

Haileybury

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Martha Nethaway / Carole Moore
Type of Inspection	Key

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Nominated person	Peter Johns (Head of Boarding)
Date of last inspection	13 November 2006

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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

Haileybury College is a co-educational school committed to boarding. The school is situated in Hertford Heath and is set in 500 acres of grounds in a rural area within easy reach of central London to the north and Cambridge to the south. Haileybury is an academic school, with an academic curriculum that includes the International Baccalaureate (IB) as well as the General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) and Advanced Level (A level) courses and examinations.

Haileybury's College commitment to boarding focuses on community values and on developing responsibility and independence. The majority of pupils joining the lower school aged from 11 years to 13 years arrive as day pupils but are offered opportunities to sample the boarding experience on a flexible basis. Entrants into main school join one of 13 boarding houses. These are called Albans, Allenby, Bartle Frere, Batten, Colvin, Edmonstone, Hailey, Kipling, Lawrence, Melvill, Thomason, Trevelyan and Highfield (lower school).

Haileybury's College currently has 749 pupils and of these 527 are boarders.

Summary

This was an announced inspection undertaken by two Ofsted inspectors and a boarding school additional inspector over three days. The inspection looked at the key boarding school national minimum standards under the 'Every Child Matters' outcome groups.

The overall outcome judgement is good with outstanding features. The outcome judgements in being healthy and enjoying and achieving are outstanding. The outcome areas for staying safe, positive contribution, economic well-being and organisation are judged as good. There are no recommendations set.

The school is popular with boarders and parents. Existing and former boarders and parents show a good level of customer satisfaction. The staff is particularly dedicated, committed and hard working.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the school was recommended to improve fire safety procedures. This has now been fully addressed. The school was recommended to review the recruitment and vetting checks and this has now been thoroughly addressed with new procedures and safe recruitment practice. The school has increased the security of the school campus. All of these areas demonstrate a real commitment to the welfare and protection of boarders at all stages of boarding life.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Across the school the health and well-being of boarders is promoted exceptionally well. The personal, social and health education programme is delivered through many avenues, such as

within tutor groups, the medical centre, boarding house staff, the chaplain, a counsellor who is a qualified psychotherapist and visiting speakers. Sensitive issues are addressed by staff with the skills to deliver this effectively. Advice and guidance is provided at age appropriate levels and due to this subject area being so well integrated across the school, staff are responsive to current issues and can provide support as matters arise in addition to the timetabled sessions. One staff commented, 'the provision for medical cover is outstanding with on site facilities and trained, caring full time staff.'

Medical care is provided by a resident doctor and qualified nurses 24-hours a day and this exceeds the minimum standard. A dedicated medical centre operates at a professional level for the school community and there is designated space for boarders if they are unwell. The confidentiality of boarders' health and medical needs is given the utmost respect and arrangements are in place to promote privacy of appointments and treatment. Clear computerised records are maintained of any treatment and medication. All medication is provided through the pharmacy and held at the medical centre to reduce administration by boarding houses.

Boarding house staff have a small stock of pain relief medication that they can issue in the late evening and overnight if required; boarding staff report that they usually seek advice from the medical centre before administering any pain relief. This practice promotes the safe storage and administration of medication with qualified professionals taking prime responsibility. Parents' consent for over the counter medication to be given to their child, along with permission for prescribed medication and any emergency treatment is obtained on admission. To respond to any sports related injuries, the school can increase the number of nurses available on duty during sports afternoons and match days and the doctor is present during most matches.

There is also an in house physiotherapist who addresses sports injuries. In addition to medical attention and treatment, the medical centre is a welcoming place to seek guidance and support with any social or emotional worries. Boarders and boarding staff report that they feel confident in approaching the medical centre for support and they value the 24-hour availability.

The catering staff have an excellent understanding of what makes a balanced and nutritious meal and put this into practice by offering an extensive range of food. All main meals are taken in the school dining room where there is always a choice of main dishes with vegetarian options, pasta bar, salad bar and jacket potatoes. Puddings, yoghurts and a selection of fresh fruit are always available to follow. Boarders enjoy the food and appreciate the many choices. One boarder commented, 'I believe that Haileybury's meals and catering provides us with an excellent standard and range of food and diet.' Very few negative comments were received about the food offered and these were related to personal preferences. The catering team meet with representatives from pupil groups in a food council to discuss any changes to the menus in the dining hall and the food available in boarding houses. The boarding houses have small kitchen areas where hot drinks and snacks can be made.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The system in place to promote the safety and welfare of boarders is good. The school provides a safe environment for boarders. The school is committed to boarding, with an emphasis on community values and fostering responsibility and independence. One boarder commented, 'I very much enjoy Haileybury and I feel like I'm in a lovely community.'

Staff are vigilant in their supervision of boarders. Boarders commented that 'there is reasonable privacy for them in their room.' Staff are expected to avoid being overtly intrusive by knocking on doors before entering.

The school has in place a clear policy for responding to child protection and safeguarding boarders' welfare. Staff receive regular refresher training and there are established links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. All staff are well placed to observe signs of abuse including changes of behaviour. Staff are able to act decisively and report anything that is of concern. One staff member commented, 'Child protection is taken very seriously and we have regular training on the topic and are offered places on very good external courses relating to it.'

Staff are well aware of the potential risk of bullying. They clearly communicate to boarders that it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff are committed to providing a welcoming and friendly community and it follows that bullying has no place at the school. Boarders commented, 'that staff act immediately if any incidents take place and they promptly address and challenge unacceptable bullying behaviour.' Boarders are also provided with clear information about cyberbullying which addresses how to use all electronic equipment in a responsible manner.

The standard of behaviour from boarders is exemplary. Staff instil discipline and this is achieved through the pastoral support at the school. Boarders are positively rewarded with progressive incentives for good behaviours. Praise is given in both academic and extra-curricular situations. The primary way in which boarders receive recognition of achievement is through the 'yellow tickets' which applauds improvement in academic work. The 'blue card' system recognise and promote service to others whether helping an individual, a team, the school as a whole or the wider community when it is above and beyond what is expected. Boarders commented, 'that pupils behave well and respond well to encouragement.' Boarders considered that disciplinary matters are appropriately dealt with by staff. Serious matters are dealt with by the boarding staff and they also keep the headteacher fully informed of all incidents. Staff strive to ensure consistency, fairness and discuss misdemeanours with boarders so that strategies can be clearly developed to prevent reoccurrences.

Boarders are protected from the risk of fire. Boarders learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they have regular opportunities to practise the evacuation of the building. Staff are highly accomplished at meeting health and safety obligations. Risk assessments are comprehensive and detailed records are kept up-to-date.

The school has in place a rigorous vetting and selection policy and procedure. It has a rigorous checking process for all staff who work unsupervised with boarders. The senior management team ensure that staff employed at the school are deemed suitable to work with children. All the necessary checks are completed including an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check. Senior staff have also attended advanced training on safer recruitment practices. As a result, this strengthens further the school procedures.

Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises. One boarder commented, 'all visitors to the school have to be identified with identification tags.'

Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. The school has taken clear measures to ensure that the boarding accommodation is reserved for their use. Boarders understand the clear rules about who can invite visitors to the boarders' accommodation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders receive excellent support from staff both in the boarding houses and by the tutorial system. Boarders benefit from the tutorial time given to each student and their tutor meets with them weekly as a group but also individually and more informally. Staff commented, 'peer supporters in houses and the tutor group system provides excellent support for pupils be it for academic or personal issues to be resolved.'

Senior boarding staff use questionnaires to assess boarders' views on their tutorials and also for tutors on how they feel the tutorials have gone, from their point of view. This overall monitoring on the effectiveness of tutorial sessions is excellent. The tutorial system does not just concentrate on the academic but the whole person and the whole school experience and how the school is supporting the boarders to succeed both socially and personally.

Boarders readily identify a range of people that they can approach from their boarding house staff, the chaplain, health centre staff, their tutors, the counsellor, prefects and peer group support. Boarders live in a relaxed atmosphere and benefit from the obvious mutual respect that exists between staff and boarders.

The school works very hard to integrate a large contingent, almost 20%, of international boarders into the community. Boarders are provided with extra support who speak English as an additional language. International boarders make a valuable contribution by sharing their different cultures and beliefs with the wider school body. Boarders commented about, 'the international showcase where we all set out our tables with flags, literature, food, music, including dance performance.' The school also organises international week in chapel where volunteers are encouraged to share their different cultures and beliefs.

Boarders also support a number of charities and there is always one overseas charity supported. There are excellent links made with the local community. Boarders also access a vast range of cross-curricular opportunities in sport, music, drama, dance, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the Combined Cadet Force and numerous other activities and clubs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Each boarding house has a boarder who is elected as the head of house who represents the views of the other boarders within that house. These views are then fed back to the boarding house staff. There is a house representative at the school senate which is held monthly. This was seen to be an active forum within the school. There is also the food committee, peer support meetings as well as house meetings. Many boarders reported that they are able to give their views directly to the boarding staff. It is a strength that boarders feel able to approach staff directly in addition to the regular formal structure for gathering boarders' views in house meetings. In response to listening to the views of boarders there have been changes to the menus, changes to the school uniform and reintroduction of additional activities.

All boarders spoken to have a good relationship with boarding house staff and go to them if they have concerns or need help or advice. Most boarders have mobile phones by which they can communicate with their family. Different rules of usage are in place for the various age of boarder and these rules appear appropriate. There are also private telephone booths which boarders may use in each of the houses. Boarders can use the school's safeguarded internet access to email families and overseas boarders can make free calls over the internet.

Parents report that contact from the school is prompt and informative. Parents of new boarders have welcomed the contact from house staff to reassure them that their child has settled well. One boarder reported, 'They go to a lot of trouble, with extra activities, to help new boarders settle in and they keep my parents informed.' Boarders and parents report that they have received an excellent welcome on joining the school. Information about the school is presented in a comprehensive handbook for parents and a child-friendly welcome booklet for boarders. The website provides additional information and is regularly updated. New boarders are welcomed into their boarding house by having an allocated older boarder to look after them along with a boarder in their dormitory of the same year group. One boarder commented, 'I am a new student and ever since I got here I have been welcomed into the school by everyone, and I am settling down very well, I love it here.'

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The school provides 13 boarding houses. Haileybury school has a range of original 'Quad' houses which includes boarding houses from the Georgian and Victorian era and a number of modern purpose-built boarding accommodation.

Boys and girls have separate boarding houses, although social interaction is encouraged in the common rooms at designated times. There are five girls' houses, each with their own personality and strength. These are known as Albans, Allenby, Colvin, Hailey and Melvill. In addition, there are eight boys' boarding houses known as Bartle Frere, Batten, Edmonstone, Kipling, Lawrence, Thomason, Trevelyan and Highfield. The houses are both home and a workplace for all boarders during their school year. The houses provide a number of municipal spaces including common rooms, a television area, pool rooms, well-equipped kitchens and laundry facilities. The sleeping accommodation includes a combination of segmented dormitories, shared double rooms and single rooms. All of the boarding houses have a suitable number of toilets, sinks, showers and baths to meet the needs of the boarders. The boarding accommodation is of a good standard and is clean, well presented and homely.

The school has in place a continual refurbishment plan with a couple of boarding houses being completely refurbished annually every six years which takes place during the school holidays. Because of this, the programme for the boarding house are at various stages of completion.

The school employs a large property and ground maintenance team who maintain the buildings and grounds to a high standard. In addition, there is a large cleaning and domestic team who regularly clean the boarding houses and maintain good standards.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Boarders benefit from the leadership of high quality senior staff who manage the boarding provision well. The school has accurate and coordinated management systems. The headteacher commented, 'we recognise that success in developing our pupils to the full depends on the teamwork we share with parents and guardians and on the pupils themselves.'

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The school's chapel services are ecumenical in style and frequently endorse and celebrate community values and the diversity of other religions and nationalities.

The school has a suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice and is available to parents, boarders and staff. There is a broad range of other supplementary information including a prospectus and pupil handbook which gives clear statements regarding boarding principles and practice.

The management of the boarding provision is an integral part of whole school and with effective communication and clear lines of accountability. The boarding houses are operating at the same standard across the school. Boarding staff receive excellent training to enable them to carry out their jobs well and are provided with a clear handbook for reference and guidance. All staff have clear job descriptions. Expectations and policies are clearly laid out.

Boarders benefit from boarding and they achieve in a wide range of areas including academic, cross-curricular and personal. Staff are in regular communication with families.

Staffing levels are good and meet the needs of boarders. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide excellent support and guidance. Boarders' welfare is effectively monitored with regular discussions within staff meetings. The productiveness and cohesion of the staff boarding committee is highly effective. Information sharing is efficient and good decision-making clearly benefit the quality of life for boarders.

The school has a suitable system in place to monitor risk assessment, complaints and accidents. The headteacher takes action in relation to any concerns or trends. This ensures that boarders' welfare is continually monitored.

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.