

Bosworth Independent College

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	928/6062
Unique Reference Number	122149
Social care URN	SC012963
Inspection number	322243
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Marianick Ellender-Gelé HMI
Social Care inspector	Sue Michowicz SCI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Inspection of social care (welfare) was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005. The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided and to inform the Secretary of State at the DCSF as to the school's continued suitability for registration as an independent school.

This report details whether the school meets the requirements for educational provision and outlines the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

Information about the college

Bosworth Independent College is an international, secondary boarding school situated near the centre of Northampton. The college, established in 1977, has 298 students aged 14 to 22 with over two-thirds of these from overseas. The remainder, about 50 students, are from the local area. Almost all overseas students speak English as a second language and their proficiency in English, on entry to the college, varies from beginners to fluent. The largest overseas group is Chinese. Overseas students are boarders and their accommodation is within walking distance from the academic buildings. The main aim of the college is to seek academic excellence and the great majority of students continue their studies at a university in the United Kingdom. Mutual respect for all ethnic backgrounds and cooperation between all members of the college community are central to the life of the college. The previous inspection was in November 2003.

Evaluation of the college

The quality of education provided by Bosworth College is good. The curriculum allows students to select courses from a good range of subjects and to be supported in their acquisition of English. Teaching is good, attitudes to learning are outstanding and, consequently, students make good progress. The ways in which the students are taught, the range of cultures represented at the college and the very good quality of relationships provide opportunities for good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for the welfare, health and safety of students in the boarding residences is inconsistent with some being very good, some satisfactory and some where standards are only partially met. Provision is satisfactory in the academic college buildings. Areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been addressed well. Most of the regulations are met and plans are in hand to comply more fully with the National Minimum Standards for boarding provision.

Quality of education

The college provides a good broad-based curriculum. It has significant strengths, particularly in enabling students to choose the academic pathways that best suit their interests and abilities. Most of the curriculum is based on preparation for national examinations and for university. The college is particularly proficient in offering scientific and mathematical subjects. There is satisfactory provision for students to develop information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The aesthetic subjects, while available at GCSE, are not strongly represented at A-level.

For the majority of overseas students, tests in English, on entry to the college, are used to identify those who have insufficient knowledge of the language to have full access to the curriculum. Intensive English courses enable students to develop their fluency rapidly. The college also provides a specialist art and design preparation course combined with intensive English language teaching. Specific pathways prepare students well for medical and legal university courses. Courses for gifted students are good with provision of additional preparation for those who wish to apply to Oxford or Cambridge. The college runs a suitable range of physical activities, however take-up for the older students tends to be mainly by the boys and the range of sports on offer does not sufficiently meet the needs of girls.

There is a satisfactory personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme for the younger students and, for the older students, relevant individual tutorial sessions. The 'Thursday activities', for example, include languages, physical activities, drama, knitting, art and music. 'Mini Term', a 10 day session which takes place in June after examinations have finished, provides students with a wide range of activities. Work experience and careers education have improved since the previous inspection and are enhancing young people's personal development.

Teaching is good overall, with some outstanding and some satisfactory teaching. Teaching shows good subject knowledge, uses imaginative presentation, is pitched at the right level to meet students' needs, challenges them to analyse and express responses clearly and accurately, and uses praise to acknowledge progress. Questioning is used well to encourage students to think and to develop confidence in the use of spoken English. Although still satisfactory, some teaching is less effective when lessons lack pace and make too few demands on students to react and express their views. Not enough use is made of paired or group work with insufficient opportunities for students to work independently, or to develop confidence in speaking. Assessment is good and ensures that students know their targets and how to achieve them. Assessment of students' acquisition of English is accurate, with regular testing which shows clearly how well students are progressing, and identifies where they need to do better.

Progress is good and, since the previous inspection, better use of individual targets has helped students to understand how to improve. Parents and students comment very positively on the college's contribution to successful academic achievement.

Students show excellent progress in their acquisition of the English language. Progress in speaking is good for many, although some young people, usually girls, need extreme reassurance to 'have a go'. Lessons are well focused and, along with small teaching groups and one-to-one support, contribute to rapid improvement. Students show outstanding levels of engagement and perseverance. Participation in extra-curricular academic learning results in increased cultural, economic and business awareness. Progress in physical and aesthetic aspects of learning is only satisfactory because provision for these areas of learning is underdeveloped.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students' behaviour is outstanding; they take responsibility for their own behaviour and for making choices about the courses they will follow. They become sensible, mature and thoughtful young people. The college deals with the rare instances of racism or bullying rapidly and appropriately. Tutors know students well and understand fully their welfare, spiritual and cultural needs. Students have an outstanding attitude to their work, taking a great deal of interest and pride in it. Relationships within the college are very good. Students enjoy the courses they follow and are keen to do well. They work quietly and with great concentration in lessons. Their attendance is good and there is little unauthorised absence.

Because students make good progress, they develop their skills and knowledge to a very high level. Their understanding of English public institutions and services is high, particularly for the many students who take law and business courses. The subjects that students study equip them extremely well for the next stage of education and for their future lives. They are particularly good at developing their understanding and appreciation of, and respect for their own and other cultures. Some students take the initiative to experience the wider world, for example by working in charity shops. The provision, which enables them to contribute to decision making within the college, is underdeveloped.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of students is satisfactory. The college provides relevant guidance to students on healthy life styles through the tutorial and PSHE programmes. Personal tutors are clear about the requirements for safeguarding young people and they know how to ensure that students are safe at the college. The weekly compulsory physical education offers a suitable choice of activities for students of compulsory school age. The college has no sports facilities of its own but makes regular use of local facilities.

The college has an effective anti-bullying policy. Students feel safe and know how to keep safe. They are very confident about speaking to staff, including their personal tutors, if they feel at risk or have any other concerns. The college fulfils its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (2002) and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure full access. The records of incidents are kept in a book together with the

record of complaints, child protection issues and racist incidents. This is inappropriate; as a matter of urgency these records should be kept separately and child protection issues and complaints should be confidential.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Some of the requirements regarding the suitability of all staff are not met fully but procedures for appointing teachers rightly involve taking up professional references and checking qualifications. Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau for the suitability of all staff who work at the college and the Single Central Record are only partially in place and require updating. Long-serving members of staff have not been checked in this way, but plans are in hand to make this a requirement.

College's premises and accommodation

The academic part of the college is totally separate from the boarding accommodation. Teaching areas, on the whole, enable safe and effective learning. There is good accommodation for teaching science and art. There are sufficient computers in the ICT room. One regulation is not met because students do not have access to outdoor space at the academic buildings. The inconsistent quality of the boarding accommodation is detailed in the last section of this report.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The college sends out good materials to inform parents and prospective parents of the college's ethos, aims, policies and of their right to request particular documents. Recent amendments to this information have resulted in only one regulation not being met. The college does not inform parents that they can request the details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the previous college year. Academic and welfare reports to families are very comprehensive and the personal tutor's overview letter is of high quality.

Procedures for handling complaints

There is a policy for handling complaints which parents and prospective parents are informed they may request. The procedures comply with most regulations. However, the hearing panel, appointed by the proprietor, does not include at least three people not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint and it does not state that parents who wish to attend the panel hearing can be accompanied. The policy does not make clear that all records of complaints are to be kept confidential and that, where relevant, the person complained about will be given a copy of any findings.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The college meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- ensure that an enhanced criminal record check is made and certificates obtained for the identity, qualifications and references of all staff prior to the confirmation of appointment (paragraph 4(2)(b))
- ensure that the college complies with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (paragraph 4(2)(e))
- ensure that the Single Central Register, in relation to each member of staff in post on or after 1 August 2007, is fully completed and ensure compliance with the relevant National Minimum Standards for boarding accommodation (paragraph 4C(2&3)).

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- make appropriate arrangements for safe outside space for students (paragraph 5(t)).

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j)).

The college does not meet all requirements in respect of procedures for handling complaints (standard 7) and must:

- ensure that the hearing panel includes at least three people who have not been directly involved in the complaint (paragraph 7(f))
- ensure that procedures state that parents can be accompanied if they wish (paragraph 7(h))
- ensure that the complaint procedure stipulates that all correspondence and records will be kept confidential (paragraph 7(i))
- ensure that the complaint procedure stipulates that the person complained about will be given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(k)).

What the college could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the college might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Improve teaching further through strategies that allow students to develop their oral skill with more confidence across all subjects of the curriculum, reducing the focus on teacher-talk, and which promote independent learning and speaking.
- Provide more genuine opportunities for students to take responsibilities and engage them fully in making decisions about provision at the college and about their welfare and life outside the college.
- Develop healthy lifestyles by improving the range of physical activities, especially for older girls.

Evaluation of boarding provision

The college boarding provision has been assessed under the five outcomes of Every Child Matters – Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution, Economic Wellbeing and Organisation. The school has met a number of key standards with either a good or satisfactory outcome. There are key areas which have been partially met; these are reflected in the recommendations, which have reduced the overall outcome to inadequate. Those areas partially met pertain to training, policy re access to the college, refurbishment of premises and recruitment systems.

Young people are supported by health policies which identify major health hazards and address issues such as substance abuse. The college does not employ a qualified nurse; however, a designated person oversees the first aid and clinical arrangements for young people who require medical attention. Evidence has been provided by the college to explain the systems for recording sickness or welfare issues and how these systems are monitored. Medical appointments are made by the college with staff available to support young people if required.

There are policies and procedures in place which ensure young people are protected from bullying and abuse. Systems are in place which enable them to voice any concerns. Young people reported having a supportive staff team who they can speak to should the need arise. Training in child protection is provided to all care staff, however, not all ancillary staff who have contact with boarders have received this training leaving young people at risk. Boarders report discipline to be fair with no unacceptable punishments. There is no use of physical restraint in the school. The college has a missing person's policy which is currently under review to ensure it

includes procedures in place for young people living in the independent houses. A complaints procedure is available to young people and significant others which meets the National Minimum Standards, however, necessary improvements have been highlighted in the education section of the report to ensure the policy is in line with current legislation. Young people reported little need to make formal complaints with their concerns and needs being addressed quickly by staff. They were confident that any complaints made would be dealt with effectively without them being penalised in any way. A copy of the complaints procedure is provided to parents on request. The privacy of young people is maintained through mutual respect. Staff were observed knocking and waiting at doors, showing consideration towards the needs of the boarders.

There are fire procedures and practices in place which maintain the ongoing safety of young people. Newly established procedures have been introduced for the independent houses which will be cascaded through a training session to all boarders living in these houses. The college has a staff recruitment policy and procedure. However, these are not rigorously implemented for management to ensure that the staff employed are fit to work with young people. In addition some records are incomplete with relevant written references and immigration work permits missing from the files. All contractors in college whilst boarders are present are accompanied at all times by a member of staff with a Criminal Records Bureau check. There is no written policy restricting access to college premises by people from outside the college. Coded key pads, window restrictors and close circuit television cameras in all communal areas are used to support the safety of boarders and staff. The college identifies high risk areas and ensures they remain safe for young people. Health and safety systems are in place; all staff involved in boarding are expected to be alert to any safety hazards and report them immediately. There is no formalised training in such things as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (C.O.S.H.H.) for ancillary staff. C.O.S.H.H. data sheets are not readily available to cleaning staff leaving staff and boarders at risk. PAT testing is undertaken when new boarders arrive.

Young people identified many people to whom they could turn for support, including personal tutors, a counsellor, boarding staff, teaching staff and senior management. The school has appointed an independent listener who has a clear understanding of the role. Every boarder has a personal tutor to turn to for academic and personal support. There is no inappropriate discrimination experienced by young people at the college. The staff and students treat each other with respect. The atmosphere is seen to be harmonious and friendly. Young people are encouraged to make contact with their local cultural community; religious festivals are observed as are dietary requirements. All young people are supported to integrate into school life by a staff team which is committed to equal opportunities for all.

There is a variety of formal opportunities for young people to express their views and contribute to the operation of boarding provision including surveys and boarding meetings. The school is establishing a separate boarding council which will include delegates from each house. Boarders report that there is little need for the formal

approach as they are able to speak directly and freely to staff if they have specific needs or requirements. Boarders are enabled to contact their families and friends in private by telephone, email and post with most boarders possessing their own mobile phones. Staff contact parents about any significant welfare concerns relating to their child at college.

The college provides a variety of accommodation which includes hostels, host families and independent houses. The standard of accommodation for host families visited was of a high standard providing young people with personal space which is comfortable, attractive and well maintained. The hostels provide supervised accommodation which was clean and tidy on the day of inspection. There are nineteen independent houses which provide young people with the opportunity to live without supervision, preparing them for adulthood. These houses range in size and those that have been refurbished have been completed to a good standard. However, there are still a number of houses that require attention to ensure comfortable surrounds are provided to all young people. The college has a rolling refurbishment programme for all of its accommodation. The college employs cleaners who spend an hour a day in each of the independent houses; however, there is an inconsistent standard in cleaning implemented in some of the houses. The college has been asked to review their practice of charging boarders in hostel accommodation for the use of the laundry facilities.

There is a suitable statement of the college principles and practices which is made available to all prospective parents and boarders. A boarder's handbook is provided on admission. The college has a monitoring system which ensures records such as child protection, complaints, the use of sanctions and bullying are regularly monitored for trends with actions taken in response to the findings. Presently the college holds all records in one hardback book which does not fully maintain the confidentiality of the documents. The college is reviewing how these records are maintained as part of their quality audit system, therefore a recommendation has not been made. Although boarding staff have undertaken child protection training, they do not receive an ongoing training package to fully support their professional development or the safety of the young people. A small number of non teaching and boarding staff have not had sufficient training in understanding their role in promoting respect for all students and valuing the international ethos of the college. The college benefits from a proactive management team who are fully aware of their responsibilities for the safeguarding of the young people in their care. Feedback from young people was positive in relation to the management of the college, believing they were extremely well supported to achieve academically and that their individual spiritual and social needs were met in a professional, sensitive and supportive manner.

Recommendations

Staying Safe

- Ensure all staff employed at the school who have contact with young people receive child protection training, this includes ancillary staff (NMS 3.5)
- Ensure the school follows its recruitment procedure, with all relevant security checks held on file (NMS 38.2)
- Ensure a written policy is developed which provides clear guidance with regard to restricting access to college premises and boarders by people from outside the college and which is implemented in practice (NMS 41.4).

Economic Wellbeing

- Ensure that the standard of decoration and furnishing of all accommodation provided for boarders is adequate and that the standard of cleanliness is consistently maintained in all houses (NMS 40).

Organisation

- Ensure opportunities are provided for training and updating in boarding practice (which include child protection procedures and health and safety) for all staff, including new and experienced staff, in line with their roles and responsibilities (NMS 34).

College details

Name of college	Bosworth Independent College		
DCSF number	928/6062		
Unique reference number	122149		
Unique reference number (social care)	SC012963		
Type of college	International residential secondary		
Status	Independent		
Date college opened	1977		
Age range of pupils	14-22		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 170	Girls: 128	Total: 298
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Number of boarders	Boys: 139	Girls: 101	Total: 240
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 9,000		
Annual fees (boarders)	£ 15,800 – £18,800		
Address of college	Nazareth House Leicester Parade Barrack Road Northampton Northamptonshire NN2 6AF		
Telephone number	01604 239995		
Fax number	01604 239996		
Email address	mm@bosworthcollege.com		
Headteacher	Mr M McQuin		
Proprietors	Bosworth Independent College Ltd.		
Reporting inspector	Marianick Ellender-Gelé HMI		
Social care inspector	Sue Michowicz		
Dates of inspection	7–8 May 2008		