

Bosworth Independent College

Independent school standard inspection report

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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 which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and the government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{3, 4}

Information about the school

Bosworth Independent College was established in 1977 as an international boarding college for students between the ages of 14 and 22 years. There are currently 295 students on roll, which includes 221 boarders from overseas; six British boarders and 68 day students who are local to the area. There are no students with statements of special educational needs. All of the boarding accommodation is within walking distance from the two academic school buildings and close to Northampton town centre. Accommodation for boarders under 18 is in one of five boarding houses which are fully staffed or in the homes of host families. There are also 20 unstaffed houses for older boarders and which are used depending on levels of maturity. Almost all overseas students speak English as an additional language and with varying degrees of fluency. The main aim of the college is to seek academic excellence and to ensure each student achieves their potential. The vast majority of students continue their studies at a British university. This was an integrated inspection of education and boarding provision. The previous integrated inspection of education and boarding was in May 2008 and this was followed by an inspection of key standards under the Every Child Matters outcomes plus organisation in January 2009.

Evaluation of the school

Bosworth College provides a consistently good quality of education. The college meets its aims, allowing each student to achieve their academic potential through careful attention to their personal development, their acquisition of the English language, if required, and a good quality curriculum which is tailored to individual needs. The college has an excellent success rate in enabling students to access the

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

⁴ www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

universities of their choosing. Students appreciate the good standard of teaching and assessment, which is also confirmed by those parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. Students are making good progress which is aided by their outstanding behaviour and small teaching groups, regular assessment and feedback. Staff care strongly about the welfare and safety of students and the college fulfils most of the education regulations for independent schools. All but one of the areas requiring improvement from the previous inspection of education have been addressed. Further improvements to the rigour of some safeguarding and recruitment procedures are necessary to ensure that college and boarding provision meet all regulatory requirements. A small number of national minimum standards for boarding are unmet which has an impact on the overall effectiveness of the boarding experience which is satisfactory. However, the quality of the boarding provision is good overall and well managed; leaders having paid good attention to almost all of the regulatory shortcomings from the last inspection. Consequently, outcomes for students are also good in respect of boarding.

Quality of education

Bosworth College provides a good broad curriculum with specialism in mathematics and the sciences. Course directors and heads of departments have devised appropriate schemes of work and monitor them effectively. Individual tutors plan thoroughly for each of their subject areas. The content of each lesson is carefully tailored to the needs of the students and to ensure coverage of each syllabus. The college assesses each student from overseas on their proficiency in English. It provides a range of intensive English courses to both aid fluency, and to allow students to fully access the curriculum as quickly as possible. Foundation studies aimed at university entry for those students not taking A level examinations have a bias towards business and economics with strong attention given to mathematics and English language acquisition. Although not formally accredited, this course is recognised by a number of universities who have accepted many of the college students with this qualification. The curriculum enables students to choose the academic pathway most suited to their capabilities and to study some courses over one year instead of the traditional two years. This flexibility results in highly individualised timetabling and sound preparation for national examinations and university. There are well designed pathways for those students desiring to follow professions in medicine, accounting and law. Additional preparation is given for students applying to Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Since the last education inspection, there has been improved take-up of aesthetic subjects at A level.

For students of compulsory school age, the curriculum fulfils requirements and the programme for students' physical development has improved since the last inspection, particularly for girls. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) ensures students develop these skills satisfactorily. At the end of Year 10, students take part in work experience which enhances their personal development. Enrichment activities take place on one afternoon each week which broadens students' interests. Personal tutors take responsibility for delivering a

programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship, which is well coordinated. The curriculum outside of the college for boarding students is acceptable and contributes positively to students' personal development and preparation to lead fulfilling professional lives. However, boarders say they would prefer a wider range of activities to take part in, particularly at weekends. Although there are facilities for cooking in the senior boarding houses, they do not always take up opportunities to cook and provide their own meals.

Teaching is consistently good and is sometimes outstanding. Tutors demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. They also understand students' capabilities well through regular assessment and thorough marking of students' work. The pace of lessons is necessarily brisk and well focused, but there is a sound awareness of when learning requires consolidation and when students require individual support. Very small teaching groups facilitate this. Tutors' questioning skills and work in pairs ensures that students think for themselves and articulate their responses in English effectively with correct use of grammar and vocabulary. Strong relationships aid their confidence in this and students make outstanding progress in their acquisition of English language overall. Appropriate laboratory facilities enable students to carry out practical tasks in science, although in some subject areas the range of activities and resources is more limited.

Assessment is good; it is regular and rigorous, ensuring there is no slippage en route to students making good progress and achieving their targets. They are supported in this both academically and personally through both subject and personal tutors; overseen by course directors who have a strong pastoral overview of the students' needs and performance. All students are highly motivated and take an interest in their studies. Students recognise the contribution the college makes to their personal and academic success and this is also confirmed by the majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. This begins with a comprehensive induction programme for new students and good attention is made to helping them settle into their academic studies and boarding accommodation.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their confidence and self-esteem grows as the high levels of support afforded to them by education and boarding staff, particularly as new residents to England, helps them to succeed as responsible young people and as scholars. Strong relationships between tutors, boarding staff and students are evident and have a very positive impact on students' personal development and in their preparation for future study. The students themselves recognise that the guidance and support they receive from all staff is an important strength of the college. It is clear that they respect all staff and appreciate the help that they are offered. There is a happy and purposeful atmosphere and almost everyone enjoys their time in the college and in boarding. Students are clear of the high expectations tutors have for them and respond well to this, so achievement is good. Students' examination successes and responsible attitudes

towards study prepare them well for the future. Students' behaviour around the college and in the boarding accommodation is outstanding and they are respectful of others. They are polite and courteous and are very willing to talk about their college experiences and their work. Attendance rates are high, with almost no unauthorised absence.

Students share their ideas about their work and their accommodation individually and through the student council; their suggestions are taken seriously by the college. Social and moral issues are considered within their chosen subject areas and in their personal tutor groups. Students make a positive contribution to the wider community by taking part in charitable events, for example for a local church's restoration fund. They gain an understanding of parliament and the judicial system through their studies and through the relevant professional knowledge of their tutors and care staff. Students' understanding of different cultural and religious traditions is mainly incidental and through the wide mix of heritage of students and staff working at the college. The college does less to formally exploit this through the curriculum or celebratory events. It recognises that it has yet to give much specific thought to the spiritual development of students, although boarding staff are supportive of when students request attendance at local places of worship.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of students is satisfactory, although of paramount importance to both teaching and boarding staff who supervise the students well. There are two regulations which have not been fully met for the college and a small number of aspects for the boarding provision which require improvement to meet all national minimum standards.

The college operates a restaurant system for all mealtimes and food is hygienically prepared and served. There are new menus for this academic year which are planned for the cultural and medical needs of the students. Students' views on the quality of the food are variable, as is shown by the differing responses on the questionnaires.

There are a wide range of suitable written policies which meet requirements, but some procedures are not always carried out thoroughly enough. For example, there have been infrequent fire practice evacuations. While the college has checked qualifications and requested professional references for staff, the college has not completely followed current guidance as a small number of references for staff were not received prior to their appointment. The college has also not completely satisfied itself that each member of staff is physically and mentally fit after their appointment has been confirmed. The college has implemented appropriate procedures for managing risks during lessons, around the college and boarding accommodation, and on outside visits. Staff and students afford due care when using the science laboratories. The college has an effective anti-bullying policy and delivers briefings on cyber bullying and internet safety to boarders. Students are confident to speak to a range of staff, including the nurse, a counsellor or their personal tutor if they have

any concerns. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently and is aided by the close communication between boarding and college staff.

Students say they feel safe and well cared for. There are always an appropriate number of suitably qualified first aiders on duty in the college or boarding accommodation. Staff understand their role in safeguarding and protecting students, for which they have received appropriate training. However, not all potential safeguarding matters are recorded in sufficient detail or are followed up rigorously enough. Admission and attendance records are maintained to the required standard. The college fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and has a three year plan to increase accessibility to the curriculum, information and premises.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The college has improved procedures for checking the suitability of staff since the last inspection. Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau are in place for staff and the single central register is complete. However, some requirements are not met fully. Criminal Record Bureau checks are carried out on host families where some students live, and where family members are over the age of 18. Staff now understand the necessity to closely monitor that this is carried out and for all family members over the age of 16.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The academic buildings are separate from all of the boarding provision, although these are all within walking distance of each other. Day students may also access a recreational building with student common rooms, restaurants, a counselling room and a sick bay, although there are no facilities for students who are ill in either of the two academic buildings. Teaching areas are safe and suitable for the number of students in each class or tutor group, including the science laboratories. Since the last inspection, the college has secured a small outdoor recreational space for students at the side of the Queens Building. There is a comprehensive development plan for the improvement and refurbishment of boarding houses and to bring them up to a higher standard. The college recognises that there is limited provision for personal laundry in the boarding accommodation, which causes some frustration to boarders.

Provision of information

The college provides a range of information to parents and prospective parents, including parents of young people choosing to board, which includes details on the college's ethos, aims and curriculum. The college makes clear which policies and documentation are available to them. It provides details of staff and their qualifications and of the performance of students in the previous academic year. The college website provides useful and accessible information for parents and carers overseas. Academic and welfare reports written termly by personal tutors with input from subject tutors are extremely comprehensive and of high quality. The college

has not made arrangements to send a copy of the inspection report out to every parent following this inspection, nor did it send out a copy of the last boarding inspection report to the parents of each boarder.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

There is a policy for handling complaints which meets requirements and is available to parents and others upon request.

Leadership and management of boarding

Leadership and management of boarding provision are satisfactory overall. The college has demonstrated that it has a good commitment to addressing the issues raised at the last inspection and the ongoing improvements are being made. There are substantial strengths in the quality of provision and care for boarders, which have made a positive impact on the quality of their lives and their future opportunities as adults. The experience of boarding clearly enables boarders to make excellent progress in their personal, social and moral development. Most of them grow in confidence and independence and all are very well equipped to make a success of their professional lives. There are excellent relationships between the students themselves and with the staff who look after them.

There is a good standard of care overall and boarders receive effective support which is suited to their individual needs. There are generally good facilities and comfortable accommodation, although further development is needed to bring the quality of each house in line with each other. There is a comprehensive development plan for this which remains work in progress. The range of activities for boarders is limited in range, but take up of opportunities which are provided are good.

The links and communication between care and teaching staff support boarders' enjoyment and achievement effectively. Behaviour is well managed. Any reported bullying is dealt with effectively and boarders say they feel safe. The views of boarders, parents, carers and other interested parties are positive. There is a clear process by which boarders can contribute their views and see that they have made a difference in improving the boarding experience.

Safeguarding procedures and the recording of incidents is satisfactory. While staff discuss their commitment to young peoples' wellbeing, there are incidents which have not been recorded in sufficient detail. A very small number of checks in relation to recruiting staff or host families have not been followed up totally effectively. The college is beginning to build a closer link with the local authority responsible for safeguarding young people.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.⁵

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that all references confirming staff's suitability to work with young people and a declaration of physical and mental fitness to work with young people are received prior to commencement of employment (paragraph 7)
- ensure that full arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders and meet national minimum standards for boarding (paragraph 8)
- ensure that there are adequate procedures for checking staff, students and visitors are able to safely evacuate the school buildings in the case of fire (paragraph 13).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the school makes arrangements to send a copy of the full inspection report to the parents or carers of every registered student (paragraph 24(1)(d))
- ensure that the school makes arrangements to send a copy of the welfare inspection report to the parents and carers of each boarder (paragraph 24(1)(e)).

National minimum standards

In order to meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools and associated regulations, the school should:

- ensure there is an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time, including sufficient and suitably timed free time each day (NMS 10.1)

⁵ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- more thoroughly record the detail of any incidents and pass onto relevant parties to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school (NMS 11.1)
- operate safe recruitment procedures and vetting of staff in line with the regulatory requirements for boarding provision and with regard to current Department for Education guidance (NMS 14.1)
- more carefully monitor the checking of members of host families aged over 16 through the Criminal Records Bureau (NMS 20.4).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Ensure there is a wider range of enrichment activities, particularly at weekends, to provide variety in learning and to enhance the curriculum.
- Incorporate further spiritual and cultural experiences across the curriculum.
- Provide further facilities for boarders' personal laundry.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience

Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience			✓	
Outcomes for boarders		✓		
Quality of boarding provision and care		✓		
Boarders' safety			✓	
Leadership and management of boarding			✓	

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Independent College		
Date school opened	1977		
Age range of pupils	14–22 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 144	Girls: 147	Total: 291
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 2	Total: 4
Number of boarders	Boys: 113	Girls: 114	Total: 227
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,200–£16,725		
Annual fees (boarders)	£17,100–£23,625		
Address of school	Nazareth House Leicester Parade Barrack Road Northampton NN2 6AF		
Telephone number	01604 239995		
Email address	ec@bosworthcollege.com		
Headteacher	Elizabeth Carter		
Proprietor	Mark Broadway and David Game		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

22 September 2011



Dear Students

Inspection of Bosworth Independent College, Northampton, NN2 6AF

You will be aware that an inspection team recently visited your college. Thank you to all of you who completed our questionnaire and to those who came to meet with us.

We understand why you are all so happy at the college and why the staff enjoy working there. Your tutors are all committed to your personal well-being and to your academic success. We believe that the curriculum which is carefully tailored to your individual needs and the one-to-one teaching and support that you receive help you to achieve this. We recognise that sometimes the range of activities within lessons and out of college time is limited and that the college could do more to aid your spiritual and cultural development through the curriculum, so we have recommended that the college looks at this.

Staff have successfully brought about much improvement over the past three years. Many of you said you did not care for the food and the college is working hard to provide healthier foods and a wider range of menus. The boarding provision is on a continual refurbishment programme but we know that you would like better laundry facilities. The school does not fully comply with the current fire regulations as fire drills in the academic buildings are not regular enough. We have also asked managers to make sure that they receive professional references and medical declarations back for all staff and that host families for boarders are monitored for whether they require Criminal Record Bureau checks for any family members over the age of 16. While your welfare and safety is of paramount importance to staff, their recording of some incidents is insufficiently detailed and the advice of the local authority is not always sought. They are committed to ensuring that they do this properly from now on. We have asked the college to make sure it sends a copy of the inspection report to all parents, including the parents of boarders.

We wish you all the very best in your future studies.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector