

Hampshire Collegiate School

Inspection report for Boarding School

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| Inspector | Bridgette Lowe |
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| Date of last inspection | 02/10/2007 |

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About this inspection

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. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details 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 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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| Outstanding: | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good: | this aspect of the provision is strong |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound |
| Inadequate: | this aspect of the provision is not good enough |

Service information

Brief description of the service

Hampshire Collegiate School is a coeducational school for pupils from three to 18 years of age. It was formed in September 2005 by the amalgamation of The Atherley School (together with its associated preparatory school, Grove Place), a day school for girls, and Embley Park School, a coeducational day and boarding school. For the first year of its existence, although under common ownership with a single governing body and principal, the two schools continued to function on their own sites. The schools came together in September 2006 on the Embley Park site, on which a new junior school had been built and the senior school buildings had been substantially extended. The school is owned and run by The United Church Schools Trust (UCST) and is located in 100 acres of open parkland. At the time of inspection there were 82 boarding pupils.

Summary

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

The purpose of this key announced inspection was to ensure that the school was continuing to meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools and is continuing to promote the welfare and safety of boarding pupils. A boarding sector additional inspector also took an active role in the inspection. All key standards for boarding schools were addressed and the recommendations made at the last inspection were revisited. Boarder and parent feedback have been taken into account while carrying out the inspection. All boarders had the opportunity to complete a questionnaire and numerous boarders were spoken with throughout the inspection.

The school has continued to develop since the last inspection and is committed to raising standards further in the future.

Pupils receive good health care from qualified nurse cover by the school's matrons. Boarders health and well-being is promoted. The school does not currently have a formal process of assessing whether pupils are competent to store and self administer their own medication. There is a positive and confident focus on child protection and safeguarding that results in the pupils feeling safe at the school. Boarders and staff reported that the rewards and sanctions system was not clear or worked in practice. The school is working to address fire safety issues and recommendations to ensure any potential risks to boarders are rectified. Facilities for pupils to achieve and enjoy are good with appropriate levels of support for individuals. Systems and avenues for boarders to have a voice and input into their lives at the school are actively engaged in by pupils, whose opinions are listened to and acted on. The boarding environment has been redecorated and refurbished to bring it up to a good standard of accommodation for boarders. The management of

the school is generally effective and coordinated, although there have been a number of changes to boarding staff since the last inspection. Staff are respectful of and sensitive to boarder's needs and wishes. Effective monitoring of the sanctions and rewards system and external fire escape stairways has not taken place. A number of recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the school was asked to act on a number of recommendations.

Ensure that redecoration and refurbishment started on the boarding environment is carried out within all dormitories and bathrooms to bring it up to a good standard of accommodation throughout (Standard 40). The school has invested a substantial amount of money on the boarding provision to bring the boarding areas up to a good standard throughout. Redecoration and the purchase of new furniture now provide boarders with a homely environment.

Ensure that there is an appropriate process in order for staff to have a formal appraisal on issues of boarding practice, on a regular basis (Standard 34). The school's new head of boarding has now implemented a formal appraisal system for boarding staff.

Ensure that fire safety recommendations made are acted upon swiftly (Standard 26). The school has invested in upgrading the fire safety detection unit throughout the boarding environment. Further recommendations are being acted upon through a detailed action plan that is being monitored by the local fire and rescue authority. A further recommendation relating to fire safety has been applied within this report.

Ensure that annual re registration documents of qualified nurses are held on personnel files (Standard 38). The relevant documentation is now held within the personnel files.

Ensure that reference request letters specifically ask referees to make sure there should be no material or mis statement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant (Standard 38). The relevant statement is now included within the reference request letter.

Ensure the child protection policy explicitly includes details for staff on their duty to 'whistle blow' if they have concerns about colleagues conduct (Standard 3.4). The child protection policy has been reviewed and updated and now includes details for staff on their duty to 'whistle blow'. The policy and procedures are well known by staff.

Ensure staff undertake regular child protection training (Standard 34). Staff now undertake regular child protection refresher training annually.

Ensure that a review is undertaken of the school's current complaint policy to ensure it is clearly known by boarders (Standard 5). Boarders are made aware of the

complaints information on starting boarding and within the boarder's handbook. However some boarders reported on inspection that they did not know the formal process should they wish to complain. All boarders expressed that they could talk to a range of staff should they have a concern.

Ensure there is an effective system of monitoring the boarding house and all records held in relation to boarding welfare (Standard 23). The head of boarding has implemented a comprehensive system to monitor issues relating to boarding welfare. However areas such as the external fire escape stairs and the sanctions and rewards system have not been monitored effectively to ensure boarders welfare is protected. Recommendations relating to these issues are to be re addressed within this report.

Ensure the school's child protection policy contains details of the need to refer any allegation or suspicion of abuse within 24 hours (Standard 3.2). The policy has been reviewed and updated and now contains the relevant details.

Consider liaising with the local Fire and Rescue Service to ensure all fire safety concerns are dealt with (Standard 26). The school contacted the local Fire and Rescue Service and is working to address the recommendations made. A further recommendation relating to fire safety has been made within this report.

Ensure the school implements a boarding development plan that prioritises areas of work in a time scaled manner (Standard 8). A boarding development plan has been implemented and the school which addresses this recommendation. The school is also developing secure plans to build a purpose built boarding house.

Ensure that a review of safety hazards is undertaken within dormitories to ensure there is no overloading of plug sockets and potential health and safety risk to boarders (Standard 47). Closer monitoring of the boarding environment ensures boarders do not overload plug sockets and safety hazards are generally acted upon swiftly.

Ensure that interview records are held on personnel files (Standard 38). Interview records are now held on personnel files.

Ensure that maintenance and housekeeping issues are closely monitored and dealt with to ensure a good standard of health, safety and hygiene is maintained in boarding areas (Standard 40). The boarding environment is now maintained and monitored to ensure standards of health, safety and hygiene are of a good standard.

Ensure that action is taken to remedy the inconsistent shower water temperature to make sure boarders have adequate access to a regular and consistent water supply (Standard 44). Action has been taken to address the water temperature and water supply. Extensive plumbing work has been undertaken and an external contractor monitors the water supply and temperature. A small handful of boarders voiced that there were at times still issues with the water temperature. The school continues to monitor this area.

Ensure that consideration is given to refurbishing toilet areas next to boys' dormitory near the sick bay (Standard 44). Refurbishment and redecoration has taken place throughout and good facilities are available to boarders.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The boarders have access to good quality medical treatment and first aid provision. The medical room newly designed and relocated downstairs in the heart of the school, is efficiently run by the school's matrons who are qualified nurses. All procedures and policies relating to health matters are maintained effectively. However there is no clear guidance within the policy on the process undertaken for assessing boarders are competent to self medicate and store medication appropriately. The boarders are positive about the facilities and care given and expressed a view that their health and well-being is well looked after. Boarders reported being able to go to the matrons with any concern or issue.

Health information for each boarder is requested from parents and updated on a regular basis. This information is shared with staff on a need to know basis and enables staff to care appropriately for the boarders. Record keeping throughout the medical centre is good. The boarders have access to the local general practitioners if needed. The matrons are well trained and suitably qualified to administer health care including first aid. Consents for the administration of first aid and medication administration are in place providing protection for the boarders and staff. Boarders who are ill receive constant supervision by the matrons in comfortable surroundings.

The school has an effective personal, social and health education programme that is age appropriate and relevant to the needs of the pupils. The curriculum involves aspects of health, well-being and provides education for pupils on how to keep themselves safe. Boarders expressed a wish to have more opportunities to learn a range of independent living skills within boarding time to prepare them for adulthood.

The catering staff responsible for the provision of meals have a good understanding of boarders' dietary needs and wishes in relation to a balanced diet. The variety, quality and quantity of food is very good. The school caters for many different diets, for cultural and medical reasons. The pupils can access fresh vegetables, salad and fruit at all meal times, with bread and spreads being available before bed time. The boarders are actively involved in the food provision via the comments book in the dining hall and the food committee. Suggestions by the boarders have been acted on. Boarders expressed a particular wish to have more opportunities in the evening to prepare meals and learn cooking skills during boarding time. The school was looking at ways to provide more occasions for this to take place in evening activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Boarders live in an environment which they reported makes them feel safe. The school has a robust and responsive anti-bullying policy which is well known by boarding pupils. The boarders feel confident that issues associated with bullying behaviour will be promptly addressed. The school provides good education to boarders, and staff in relation to cyber bullying. Boarders welcomed internet safety awareness education and reported the session to be very informative.

The boarders are protected from the risk of harm or abuse by appropriately trained and experienced staff with robust policies and procedures that staff are fully informed of. Suitable child protection training is provided on a regular basis to all staff employed at the school including non-teaching or boarding staff. The staff have a clear understanding of key child protection matters and the action they need to take if they suspect a child is at risk of, or is, being harmed. The school liaises with the local authority designated officer in respect of any child protection concern. There is a real and confident focus on safeguarding and child protection with competent and experienced designated staff taking overall responsibility for this. The boarders reported that they feel safe at the school and have a variety of adults they can talk to.

The behaviour of the boarders seen throughout the inspection was good. The boarders were relaxed and very open about their experiences as a boarder. The school addresses inappropriate or negative behaviour through a range of sanctions. However many boarders commented that the sanctions and rewards system was unclear and felt unsure how they could achieve rewards within boarding time. Staff also reflected this view. There is satisfactory information on sanctions if boarders are found to be smoking. However permitted sanctions are not listed within the policy or information given to boarders. Very limited feedback was received from parents; however one parent expressed a view that 'sanctions appeared to be inconsistently applied'. The head master monitors all major sanctions such as suspensions or exclusions, although these are few and far between. Complaints or concerns raised are extremely low in number and this is a reflection of the open communication staff have with parents. Parents can easily access the school's complaints policy on their website. Boarders feel confident in raising any issues with a variety of staff, although reported not being fully aware of the formal complaints procedure.

Boarders are satisfactorily protected from the risk of fire. Aspects of fire safety are addressed in a suitable manner with regular drills, tests and servicing ensuring the well-being of pupils and staff alike. The school strives to maintain a safe environment and continues to make improvements. The school has been visited by the local fire authority and has a number of actions to address to ensure the boarding environment is complying with fire safety standards. The boarders clearly know how to evacuate in the event of an alarm being activated. An independent annual fire risk assessment highlights further work to be completed to ensure boarders' welfare is protected. This includes repair work to external fire evacuation stairs. At the time of

inspection the school took action to secure contractors to complete this priority work by December 2010.

The school has a key-pad entry system to all boarding entry points thus maximising the safety of pupils and the general security of the premises. Boarders were clear about areas within the school site which are out of bounds. They are well versed with the school's health and safety guidance especially in relation to informing staff should they leave the premises.

Suitable changing and bathing facilities provide boarders with good privacy. Boarders reported that all staff are respectful of their privacy especially at times of showering or changing. Improvements have been made to a number of shower and bathroom facilities which boarders welcomed, although there still remain some issues with the water temperature in some shower areas. Boarders reported that sometimes the water when showering can be scalding hot and they are unable to change the heat settings due to the type of showers available. The school continues to monitor the situation and has invested in upgrading the plumbing to attempt to rectify the water temperature issues.

The boarders are protected by the robust recruitment procedures in place. Staff with responsibilities for recruitment procedures have attended safer recruitment training. All visitors are checked and supervised if moving around the school providing enhanced protection for pupils.

The school ensures that any risks posed to boarders are addressed in a comprehensive fashion. Comprehensive risk assessments address all environmental, activity and leisure matters without limiting opportunities for boarders to engage in an active and fulfilling experience. High risk activities are equally well addressed and risk assessed; for example, outdoor pursuits and overseas trips.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The school promotes a variety of activities and continues to strengthen and expand the activities programme in the evenings and at weekends through consultation with boarders. Additional recreational areas have been made for use by boarders including separate fully equipped common rooms for boys and girls. Boarders expressed a wish to further enhance their independent living skills in boarding activity times.

The school is committed to providing personal support to individual pupils. A dedicated committed staff team ensure all boarders have someone to talk to if they need to and this is confirmed by the boarders. Boarders have access to an independent listener, although not all boarders were aware of who they were or how to contact them. At the time of inspection posters were produced to raise boarders' awareness of the independent listener. Throughout the inspection boarders were generally positive, happy and relaxed and spoke freely about life at the school.

Feedback from boarders confirmed the variety of staff they would go to for support, including the boarding staff, tutors and the school councillor. The school values the different cultural needs of its boarders. During the inspection the inspectors heard of, or saw, no inappropriate discrimination of gender, disability, race, religion or culture. Overseas boarders and new boarders confirmed that they are made to feel very welcomed and fully supported, to ease their transition into boarding at the school

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The boarders are considered an integral aspect of the school with their views and wishes being acknowledged and acted upon. They are encouraged and supported to contribute their views through the newly implemented boarding council and school council provision. These forums are open and interactive allowing boarders a formal arena to contribute their thoughts. The boarders reported their views and opinions are listened to with positive actions and outcomes being achieved following boarders suggestions. Boarders also have many informal and formal opportunities to express their views. The boarders have opportunities to express their thoughts about the school's catering provision through the comments book within the dining hall. Boarders reported very positive comments about the new boarding staff, especially the new head of boarding and his wife. Boarders spoke of the positive changes staff had made as a result of listening to boarders' views.

The boarders are assisted to maintain contact with their families and friends. Mobile phones are allowed, as well as the private telephone booth available to boarders to contact family. Boarders are also able to video call family and friends through the availability of video conferencing software and computer network. The boarding housemaster maintains good communication links with parents via email, telephone and the positive development of a boarding newsletter.

New boarders are helped to settle into the school by positive staff and a warm and friendly boarding community. Boarders reported they are made to feel very welcome when they start boarding and this helps them settle in quickly. There is currently no formal system where experienced boarders are able to introduce pupils to boarding. However it is reported that individual needs are closely taken into account when settling pupils into boarding life. There is clear information relating to boarding, available for parents and boarders within the boarding handbook.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The boarders are provided with recently improved and redecorated accommodation that is well organised and supervised. Pupils board in the main school house which is a grade 1 listed building. The school has achieved good developments to improve the boarding environment working with the constraints that come with an old listed building. The boarding dormitories provide appropriate protection and separation of

boarders by age and gender. The vast majority of the boarding provision has now been brought up to a good standard throughout. One dormitory still has old furniture remaining although the boarders reported liking their environment. New furniture, fixtures and fittings have been purchased for the vast majority of boarders. Further improvements have been made to redecoration and lighting to give a warmer more homely feel to the boarding areas. Improvements to shower and wash areas have been made since the last inspection. However some boarders reported some issues remain with the shower water temperatures as highlighted in the staying safe section of this report. Boarders are generally positive about their boarding dormitories and reported having a good and enjoyable boarding experience.

Boarders benefit from the new communal areas that have been created in the boarding areas. These provide boarders with more space for relaxation and fun. These areas are well resourced with computer games, books, televisions and DVDs to enjoy. The boarders have areas around their beds that they can personalise and sufficient lockable storage for clothes and personal items. Boarders are generally respectful of each other's possessions although some minor concerns about theft were highlighted by boarders during the inspection. The standard of maintenance and cleanliness is good throughout the boarding houses. The toilet and washing provision is good and ensures privacy for all boarders when using them. Boarders are able to report any maintenance issues directly to the boarding house master in daily boarders' meeting. Boarders reported boarding at the school is fun and has helped them develop as independent individuals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Individual needs are very well catered for, from religious, cultural to dietary needs. Different cultures are explored, with boarders being involved in links with overseas schools and charity fund raising events. The school has a diverse group of boarders that are integrated well into the boarding community. Overseas boarders commented that they were welcomed into the school and helped to settle quickly into boarding life.

The management of the school is generally effective and coordinated. There have been a number of changes to boarding staff since the last inspection including a new house master and mistress being in post since September 2010. Boarders reported that they have become 'used to change' as they have had at least three different head of boarding masters in three years. There is a well structured senior management team which is well informed of its roles and responsibilities and effective in delivery. The boarders are cared for by good numbers of staff who are trained and sensitive to their needs. The boarding staff receive regular training to ensure they are up-to-date with areas such as child protection, first aid and fire safety. The staff interviewed and observed during the inspection are committed to providing boarders with a positive experience.

The monitoring of all areas and records is satisfactory. Boarders and staff reported

that the sanctions and reward system is not effective in its practice and not clearly understood. Effective monitoring of the current practice is not taking place. Ineffective monitoring of the condition of the external fire escape stairs has resulted in immediate action to be taken by the school to rectify issues and reduce any potential risk to boarders and staff. These areas highlighted in the staying safe section of this report impact on the outcome judgement for organisation also being judged as satisfactory.

The school provides clear information to parents and boarders about the boarding practices and principles of the school. The school's website has a wealth of information for parents and prospective parents to view. Boarders confirmed that information on boarding is provided prior to commencing boarding and contains details of the boarding routine.

Staff involved in the management of the boarding provision are committed to continue to develop and improve the boarding facilities and experience. There are future development plans to build a purpose built boarding house within the school grounds.

The boarders are protected by good quality risk assessments that cover any crises that may relate to their welfare. Changes are being made to support the health and safety officer in this role and ensure that all areas of risk and health and safety are regularly monitored and reviewed.

The boarding houses are well organised and provide a safe and secure environment for boarders. The number of staff available for the supervision of boarders is good. There is clear information for boarders to know which member of staff is available at all times of the day and night. However at the time of inspection the head of boarding was on duty and on call every night throughout the week and weekends, due to the recent departure of a resident boarding member of staff. The school were acting to rectify this issue and lessen the burden on the head of boarding. The boarders report they have no difficulty in finding a member of staff when they need to. The staff receive appropriate training commencing with induction and regular updates, and have guidance on boarding policies and practice which are being updated.

The boarders are closely supervised, and staff are aware of their whereabouts at all times with boarders needing to sign out if they are leaving the school site. They are well informed of the boundaries in place in regard to where they can and cannot access on the school site including the school grounds. There are clear protocols for staffing of organised trips away from school.

The relationships between staff and boarders are relaxed, friendly and appropriate in manner. Senior and boarding staff are committed to providing good standards of care and to continue to promote and develop boarding. The school's approach to boarding has resulted in increased numbers of boarders and positive feedback from the boarding community.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Compliance with national minimum standards

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure boarders' are aware of the independent visitor and how to contact them (Breach of NMS 14.6)
- ensure boarders and staff are clear about the sanctions and rewards system and this is effective in practice (Breach of NMS 4.1)
- ensure fire safety recommendations are acted upon immediately. Specifically in relation to the safety of external fire escape means and complete the fire recommendations made by the local fire authority (Breach of NMS 26)
- update the schools policy to reflect the steps the school takes for boarders keeping and administering their own medication and how the school assesses they are sufficiently responsible to do so (Breach of NMS 15.11)
- ensure arrangements for new boarders to have guidance from experienced boarders and ensure an appropriate process is in place (Breach of NMS 21)
- ensure a senior member of staff regularly monitors areas relating to boarders welfare. Specifically, sanctions and rewards and fire safety. (Breach of NMS 23)

