

Bellerby's Tutorial College

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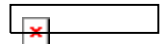
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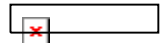
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Introduction and summary

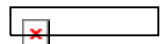


Purpose and scope of the inspection



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 college's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the college



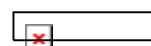
Bellerby's College in Cambridge is part of Study Group International, which owns sister colleges situated in London, Brighton and Hove and Oxford. It provides education for male and female students between the ages of 14 and 22 years of age. The vast majority of students are foreign nationals for whom English is not their principal language. There are currently 334 students on roll of whom 15 are of compulsory school age (below the age of 16).

Established in 1996, the college states its prime aim as preparing international students for entry to university in the United Kingdom. It is situated on two main sites. The Manor site is a self-contained campus located in the north of the city, approximately two kilometres from its centre. Queens campus is located in attractive old buildings, adjacent to the Botanic Gardens and five minutes from

the centre of Cambridge. Students are accommodated either in the college's own halls of residence or with local host families selected by the college. The brochure emphasises the importance placed on providing students with a supportive environment in which to study.

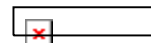
The college offers a wide range of courses for students at many stages of their academic development. These lead to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), the International GCSE (IGCSE), Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced level (A2). A large number of students follow the college's university foundation programme. In addition it offers an English preparation course for students who need to improve their English before joining academic courses. There are a relatively small number of students of compulsory school age in the college, most of whom study GCSE, IGCSE or take the programme designed to improve their language proficiency.

Summary of main findings



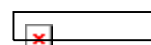
Bellerby's Cambridge is a good college overall. It offers a wide range of curricular opportunities. The quality of teaching is good. It is successful with the majority of its older students in its aim of ensuring that students proceed to university. It demonstrates concern for the welfare of students which is evident in the positive college ethos. It meets most of the statutory requirements, but needs to ensure that the issues identified by this inspection are addressed.

What the college does well



- it responds flexibly to individual students needs;
- students generally make good progress, including those who enter with limited English; nearly all the older students secure places at university;
- the quality of teaching is good;
- staff are very well qualified;
- it makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of its students;
- leadership ensures clear vision for the improvement and development of the college; and
- the premises and accommodation for academic study are good overall.

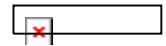
What the college must do in order to comply with the regulations



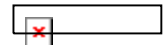
- provide appropriate careers guidance for secondary-aged students;
- maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995;
- ensure that, prior to confirmation of the appointment of all staff, appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references, and ensure that such information has been taken into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed;
- ensure that checks are completed of staff who care for, supervise, or are in charge of, children in boarding accommodation;

- provide facilities on both sites for students who are ill;
- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware that the information identified in section 6 is available from the college;
- review the complaints procedure to meet the requirements fully and make the procedure known to students and their parents; and
- comply fully with standard 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools as identified in the April 2004 report of the Commission for Social Care inspection (CSCI).

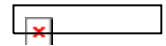
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the college



The quality of the curriculum



The college offers a suitably wide range of courses for students at various stages of academic development. It provides students with the opportunity of progressing from learning English through to university entrance. As well as evidence of previous academic performance, the college uses International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores to determine appropriate courses for students prior to entry.

The college responds flexibly to individual students' needs. Overall, courses are appropriate for students across a range of ages and abilities. Although most students are catered for within the main levels of study, movement between courses is possible. The majority of students follow either the college's university foundation programme or GCE Advanced level courses (AS and A2). Foundation course students may choose from a wide range of specialist subjects, including, for example, art, engineering and business studies. There are currently 15 students who are of compulsory school age, seven of whom are taking GCSE; most of the other younger students take an English proficiency course. The overall time spent by individual students on the English proficiency is variable according to their progress, but is for a maximum of two terms. Students taking GCSE courses may be older than sixteen and occasionally, for example in cases of high ability, they may proceed to Advanced level courses when they are younger than sixteen.

A wide range of curriculum opportunities are available to students of compulsory school age taking GCSE courses. They study a minimum of five subjects, including English, mathematics and personal, social and health education (PSHE). They are required to take games as an extra-curricular activity. The PSHE provision reflects the aims and ethos of the college. However, younger students who take IELTS courses do not have the same regular opportunity, in particular the minority who are based on the Queens site. The college needs to address this inconsistent provision for compulsory aged students. Although there is good careers support for older students preparing for university, provision for younger students is inadequate to meet the requirement.

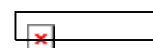
Curriculum policies and structures are clearly set out in a brochure provided by Bellerby's family of colleges. Schemes of work have a number of positive features but are varied in the quality of support that they provide for teaching and learning. Although all departments are now required to

have an outline scheme of work, greater detail would be beneficial in some cases. For example, the scheme for art provides helpful detail to support students' progression in learning where a group of GCSE students is shared by more than one member of staff.

There are no students with statements of special educational need (SEN). However, despite the difficulties of distinguishing between learning needs and language difficulties, the college is aware of the need to monitor for SEN. Students are identified for additional support as appropriate. During the last academic year two students were provided with such support.

The college has established a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They include sports, for example badminton, soccer and basketball. Other activities, such as a debating group, contribute effectively to preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The college keeps records of the participation of students in these activities, which have the potential of providing support for their future university applications.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



Overall the quality of teaching is good across the full range of courses offered. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory with most being good and some very good. The highest proportion of good or better teaching was observed on the GCSE and A2 courses. There was very good teaching in some of the art, biology, business studies, English and mathematics lessons observed.

Teachers' specialist subject knowledge and enthusiasm is evident in many lessons and is a strength of the teaching. Other strengths include the careful structuring of students' work, particularly necessary in two-hour timetabled sessions, and the use of clearly identified learning outcomes.

Most teachers are effective and clear communicators, sensitive to the particular needs of students for whom English is not their first language. In their teaching there is an awareness of the linguistic challenges students face. This is seen in their use of vocabulary and in the recognition and identification of technical language required in particular subjects. Good communication is evident in the care and attention to detail seen in notes written on the whiteboard, sometimes enhanced by the use of colours. In the best lessons, during oral work students are encouraged to respond in full sentences, while other members of the class listen critically and contribute to refining the response. Well intentioned attempts to assist students' learning are, in a few cases, inappropriate. Examples include the use of block capitals and oral work where teachers answer their own questions or interrupt students.

For many courses the content and approach are determined by a chosen textbook. In some classes students' work is constrained when they have not all acquired the textbook. In most classes there is a good sense of pace, necessary for the delivery of the courses. The best teaching reflects responsiveness to the students' level of understanding and demonstrates the confidence to adapt the lesson accordingly, which results in faster progress.

In most lessons the small group sizes makes it possible to address the needs of all learners. For example, in one GCSE lesson the teacher successfully planned different work for a group being prepared for two levels of entry. However, occasionally, the pace of a lesson is dictated both by the course content and the most able students but fails to meet the needs of the lower attaining students.

The relationships between staff and students are very good, with mutual respect that enhances the classroom experience. In the best practice there is a relaxed atmosphere; humour contributes to the teaching and learning alongside academic rigour and high expectations. In some of the English

language teaching a supportive atmosphere encourages students to speak out, not afraid or embarrassed to make mistakes in their learning.

Students generally make good progress, including those who enter with limited English. The college's analysis of examination results shows that the success rates are higher at Advanced level than GCSE. Pass rates at GCSE are variable, partly reflecting the small numbers entered for some subjects, the linguistic demands of the individual subjects and the particular aptitudes of students. Of the subjects with larger entries, students achieve well in art and design and mathematics. Over the last three years pass rates at Advanced level have been very good with a consistently high proportion of students achieving A and B grades in mathematics and chemistry. These results have enabled the majority of students to succeed in their aim of progressing to an English university. Similarly most of the students following the foundation courses succeed in this aim.

The college has issued guidelines for planning, teaching and assessment to all staff. There is an expectation that there will be regular assessment through homework and set tests and that these are used to monitor students' progress and to inform their learning. While underperforming students are referred to a senior tutor, it may be helpful for the college to formalise aspects of their assessment in order to centrally monitor the progress of all students in all subjects.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

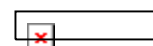
The college meets most but not all of the requirements.

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

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

- provide appropriate careers guidance for secondary-aged students (paragraph1(2)(g)).

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



The college's provision for students' moral, social and cultural development is good, but there are weaknesses in the provision for their spiritual development.

The college has not yet considered how students' spiritual development might be addressed. Nevertheless it has demonstrated that it is sympathetic and responsive to students' spiritual interests. For example, as part of the college's induction programme students are given information about places of worship in the locality. The college does not yet identify opportunities to promote a spiritual dimension within the curriculum. However, there is time for reflection and debate in a discussion group offered as part of the Wednesday afternoon activities programme.

The provision for students' moral development is good with several opportunities to assist this; for example, the inclusion of a contribution from the local police in the college induction programme. The student code of conduct, particularly as it relates to relationships with host families, encourages consideration and respect for others. This is supported by the positive role models provided by staff in their relationships with students.

Provision for students' social development is good. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities provided by staff, including sporting, recreational, academic, cultural and social pursuits. Given the diverse cultures and backgrounds of students they relate very well to each other, supporting each other in class and generally being sociable and friendly. This is a strength of the

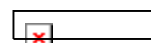
college.

Provision for cultural development is good. The rich cultural traditions represented by the student body mean that there are many opportunities for students' cultural development. These are exploited well in some lessons, for example in a business studies lesson where students identified successful businesses operating within the economic systems of their own countries.

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 welfare, health and safety of its students. Appropriate policies are in place for anti-bullying, child protection, disciplinary procedures, health and safety and fire procedure. The policies are clear and comprehensive and they are promoted through posters displayed in teaching rooms and notice boards throughout the college. There are staff with First Aid qualifications available on both sites throughout the college's hours of operation. There is an identified member of staff for child protection issues who is well qualified for this role and who takes a keen interest in students' welfare.

Each student is allocated to a personal tutor with whom they have weekly contact. The work of the tutor is overseen by senior tutors responsible for the different courses on each site. Additionally, welfare officers have been appointed on both sites. They are approachable and responsive to students' needs. Students are aware of whom to approach should a personal problem arise. The appointment of a Chinese Language Counsellor has greatly benefited communication between the college and its Chinese students and also their parents.

The behaviour of the students in class and around the college sites is very good. Students are affable and integrate well, conducting themselves in an adult manner and creating a friendly and supportive international ethos. Any instances of inappropriate conduct are taken seriously by the college. Written records of such instances and the sanctions applied are recorded in students' files. It would be helpful for a separate log to be kept on each site as a cumulative central record.

A manual attendance register is kept with entries transferred to a computer with regular printouts that satisfy the regulatory requirements. The admission register is maintained centrally on a sophisticated database by Bellerby's central administration. This satisfies the regulatory requirements in most respects, although occasionally the names of parents were not recorded.

In response to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 the college has had an external review of access provision at both sites conducted by a firm of chartered surveyors. This detailed and thorough audit has resulted in a report that includes the necessary recommendations and costings for full access, which has yet to be fully implemented.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

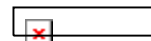
The college meets most but not all of the requirements.

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

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

- maintain an admissions register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (3(9)).

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



The leadership demonstrates clear vision for the future improvement and development of the college. The management structure has been recently revised. Developments clarify the roles and responsibilities of key members of the college management and administration team. The developments are clearly aimed at improving the effectiveness of management and administration, and further improving the college's provision and support for students.

Staff at the college are very well qualified; a number additionally have qualifications suited to students of compulsory school age. There is a suitable number of staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. There are sufficient teachers with qualifications to meet the general needs of overseas students, as well as the specific teaching of English as a second language. Over half the staff teaches at the college on a full time basis. A number of staff provide high quality support for students through the extra-curricular activities that have started recently. Non-teaching staff make a significant contribution to the college through their hard work and commitment.

Clear procedures are established for undertaking staff checks, although checks on a minority of teaching and non-teaching staff have still to be returned to the college. The recent inspection of boarding and welfare by the (CSCI) highlighted concerns relating to the vetting and recruitment of host families. Action needs to be taken to ensure that all such checks are now completed as a matter of the utmost urgency.

Staff training needs are identified by heads of department. The budget for supporting staff training and development has recently been increased, but there are still constraints on the extent of training that can be provided for the relatively large staff. The recent report produced following inspection by the CSCI highlighted limitations placed upon meeting the training needs of boarding staff. Staff training needs could be identified more effectively through quality assurance strategies, including the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

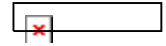
No.

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:

- prior to confirmation of the appointment of all staff, ensure that appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their identity, medical fitness, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references and such information has been taken into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed paragraph (4(c)); and
- in the case of staff who care for, train, supervise, or are in charge of children in boarding accommodation, procedures need to comply with Standard 38 of the national Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (4(d)), (as indicated by the recent CSCI report).

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



Overall, the premises and accommodation for academic study are good. Both the Manor and Queens sites provide pleasantly decorated accommodation for teaching and learning. The accommodation on the Manor site is well suited to the education of students of compulsory school age and the Queens site reflects the predominantly older students. At the time of the inspection the learning environment was significantly enhanced by art work displayed for scrutiny by the examination board. The college does not always consider how the display of a range of students' work might support the development of writing and other aspects of learning.

The college's specialist accommodation is good. It is very good for science and good for art and information and communication technology. Without exception classrooms seen during the inspection, were adequate for the number of students and provided teachers with sufficient space to employ a range of strategies and to provide individual support to students as necessary. They are well and furnished with predominantly new tables and chairs. Facilities for the specialist teaching of information technology are appropriately equipped with adjustable chairs.

Overall resources are appropriate to meet the needs of teaching and learning. The high quality of the science preparation area is notable, as is the support available from qualified laboratory assistants. The use of computers is beginning to develop across the curriculum. For example the art department has two computers, supported by appropriate software; this provides an important tool for extending students' learning opportunities. There is good library accommodation on both college sites. The standard of furnishing in both libraries is very good. The college is aware of the need to continue developing the stock of books at the Queens site.

Accommodation is clean and well maintained. The quality of even the older parts of the buildings is testament to the support provided by cleaners and those charged with its maintenance. Although there are sufficient toilets and washrooms for the use of students and staff, the arrangements of a block of student toilets on the Queens site with a single entrance for male and female students is inappropriate and requires modification. Similarly on the Manor site the common entrance to male staff and students' toilets is inappropriate. Appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill are now established on the Manor site, following a deficiency previously highlighted by the inspection of boarding and welfare. However, there is still no such room on the Queens site. Dining rooms on both sites are clean and attractive. During the inspection the quality and range of food provided was good, with clear evidence of care in its preparation.

As mentioned elsewhere boarding and welfare was recently the subject of specialist inspection. In the context of this inspection it is evident that the college has already made a number of changes to meet a number of issues highlighted as needing improvement. The college is aware of its obligations to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

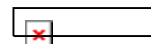
The college meets nearly of the requirements for registration.

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:

- provide facilities on the Queens site for students who are ill paragraph(5(l)).

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



All the information required by the regulations is available in the college. However, parents are not made aware of the fact that some of it is available to them on request. The college considerably exceeds the minimum requirement for the provision of reports to parents. The reports examined during the inspection, whilst an effective form of communication in many respects, provided limited information. The college could consider how reports could be further improved by emphasising what students have achieved and what they must do to improve further.

The college needs to undertake a review of the information provided for parents and prospective parents. Both the college and the parent company should ensure that their chosen means of providing information meets the regulatory requirements fully. Where it is not a requirement to provide specific aspects of information directly to parents and prospective parents, it should be made clear in brochures and other material provided that it is available on request from the college. Currently this is not the case. Whilst the form of brochures is a matter for the college and the mother company, the current brochure provides limited opportunity for the Cambridge College to express its distinctive individual ethos.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

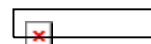
The college meets most but not all of the requirements.

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

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

- ensure that parents and prospective parents are aware that the following information is available from the college:
 - particulars of policies on 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 for the preceding year, including the results of any public examinations paragraph (6(2)(i));
 - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the college paragraph (6(2)(j)); and
 - the number of staff employed at the college, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications paragraph (6(2)(k)).

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



The college has recently produced a complaints procedure that is clearly described with details of the process, identified persons as points of contact and the possible outcomes at each stage. The intention is to maintain a record of all complaints. While entirely within the spirit of the regulatory requirements there are a few matters of detail in which the current draft is not fully compliant. These include making explicit what may currently be implicit in the procedures.

Does the college meet the requirements for registration?

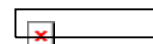
No.

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:

- provide for a formal complaint to be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint (paragraph 7(e));
- provide for a panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulate that the complainant, proprietors and headteacher, and where relevant, the person complained about, should be given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i));
- provide for a written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j));
- ensure that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 163 of the Education Act 2002 requests access to them (paragraph 7(k)); and
- comply with standard 5 of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools as identified in the April 2004 CSCI report (paragraph 7(l)).

College details



Name of college:	Bellerby's Tutorial College
DfES ref number:	873/6023
Type of college:	Tutorial College
Status:	Independent
Age range of students:	14 - 22 years
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time students):	Boys 180, Girls 154, Total 334
Number of boarders:	Boys 180, Girls 154, Total 334
Annual fees (boarders):	£4,605 per term - English Language
	£5,130 per term - GCSE
	£5,255 per term - A level
	£5,130 per term - Foundation
Address of college:	Manor Campus Arbury Road CAMBRIDGE CB4 2JF
E-mail address:	cambridge@bellerbys.com
Telephone number:	01223 517037
Fax number:	01223 517038
Headteacher:	Mr Eric Squires
Proprietor:	Study Group
Lead Inspector:	Mr Mike Thirkell HMI
Dates of inspection:	27 - 30 September 2004

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