staff and the fairness implicit in the code of conduct of the college. Students can distinguish clearly between right and wrong and have respect for the law. PSHE lessons include topics such as helping the aged, racism, honesty and bullying. Moral issues are also considered in and other subjects: topics have included war and pacifism, animal testing, population control, the position of women, wealth and poverty and environmental issues.

The college's provision for personal and social development is very good. It is strongly promoted through boarding and the need to share and be self-reliant. During their time at the college, through the activities and termly productions, the students come to realise their own capabilities, take pride in their successes and gain in confidence. This was seen in their easy manner in interviews. The students learn to contribute to the college community, and every pupil has responsibility for some house duties. Students also take turns in serving and clearing away meals. House and teaching group prefects have further responsibilities: they meet with members of staff and are helpful to them. Relationships between students are good, fulfilling the college philosophy of 'Friendship through education'. Relationships between students and staff are friendly: students are co-operative and teachers supportive. The students show initiative in organising their use of time. Students are helpful to one another and are well aware that teachers and boarding staff may be approached for help. All students aged 14 or above take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which gives opportunities for environmental work and activities to promote teamwork and leadership. At Christmas, the students visit local institutions to sing for blind people and senior citizens. The college takes care to give praise and 'commendations' as rewards for good work or behaviour and to administer sanctions if needed. A cup is presented each term for the house with most 'commendations'. A college council of prefects and teaching group representatives meets to discuss matters relevant to the students' life at college.

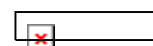
The college's provision for the students' cultural development is good. It emphasises the differences

between Korean and British customs. Most of the food is British in style and Korean menus are served each week. Students learn the conventions of British daily life and the nature of British festivals through their induction to the college, PSHE lessons and short stays with host families. Nine students are currently participating in a musical production by a local church group. Other aspects of different cultures are made apparent in humanities lessons, such as those on ancient Egypt and life in Roman times. Some aspects of other cultures are met in English or PSHE. Topics have included consideration of cultural stereotypes; for example, in relation to Islamic and Jewish culture. However, the nature of Britain's multi-cultural society could be emphasised more systematically. The students become familiar with public institutions and services; for example, in learning about the role of the local mayor (a governor) and through talks by the local police. Western culture is experienced through visits to London, Cambridge and Colchester, to concerts and to theatre productions. English newspapers are available in the common room. The ethos of the college promotes respect and harmony between students of different cultures and beliefs.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the students



The college makes good provision for the students' welfare, health and safety and staff know the students well within the small teaching groups and in the boarding house. The tutors give due emphasis to academic and pastoral matters and the progress and needs of individual students are discussed at staff meetings.

The college has thorough procedures and documentation for the students' welfare, including child protection. The director of studies has recently followed a child protection course and briefed other staff. The anti-bullying policy is helpfully supported by guidance in PSHE and a termly questionnaire through which students may raise any concerns. The college has a clear policy to promote good behaviour through rewards, 'commendations' and sanctions, if needed; clear records are kept. The college has a good policy for health and safety, and helpful guidance is given for outside visits. Regular fire practices are held at different times of day and night. Provision for First Aid is good and all students have a guardian residing in the United Kingdom. The kitchen is kept in a tidy, clean and hygienic state, with ingredients carefully separated and stored. Meals are varied and nutritious.

However, the college has yet to formulate a policy in line with the DDA and, in particular, has not produced the required three-year plan to improve disabled access within the resources it can afford.

The rate of attendance is very good and the attendance register is well kept. However, the admission register is not complete. It does not include dates of birth and does not always give the name and address of the student's parent or of the college last attended.

Boarding arrangements are very good, with a clear boarding policy and English and Korean staff. Supervision is good during the day, at 'prep', and in the late afternoon and evening, with weekend visits and activities such as cooking, golf and football. Arrangements for medical care are very good. The college nurse keeps a record of each student's state of health and provides treatment as necessary; all students are registered with the college doctor in Felixstowe. When students are ill, sensitivity is shown to their situation.

All students encountered on the inspection were very positive about the college and the students' questionnaires were positive overall. However, a significant proportion of returns indicated that some students do not agree that staff deal effectively with students who behave badly, and do not consider turning readily to a responsible adult if they have a problem. Interviews with students did

not reinforce these views, although a few younger ones did feel that those older were not always as supportive as they could be.

Since the NCSC inspection in November, certain action has been taken. Further emphasis has been placed on reporting bullying; additional child protection training has been undertaken and a form has been produced to record the action taken in checking the appointment of staff (although this is not used systematically). Bells have been fitted in the boarding house to facilitate contact with the house parent. Matters in hand are the compilation of a more comprehensive boarding house handbook, the appointment of a head of boarding and the preparation of care plans for students with particular difficulties.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

It meets all of the requirements but two.

What does the college need to do to comply with the regulations?

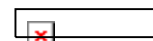
In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the college should:

- *maintain the admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (paragraph 3(9)).*

What does the college need to do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act?

- *produce a policy in line with the Act, including a three-year plan to improve disabled access within affordable resources.*

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



The college conducts a number of checks on the identity, references, employment history and qualifications of staff as part of the appointment process, but not all staff have been checked by the CRB as to their suitability to work with children. Two foreign nationals, for example, have not had a CRB check yet have been in the country for some time. No confirmation has been sought from agencies which send temporary staff, usually support staff, that they have conducted CRB checks. Adults from the local church who use the premises on Sundays have been checked as have host families. A useful checklist has been established following the NCSC boarding report to assist record keeping but this is not yet used consistently and systematically and there is no evidence of checks on the medical fitness of staff prior to appointment. Following changes into the roles of certain administrative staff there is some ambiguity about who has ultimate responsibility for making these checks.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

No.

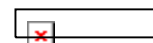
What does the college need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the college should:

- ensure that prior to confirmation of appointment, all staff have been checked with the CRB as to their suitability to work with children, and this at an enhanced level if the person will be regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge

- of persons aged under 18 (paragraph 4(b));
- carry out an appropriate check on medical fitness prior to confirmation of staff appointments (paragraph 4(c)); and
- in the case of staff who care for, train, supervise or are in charge of children in boarding accommodation, check that they also comply with Standard 38 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Colleges (paragraph 4(d)).

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The premises and accommodation are satisfactory overall for teaching and learning, and in many ways they are good for a small college.

Classrooms are bright, pleasant and in good condition, with effective sound proofing, so that noise does not interrupt teaching. Throughout the college, the accommodation is tidy, clean, hygienic and well maintained; it provides appropriate heating, lighting and ventilation. The classroom furniture is adequate and emergency exits are provided. Care has been taken to see that occasional Sunday college use of the classrooms poses no problems for students at the college. Facilities for sports are well supplemented by use of the sports centre next-door to the college. The washroom facilities are adequate, with plenty of wash basins.

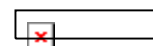
The college is resourceful in the use of its accommodation to ensure that it is used as efficiently as possible. However, classrooms are small in size, common room space is compact and the multiple use of rooms for library, computers, music, dining and science is inconvenient. The lack of a dedicated science laboratory makes the use of resources difficult and restricts the range of experiments which can be conducted. In the absence of a sick room, any student who is ill can be accommodated in a single study bedroom.

Almost all students have single study bedrooms with a desk, sink and storage space; the youngest students are two to a room, with bunk beds.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



The college has a detailed prospectus which contains much useful information for parents, including a statement of college aims and curriculum. There is a useful handbook for parents, parts of which have been translated into Korean. There are written policies on many aspects of college life but the college needs to let parents know that these are available on request. A newsletter gives information on college events and students' achievements but does not contain full details of examination results from the preceding college year.

There is a brief statement in information given to parents which mentions that complaints are to be addressed to the principal but no further indication of procedure and no indication of number of complaints are given.

Full reports to parents are issued each term, with details of students' attainment and motivation in

different subjects. Grades (for achievement and effort) from the termly examinations give parents a helpful general impression of the pupil's achievement. An interim report is also issued each half-term giving useful additional information to parents on the student's overall progress and effort. In the main reports, most subjects have a standardised description of the work covered, but some of the reports are too generalised and contain little subject specific comment and would benefit from more specific advice on how to improve.

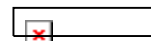
Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

The college meets most but not all of the requirements.

What does the college need to do to comply with the regulations?

- order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the college should:
 - ensure that parents are aware that they may request the following information:
 - policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of students misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h));
 - particulars of academic performance during the preceding college year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i)); and
 - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the college, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding college year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

7. The effectiveness of the college's procedures for handling complaints



There is an appropriate policy for responding to complaints by students. However, the existing complaints policy for parents does not clearly specify the procedures to be followed at each stage and therefore does not meet regulations. The current statement is too general in nature. Parents are also not made aware that details of the complaints procedure are available on request.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

No.

What does the college need to do to comply with the regulations?

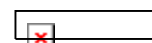
In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- there are clear time scales for the management of the complaint (paragraph 7(c));
- a formal complaint can be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint (paragraph 7(e));
- if the parents are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matter (paragraph 7(f));
- where there is a panel hearing of a complaint there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the college (paragraph 7(g));
- parents may attend the panel hearing, and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h));
- the panel makes findings and recommendations and stipulates that the

complainant, proprietors and headteacher, and, where relevant, the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i));

- written records are kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j));
- correspondence, statements and records of complaints are kept confidential (paragraph 7(k));
- its procedures comply with Standard 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Colleges (paragraph 7(l)).

College details



Name of college:	Felixstowe International College		
DfES ref number:	935/6076		
Type of college:	Boarding		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of students:	9-17 years		
Gender of students:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time students):	Boys 15,	Girls 8,	Total 23
Number of boarders:	Boys 15,	Girls 8,	Total 23
Number of students with a statement of special educational need:	Boys	Girls	Total 0
Annual fees (day students):	N/A		
Annual fees (boarders):	£16,500		
Address of college:	Maybush House Maybush Lane Felixstowe Suffolk IP11 7NA		
E-mail address:	Felixic/rmplc.co.uk		
Telephone number:	01394 282388 / 01394 671780		
Fax number:	01394 276926		
Principal:	Mrs Jungshill Lee		
Proprietor:	Felixstowe International E-WHA		
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Honoree Gordon HMI		
Dates of inspection:	4-7 May 2004		