

Dunhurst (Bedales Junior School)

Inspection report for boarding school

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Date of last inspection	19 October 2004

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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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Dunhurst School is part of the Bedales group of independent schools, located near Petersfield in Hampshire. The school is a co-education independent boarding school that also provides day placements for pupils aged eight to 13 years of age. Dunhurst School shares a campus with Bedales senior school, which means that pupils have access to excellent facilities and extensive grounds. The boarding provision is divided into three 'wings', a junior wing for children in year six and below and separate girls and boys wings for years seven and eight. All are located in the main house and provide comfortable accommodation.

Summary

This is the key announced inspection as part of the three-year inspection cycle for Boarding Schools. The inspection focused on the key National Minimum Standards and assessed the school's compliance with recommendations made at the last inspection. National Minimum Standards for the boarding facilities are also assessed under the outcome for economic wellbeing. Recommendations made at the last inspection are as follows: National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools three, that the child protection policy includes a requirement for staff to report any concerns about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues. Ancillary staff receive formal guidance on child protection National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools four, that major punishments are recorded in a suitable book or log National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools five, that there is guidance for dealing with boarders' complaints, which is known to them, that all stage one complaints are recorded appropriately, and that information for parents and boarders includes contact details for the Commission National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 15, that a protocol is drawn up, using professional advice, on the management and administration of non-prescribed medicines, including homeopathic remedies National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 20, that each boarder has a suitable secure, accessible place to keep personal possessions National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 35, that the staff disciplinary policy includes provision for the precautionary suspension of staff where necessary, and the support they should receive during that suspension National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 38, that the school follows a rigorous recruitment process for staff, designed to protect children National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 39, that no members of staff are allowed to work with boarders unless satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 44, that the boys' showers are improved and the health and safety hazard presented by the exposed hot water pipe be removed National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools 15, that the medicine cabinets are kept locked. Pupils completed questionnaires and returned these prior to the inspection.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

An updated child protection policy is available which includes the requirement for staff to report concerns about practice. All major punishments are recorded in the school's electronic database, which is kept under review by the deputy principal. Details of how boarders can make complaints are available and details of how to contact Ofsted is available within Bedales Schools' information. Boarders have a range of opportunities to raise concerns and complaints, including

in concerns and complaints books or via student reps and staff. A new policy and procedure with regard to the management and administration of medication is in place and includes a protocol and separate consent for the use of homeopathic remedies. This was written in conjunction with the school GP. All medication cabinets are kept locked. All boarders have some form of lockable storage available to them. Action has been taken to repair the showers as recommended at the last inspection. Updated personnel policies and procedures are in place and sound practice is in place. Personnel records contain the required recruitment checks including Criminal Records Bureau disclosures. The school has introduced student reps and student listeners that are actively used by the pupils.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Personal, social and health education is promoted within the school, both during lessons and by welfare staff. The school has clear policies with regard to the use of illegal substances. The age range of the students at the school results in little concern about substance misuse, the use of alcohol and smoking. The school arranges for specialist talks to be offered to parents in the evening, these include a recent talk on 'battling the body blues' which covered eating disorders. A new school counsellor is in post and is offering sessions to pupils who wish to attend. Referrals can be made by staff or pupils can contact the counsellor directly. The counsellor also offers open door sessions that can be attended without an appointment. The matron team are responsible for the management and administration of first aid and medication. The sick bay/treatment room is neat and orderly. Updated protocols and policies with regard to the administration of medication are available, this includes detailed consent for the use of homeopathic remedies, which the matrons are trained to use. A new administration of medication procedure is in place which provides bullet point guidance to staff. However, in most cases the medication is administered by the matrons themselves. Few pupils are prescribed medication other than asthma inhalers. Prescribed medication is held in locked cupboards or pupils carry their inhalers and epipens with them. Some epipens are held around the school for immediate access. Although clear protocols are in place for pupils who have allergies, written risk assessments are not available for those pupils who are carrying and administering their medication. Sound practice is used to administer medication with either the pupils visiting the treatment room to receive their medication or the medication is taken to the dining room at meal times and the pupils go to the member of staff who administers the medication from the container or dosing box. Written records are held of all medication administered, and a record of medical treatment is kept in the daily log and on individual health cards. The matrons also maintain a sound audit of medication held in the school. Consent is also obtained for the administration of over the counter medication, and a number of pupils bring in vitamins and supplements. Some medication is decanted into weekly dosing boxes. However, the matron is taking action to ensure that the school follows current best practice by liaising with the community pharmacist who is visiting the school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The school is open about its approach to child protection, countering bullying, complaints and discipline. This information is detailed within the handbooks provided to parents, staff and pupils. A sound school specific child protection policy is available within the staff handbook, and a further updated version of this policy is available in line with the Bedales School's policy,

and complies with recommendations made at the last inspection. The senior (Bedales) school deputy head teacher is the designated child protection officer for the whole Bedales School site, and they are supported by the Dunhurst School Deputy Principal. All staff receive regular training in child protection with the last update being in September 2007. This includes ancillary and support staff as recommended at the last inspection. Staff use an electronic database to record areas of praise and concern, with confidential information being held on the pupil's school file, which is shared on a need to know basis. Although 30% of respondents to the questionnaires stated that they had experienced bullying, 25% stated that the school offers support and responds robustly to incidents. Descriptions of responses include talking to the pupils involved, and calling their parents. However, in contrast to these responses, groups of pupils met during the inspection, interviews with staff and the school's database do not identify bullying as a problem at the school; especially younger pupils who do not feel that they are bullied at all. All pupils met quickly identified people that they could talk to if required. All pupils responding to questionnaires, and met during the inspection, identify a range of staff, family members and friends who they can approach if they have complaints or concerns. Pupils all talk positively about being able to use the new concerns books and boxes and 'student reps' to affect change in the boarding houses. Pupils actively use these systems, and the staff are reviewing the number of comments and requests so as to feedback to the pupils about action that can be taken. Pupils were able to give examples of how these requests had already been acted upon. Posters about who pupils can talk to if they are worried or have concerns are displayed and these include contact details for Childline. Pupils know that these are available. The school trains pupils as peer listeners during a weekend away at the beginning of term. Pupils know that peer listeners are available, and use them when they need support. Peer listeners are aware of the importance of confidentiality and safeguarding, and they meet with staff each week to ensure that they receive support and can debrief; discussing issues anonymously or on a need-to-know basis. Pupils are very knowledgeable about fire safety procedures and the need to keep fire evacuation routes clear. Pupils are able to describe how they would evacuate from the school, and four evacuations, planned and accidental, took place in September. External contractors ensure that the fire safety systems are checked as required. A full review of human resources and recruitment is in progress, and action is taken to ensure that the recruitment of staff safeguards the pupils. Personnel records contained the relevant checks including references and enhanced CRB disclosures. Gap students are either recruited through partners in the student's home country or by direct application. References are obtained for these students and CRB checks are completed on their arrival in the UK. Access to boarding areas is restricted, and no unauthorised access is available to unchecked staff. Maintenance staff are employed by the school and are subject to the same recruitment procedures as boarding staff, and a matron or house master or mistress is on duty at all times. Staff are not intrusive in supervising pupils in the boarding areas. The new facilities manager is responsible for health and safety and maintenance at the school, with delegated tasks being given to the housemaster. The housemaster uses a health and safety checklist to assess the school environment, however, some areas need specialist knowledge to complete. The housemaster will attend specialist training to complete this task. The house master produces a report on identified risks and repairs, and although some action had been taken, further work is required. A thick cable runs at hand height to a metal stairwell near the physical education department that needs to be made safe. The school identified that action is required to make this safe, and although it looks like a mains power cable, the inspector was advised following the inspection that this is a data cable. Radiators and hot water pipes within the boarding house do not have cold touch surfaces

or thermostatic controls. Pupils push their mattresses up against these radiators. Staff cover the radiators with something when the heating is on, although this does not fully protect pupils.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The school provides an excellent range of activities after class time. The activities are offered before and after supper and form part of the school's daily timetable. Activities offered include music tuition, creative arts and sport, and pupils confirm that they are encouraged to complete one leisure activity each day. Free time is available after activities at 7.30pm, on Wednesday afternoons and after Saturday school. When pupils remain in the school when other boarders have returned home, staff provide activities and outings; these include trips to the coast, theme parks and other places of interest. As detailed under staying safe, pupils identify a range of staff they can turn to for support and guidance. The school also has a tutor system in place. Tutor groups meet daily, and tutors meet with pupils on a one-to-one basis weekly. Tutors and pupils are able to discuss welfare and academic issues during their tutorials, however, pupils freely approach any member of staff to raise concerns or talk through current issues. As already mentioned, a school counsellor offers support to pupils as required, and leaflets are available to inform the pupils about their availability. The school has an ethos of inclusion that runs through all of their publications. Although the school is secular, support is provided to any pupil who has specific cultural, ethnic, religious or support needs. The school has a clear equal opportunities statement that is published, and no concerns are raised by pupils about a lack of inclusion. Staff are able to demonstrate how pupils with specific needs are supported to integrate fully, and gave examples of how pupils support each other to ensure that they are not isolated.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Eighty five percent of respondents to questionnaires state that they are able to make their views known 'very much so'. Pupils are aware of the range of ways that they can raise their views, which include committees and councils as well as the peer listeners, student reps, concerns books and boxes and speaking directly with members of staff. The school promotes independence and open discussion. Pupils actively approach staff, and demonstrate mature attitudes to sharing their views. Pupils are happy to debate each others views and comments to form individual and collective opinions. No concerns are identified about maintaining contact with parents and carers. Pupils have mobile telephones and telephones are available in the boarding areas, that pupils say they use when they are out of credit. Each pupil has a pigeon hole from where they collect their unopened mail. Parents are able to visit the school and many pupils talk about meeting their parents on Wednesday afternoons when they have free time. Parents are also encouraged to visit the school for social events such as Badley weekend and a range of performances. Staff maintain contact with parents as required, and the school's policies ensure that parents are kept informed of concerns relating to their child.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The boarding areas are kept neat and orderly, and pupils speak positively about the facilities. Some of the décor and furniture is worn, however, the school has a rolling programme of refurbishment. Action has been taken to repair the showers as recommended at the last

inspection. Pupils personalise and choose names for their dormitories. Some pupils raised concerns about their mattresses, while others are happy with their mattresses. However, on checking it is evident that these are new mattresses. Sufficient washing and toilet facilities are available. One bathroom contains three baths that are screened by curtains. All pupils have lockable storage available.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A detailed prospectus is available along with a pupils guide and a good range of information that is accessible via the school's website. Clear principles and aims are published for the school individually and as part of the three Bedales Schools. School records are held on the electronic database and the deputy principal regularly monitors the entries. The principal has a sound awareness of concerns, punishments and praise that is logged on the system. The school is proactive about risk assessment, and ensuring that any identified risks are minimised. Off site and high risk activities are assessed before activities are agreed. The deputy principal reviews these. Identified members of staff are allocated to oversee activities, and staff are always present at mealtimes. Pupils know who their house staff are including their matrons, gap students, house masters and mistresses and any tutors assisting each night. Pupils speak highly of the support from staff, and describe the gap students as being like pupils themselves. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for supervising pupils who remain at the school when other boarders have returned home, and staff stated that often this resulted in a high staff to pupil ratio for weekend activities. Arrangements are also in place to ensure that suitable cover is available for when staff are sick or absent. Job descriptions are available in the staff handbook. The role of spouses are known and agreed by the school. An induction programme is available as well as a personal development programme. These are detailed within the staff handbook. Gap students confirmed that they received induction training when they arrived at the school.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that risk assessments are in place for pupils who hold and administer their own medication
- ensure that radiators do not present a risk to pupils
- ensure that areas identified in the health and safety audit are attended to promptly.

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for boarding school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' health is promoted (NMS 6)
- safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 15)
- boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill (NMS 16)
- boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 17)
- boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 25)
- boarders are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 48)
- boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 49).

Ofsted considers 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are protected from bullying (NMS 2)
- boarders are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- boarders' complaints are responded to appropriately (NMS 5)
- the operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school (NMS 22)
- boarders are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 26)
- the welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school (NMS 28)
- boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 29)
- boarders' personal privacy is respected (NMS 37)
- there is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders (NMS 38)
- boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures; all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises are supervised (NMS 39)
- boarders have their own accommodation, which is secure from public intrusion (NMS 41)
- boarders are protected from safety hazards (NMS 47)

Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 18)
- boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 27)
- boarders have satisfactory provision to study (NMS 43)
- boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas (NMS 46)

Ofsted considers 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school (NMS 12)
- boarders receive personal support from staff (NMS 14)
- boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 19)
- new boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in (NMS 21)
- boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school (NMS 30)
- there are sound relationships between staff and boarders (NMS 36)

Ofsted considers 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' possessions and money are protected (NMS 20)
- boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation (NMS 40)
- boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 42)
- boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 44)
- boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day (NMS 45)
- boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school (NMS 50)

Ofsted considers 51 the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- a suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- there is clear leadership of boarding in the school (NMS 8)
- crises affecting boarders' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- the school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare (NMS 10)
- risk assessment and school record-keeping contribute to boarders' welfare (NMS 23)
- boarders are supervised adequately by staff (NMS 31)
- staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site (NMS 32)
- boarders are adequately supervised at night (NMS 33)
- boarders are looked after by staff which have specific boarding duties, and have received adequate induction and continued training (NMS 34)
- boarders are looked after by staff which follow clear boarding policies and practice (NMS 35)
- the welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 51)
- the welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

Ofsted considers 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.