

Clifton High School

Inspection report for boarding school

Unique reference number	SC026655
Inspection date	30 September 2009
Inspector	Debbi Flint
Type of Inspection	Random

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Date of last inspection	24 January 2005

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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

Clifton High School was established in 1877. The school was unusual in that it based its guiding principles on an ethos of inclusion and in this aspect was ahead of its time. It was established as a non-denominational school which would be open to all pupils without social discrimination. These principles have remained at the heart of the school.

Clifton High School currently offers family boarding to students in the sixth form. The school employs a Family Boarding Coordinator who arranges this provision.

Summary

This statutory inspection was undertaken as an announced interim inspection. The school currently has one boarder under the age of 18 years residing in lodgings. For this reason it was decided that all key national minimum standards for boarding schools would not be assessed at this inspection as some key standards were not applicable to this situation. The purpose of this inspection was to assess whether the lodgings provided were suitable and also to assess key standards under being healthy and staying safe. An overall equality and diversity text judgement was not made at this inspection as all key standards were not assessed.

The service provided was judged to be outstanding overall. The accommodation is of a very high standard and staff promote a healthy lifestyle and ensure that young people are safe.

There were no recommendations made at this inspection.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection was carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection and two of the recommendations made are no longer applicable. A recommendation that all staff should have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure has been met.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Young people reside in lodgings with host families. Prior to coming to the school a boarder's parent or guardian completes a medical record form and also signs consents for the administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication. On arrival at the school boarders are registered with a local doctor, dentist and optician in the area where they are residing. The school has a health centre which is open during the day and a matron is always on duty in school hours. All matrons are registered nurses. Matrons invite any new boarders to have a full medical examination on arrival at the school and are also responsible for delivering personal, social and health education (PSHE) to boarders. The school has a clear policy on the processes to follow should a boarder be ill. Minor illnesses are cared for by the host family but should any illness be prolonged boarders will be placed back in the care of their parents or guardians. The health centre has a sick bay which can be used for minor illnesses.

There is good health support available to young people at all times and staff ensure that young people's well being is promoted. The school keeps an individual health record for each boarder and this is stored safely in a locked cabinet in the health centre. All staff are first aid trained. Some staff complete a one day course in first aid whilst others, such as nurses, complete a longer four day course. The school has a policy in place for the safe administration of medication. Boarders are able to self administer if risk assessed to do so or they can alternatively elect to have their medication administered by staff. The school employs a counsellor who visits three times a week and is available to assist boarders with any personal problems. There is an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Any boarders residing in lodgings are provided with breakfast and an evening meal by their host families and take their lunchtime meal at school. Host families state that they try to encourage any boarder residing with them to feel part of the family and to eat with them. Boarders are offered the main family evening meal but, if this is not to their liking, host families confirm that an alternative is always available. Currently only one young person under 18 years of age is boarding with a host family and this young person confirms satisfaction with the food available in lodgings. Older boarders also express satisfaction with the food on offer in lodgings but they are not technically part of this inspection.

The school has a dining room where all young people take their lunchtime meals. The dining room is comfortable and clean and meals are well ordered occasions. A wide variety of choices are on offer to young people at lunchtime and these include vegetarian options and a salad bar. The school has a café which offers on site healthy snacks and light meals to students, parents, guardians and visitors. The last environmental health inspection of the school's dining room and café was in October 2008. One recommendation was made and this has since been met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

There are good procedures in place to safeguard the young people and to ensure that the school site is safe and secure. Stringent security measures are in place and all visitors sign in and out of the school. The school has a health and safety policy and a critical incident policy. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place for all school buildings and any activities that young people may engage in. There are fire procedures in place for the whole school building and regular fire drills are carried out. The school has ensured that all host families are vetted and CRB's and two references are held on file for all individuals concerned.

The head teacher is very proactive in countering bullying and arrangements have been made for the police to visit the school and talk about cyber bullying. The school has an anti-bullying policy. This policy is issued to boarders during their induction to family boarding. Boarders state that they do not currently experience any bullying.

The school has a designated person for safeguarding and child protection and this is currently the head teacher. There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place and this has been updated to reflect recent changes in legislation. The head teacher receives annual safeguarding training from an external organisation which specialises in providing this training to schools. All staff receive annual safeguarding training and any new staff receive a child protection induction. The school has a lost child policy which gives guidance for staff on action to take in the event of any child or young person being reported missing.

There is a general complaints policy in place for the whole school and there is also a specific complaints policy for family boarders. The school's counsellor is also available to discuss concerns and child-line posters are displayed in common rooms and other communal areas.

All boarders are issued with the whole school disciplinary policy and also with the school's specific policy on expectations and guidelines for host families, parents and students. The school has a code of conduct for students and this is also issued to boarders. The head teacher keeps and monitors logs of sanctions, major punishments and detentions. Behaviour around the school is generally exemplary. The school has a clear policy on the use of physical intervention although the use of this measure has not been necessary.

The school has several host families who are able to accommodate boarders although only one young person under 18 years of age is currently accommodated. Host families are aware of the need to respect young people's privacy and any boarders resident with them will be issued with their own individual keys. All boarders rooms are large and spacious and the majority of them are en suite. All lodgings are risk assessed before anyone is accommodated and are then checked annually thereafter. Each host family is inducted in fire safety by the Family Boarding Coordinator and all host families confirm that they have fire safety procedures in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

There are sound policies and procedures in place to ensure that family boarding is a safe and happy experience for the overseas students who use this service. The school has a Family Boarding Coordinator who oversees this provision. The Family Boarding Coordinator initially meets with each young person and ascertains what kind of family they are looking for. The student is then matched with a family and a host family assessment is completed. All suitable host families are issued with the policy 'Expectations and Guidelines for Host Families'. References and CRB's are then taken up and once these have been obtained an agreement between the school and the host family is signed. The student is then sent written confirmation of the name and address of his or her host family and is asked to complete a medical record form for the school's purposes. Students also register with local doctors at this stage. Once the student moves in to lodgings the Family Boarding Coordinator has weekly telephone contact with the host family and meets all students at least weekly. Formal meetings between the student, Family Boarding Coordinator and host family are carried out every half term. Lodgings are inspected annually and all host families can contact the Family Boarding Coordinator or other designated staff out of hours. The school has created host family questionnaires and student questionnaires for quality assurance purposes.

The accommodation offered is of a very high standard. All rooms are large and spacious and contain desks for study purposes. All beds are comfortable and of a high quality. Some rooms also contain sofas and additional sofa beds. All host families have large and comfortable houses which are decorated and maintained to a high standard. The majority of students will be offered

en suite bathroom facilities. In cases where this is not possible bathrooms are shared with the children of host families. Washing machines are available for laundry purposes. All lodgings are free of safety hazards and comply with fire safety regulations. Young people are able to access a phone in the all homes but this is generally not necessary as young people have their own mobile phones. Host families state that young people can come and go as they please and this is confirmed by young people.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision of family boarding has been judged to be outstanding under economic wellbeing.

The school has a statement of boarding principles and practice which is available to parents, boarders and staff. This statement explains that boarding is offered to sixth formers who will lodge with a host family. It makes clear the expectation that all boarders must have a guardian and it is clear that the school does not supply guardians. The role of the Family Boarding Coordinator is fully explained in this document.

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

There are no recommendations.