

NBU, 3rd Floor
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Telephone: 0300 123 1231
Fax: 0300 123 3159
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk



12/03/2010

Dr Glenn Hawkins
Cambridge Education Group
Sidney House
Sussex Street
Cambridge
CB1 1PE

Our Reference SC015279

Dear Dr Hawkins

Inspection report

An Ofsted inspector inspected your Boarding School provision on 08/02/2010.

Please find enclosed:

- a copy of your inspection report

The inspection report

The inspection report sets out Ofsted's judgements about the quality of the provision you offer. Please make the report available to children and young people and relevant stakeholders. We normally publish your report on the internet in 15 working days.

If you have any queries about your report or inspection judgements, please contact our helpline on 0300 123 1231 within 15 working days of receiving your report.

Recommendations

The report contains some recommendations to improve your provision further. We will check whether you have acted on these recommendations when you are next inspected.

Yours sincerely

Janice Matthews
Inspection Support Team



Cambridge Arts & Sciences

Inspection report for Boarding School

Unique reference number	SC015279
Inspection date	08/02/2010
Inspector	Trevor Hall
Type of inspection	Key

Setting address	13-14 Round Church Street, Cambridge, CB5 8AD
------------------------	---

Telephone number	01223 314431
Email	
Registered person	Cambridge Arts & Sciences
Head/Principal	
Nominated person	Glenn Hawkins
Date of last inspection	23/05/2006

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

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

Cambridge Arts and Science (CATS) is currently providing 384 boarding places for students in three types of accommodation including home stay lodgings, supervised boarding houses and shared houses or flats. Home stay lodgings are only available for students over the age of 18 years. The college accepts students aged 14 years old or above, with the majority of the students aged over 16 years of age and many students are over 18 years of age. The college is a truly international establishment, with a record of high academic achievement, with boarders attending from many and varied parts of the world.

The college provides students with appropriate personal supervision, in line with their age and maturity both in terms of academic and social education and development.

The main campus is based in Cambridge city centre providing close and easy access to local facilities. The campus is made up of several buildings situated close together providing a communal and social area for students in addition to academic areas.

The college provides students with social and educational activities and opportunities throughout the year.

Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an announced inspection undertaken by one Ofsted and one Boarding Schools' Association inspector, conducted over three and a half days. The inspection looked at the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards (NMS) under the Every Child Matters outcome groups. The inspection was informed by the college producing a detailed and comprehensive pre-inspection self-assessment and by an extensive questionnaire completed by all of the college's boarding students. This inspection revealed that the college is operating to a high standard, the college was judged to be good in all of the Every Child Matters outcome groups.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the college was last inspected there have been many improvements and developments, particularly in the organisation of the senior management team. This change in structure and personnel has more clearly defined the roles and individual responsibilities of senior staff particularly in relation to both student welfare and boarding.

All of the recommendations made at the college's last inspection have been

appropriately addressed. The colleges anti-bullying policy now involves a significant annual input from students, who help to formulate the colleges anti-bullying charter, this policy is easily accessible to the student body.

The college's ability to effectively communicate with and formally gather students views about their experience of college life has improved considerably. The setting up of a college counsel, which meets regularly, frequent open surgeries with senior staff and the regular use of student questionnaires all contribute to this improved dialogue.

The provision for caring for young people that are ill has improved, all appropriate parental permissions for routine medical treatment and first aid are now routinely obtained prior to any student being admitted. All house supervisors are first aid trained. The college has employed a full-time and appropriately qualified and experienced nurse who oversees the medical provision within the college, advises house supervisors and monitors the college sick room during the college day.

The college has a comprehensive policy on the care of ill boarders and has an appropriate ability to both isolate and care for ill students, these arrangements provide for students to have separate toilet and washing facilities and meet the required national minimum standards.

The canteen arrangements have improved, with the majority of young people reporting their satisfaction with the variety of the menu and the quality of the food provided. The college now has a quantity of water dispensers located around the campus to ensure that all students have ready access to drinking water throughout the day.

The maintenance of boarding house records has improved considerably and with the recent introduction of the college's electronic recording systems, staff throughout the college have an instantly accessible source of up-to-date information about students, which has greatly enhanced the degree of welfare support they are able to provide. Similarly the introduction of an electronic system for recording health and safety issues, ensures that all records relating to fire prevention and detection system checks are properly maintained.

The safe employment practice of the college has also improved. Systems are now in place to ensure that all staff, prior to their employment, are appropriately vetted. All new staff are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check, appropriate references are taken up and verified, including one from the last employer and full checks are completed on identity, employment history and qualifications.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Students' health and well-being needs are being effectively promoted through professional and comprehensive services.

Since the college's last inspection the provision for caring for sick students has been re-organised. All students resident at the college are registered with a local GP doctors practice and the college employs a qualified nurse who is responsible for monitoring the students health needs.

During the college day all students have access to a qualified nurse based in the colleges sick bay, however, this sick bay is not open at weekends and is not open 24-hours a day, nor is it staffed 24-hours a day. This provision enables students who feel ill during the college day to be appropriately monitored and acts as a focal point for young people who may wish to seek medical advice or assistance. Most young people are accommodated in single bedrooms, many with en-suite facilities and when these students are ill they remain in their own accommodation, which is regularly monitored by staff. The provision of several designated isolation rooms, with en-suite facilities, in Varsity House ensures that students in shared accommodation can be isolated and have access to toilet and washing facilities that are not used by other students. These arrangements ensure that the national minimum standards in respect of caring appropriately for sick boarders are fully met.

The college has all appropriate policy statements, procedure and practice guidance that specifically addresses the use of prescribed and non-prescribed medication and addresses the issue of students who self-medicate. Many students self-medicate and these students have within their rooms provision for the safe storage of this medication. Younger students, those accommodated in fully supervised houses, are expected to hand in all medication to staff, unless they have been assessed as competent to self-medicate. Staff administer this medication and update the students' medical records accordingly.

It was noted that all boarding houses hold small amounts of non-prescribed medication and have appropriate policies on how these should be used and when it is necessary for additional medical attention to be sought, however, it was not clear if the college had a written protocol on the provision of non-prescription 'household' medicines to ensure uniformity of provision and to assist in stock control. Staff are trained in the administration of medication and actively put into effect the college's health education policies and integrate these into their daily contact with students. Consent for medication and first aid is sought from parents and guardians on an appropriately detailed consent form.

Students' welfare is promoted because a record is kept of the outcomes of all known medical appointments to ensure any ongoing concerns are addressed. Information regarding the health and medical history of each student is gained as part of the college's admission process through proactive contact with families. This ensures individual needs are identified and that each student receives an immediate and appropriate response when they are ill.

Students have access to information and guidance with regard to health and social issues. These areas are also addressed formally through the college's curriculum. Boarders are relaxed and well informed when discussing personal, health and social

matters.

Students' religious and health related dietary needs are met by a team of catering staff responsible for the provision and preparation of meals. These staff have an appropriate understanding of what makes up a good balanced diet and have had training about nutrition to enable them to put this into effective practice. Vegetarian options are available at each main meal, as is soup and a salad bar option. All meals are taken in the college's central dining room.

All students that are on full board are provided with all their main meals at the college's central dining room, no meals are taken in boarding houses. The college operates a snack bar to enable all students to purchase additional items and the main teaching campus, is located in the heart of the city, enabling students to access a multitude of shops and cafes. These arrangements meet most students needs, however, it was noted that many young students, some aged under 16 years of age, choose not to eat breakfast, preferring to have additional time in bed before heading off to college. While this may be appropriate for older students who are legitimately exercising freedom of choice, it does not reflect the level of nurturing and care required by this potentially vulnerable group of young people.

Menu planning is good, integrating culturally appropriate food and encouraging students to try new dishes. Flexible arrangements are made to take account of students' choice and students' responses to both formal questionnaires and informal discussion confirmed that while they feel that the food could be better they acknowledge that the food at the college is of an acceptable quality, is varied and is nutritious.

The college's central dining room is adequately furnished, clean and equipped to meet the needs of the students. At peak times, however, particularly in bad weather, when many students choose not to use many of the other eating opportunities available to them, it can become crowded, with pressure on queuing and seating with increased waiting times. These issues are readily acknowledged by the college, in their development plan and the proposed enclosing of the patio area, which already provides extra space during the summer months, should provide the additional space required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students' safety is promoted because staff are aware of the college's policies and procedures; they listen to the concerns of their students and take appropriate actions to ensure their welfare.

Students are cared for in a warm and friendly atmosphere. The college has appropriate anti-bullying policies and students expressed confidence that staff would deal with any instance of bullying promptly and effectively. Each year the students help to create a college anti-bullying charter, this ensures that each student

understands what constitutes bullying and what the college community's attitude to this behaviour will be. Students indicated that bullying rarely happens at their college.

Student welfare is safeguarded because staff receive regular in-house training in child protection and demonstrate an appropriate knowledge of policies and procedures. The college's designated child protection staff have all attended approved external training and all house supervisors have received appropriate child protection awareness training from the local social services department. This high level of training ensures that the relevant staff maintain up-to-date knowledge of national and local safeguarding procedures and ensure that the college's safeguarding policy reflects the best local practice. Boarders confirm that they feel staff give a high priority to keeping them safe.

Students state that the college respects their privacy and confidentiality, that their concerns are listened to and they are supported to behave well. Great care is taken to ensure that confidential information about young people is kept safely locked away and only those with a legitimate need have access to it. The college has appropriate policies and staff guidance notes for all boarding staff that describe the behaviour that is expected of such staff in respect of young peoples privacy.

The college has recently introduced several electronic recording systems, both into the education and boarding elements. These systems enable appropriate staff to access information about young people throughout the day. Electronic registration of each lesson enables staff to be able to track young people's attendance and to be able to alert appropriate staff or external services if young people absent themselves without the knowledge or approval of staff. While this level of monitoring may seem inappropriate for many of the older students it does provide a reassuring overview for the college's younger and more vulnerable students.

The college has all necessary policies and procedures in respect of students' behaviour management. These expectations are clearly made known to all students, either before they arrive or during their induction, they are also clearly stated within the student handbook. Inappropriate behaviour is addressed in a fair and measured way, within the college's four stage disciplinary procedures.

The college has a strong focus on promoting effective and supportive networks within the student body. The current students have helped to identify the need for an appropriate peer mentoring scheme. This will enable young people to share issues with older students who have been trained to either assist them directly or to direct them to specific staff to ensure that their needs are met.

A clear behaviour management policy, together with an established structure and opportunities for the students to be guided to learn good social skills, has the positive effect of creating a harmonious and friendly environment throughout the college.

The college has a clear complaints procedure and information about this is available

to students and parents through written material. Students state that the college responds quickly to any concerns raised by them and students are proactively supported to raise any concerns or issues that they have.

Students expressed confidence in the safety and security of the college. The college grounds, including those boarding areas located off the main campus, are protected by an extensive network of closed circuit television security cameras. These cameras do not intrude on boarders' reasonable privacy and are supplemented in the evening by the college's own night staff who provide wandering supervision, throughout the varied housing stock and if necessary in the local area.

Students learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they regularly take part in the emergency escape drills. Safe procedures are in place to protect students through regular servicing of fire warning, fighting systems and equipment and all other electrical equipment at appropriate intervals.

The college has a good set of comprehensive environmental risk assessments and has recently introduced a very good electronic system to inform maintenance staff of any known issues. The college's systems prioritise remedial work that is reported using a risk assessment procedure that ensures that student health and safety is always the priority. In inspecting the college's boarding provision it was noted that several ground floor windows lacked opening restrictors, this could conceivably undermine the security of these lodgings. Several upstairs windows also lacked appropriate restrictors these could present a falling hazard.

The college operates an established robust staff vetting procedure which is applied consistently and staff demonstrate an excellent awareness of the need to safeguard their students at all times. Staff recruitment files contain extensive evidence of recruitment checks that have taken place prior to staff being employed. This includes an appropriate enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. All adults who visit the boarding accommodation are supervised by staff. This practice ensures that young people are appropriately safeguarded.

The college has thorough risk assessments for all aspects of the premises, grounds, boarders' behaviour and activities, both on and off site. Particular efforts are taken to ensure that all areas used by the boarders are free from avoidable safety hazards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Individual and group support to students is given a very high priority by the college. Students are benefiting from living in a college where staff are focusing on promoting their success, meeting their needs and celebrating their achievements.

Staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner and consequently the care, social opportunities and activities are of a good standard. Students freely initiate interaction and seek help from various staff members on duty. The college provides

an environment where the value of equality and diversity is understood, promoted and celebrated. The college community represents the individual and diverse identities of students and this uniqueness is celebrated in a way that promotes awareness and understanding.

The college prides itself on the quality of its pastoral care, through the college's counselling service, the independent listener and the pastoral structure promoted by the good relationships witnessed between the students and staff. Students confirmed that they are encouraged to discuss all matters related to their boarding life and stated that staff always respond positively and take issues raised seriously.

Students enjoy living in a setting that has an effective equal opportunities policy and an ethos of inclusiveness. No student raised any issue about inappropriate discrimination either directly to the inspectors or in the student questionnaires completed by the whole boarding group prior to the inspection. The multi-cultural nature of the college is seen as a positive strength by both students and staff alike. Students talked enthusiastically about the college's ethos and the friendly relationships that exist between both students and the college's staff group. This, they feel, makes the college both effective and special.

Study provision within the college is very good, with ample space available for all boarders to work on preparatory or private study. The boarding accommodation provides each student with either a single or twin bedroom that has provision for study within it, enabling them to benefit from a more focused work environment. All students interviewed expressed unreserved appreciation of the boarding arrangements and while there was an acknowledgment that some of the college's boarding houses offered a higher degree of personal comfort and better facilities, none considered their accommodation to be inappropriate or sub-standard.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Students are actively encouraged to contribute to the running of the college and because their views and opinions are valued, this results in good social cohesion and a strong college identity.

Most students consider that they benefit from a supportive boarding experience, which is open and inclusive, although a small minority appear unconvinced that their contribution is appreciated and accommodated. The college employs a variety of systems to gain students' views about matters affecting their daily lives and the general running of the boarding houses.

The college council meets on a regular basis, senior staff have both an open door policy and hold surgeries at which young people are invited to share any concerns. The college has taken part in a pilot scheme which includes external canvassing of the students' opinions and these results, which were extremely positive, have helped to inform the college's senior management team and have influenced the college's

development plan. The college is easily able to demonstrate its commitment to seeking young peoples views, it is also able to demonstrate many examples of how these opinions have led to changes being made in college routines and procedures, particularly in respect of issues relating to catering or the boarding houses.

The college's mission statement refers to encouraging independence and developing maturity. By effectively communicating with young people about matters concerning their own lives, progress and future, the college helps them to learn how to take responsibility, become independent and to develop appropriate self-confidence.

All students under the age of 18 years have a team of house staff and a personal tutor who oversees and co-ordinates their care and education. The house staff play a key role, encouraging and supporting each student to develop self-confidence and respect for others. Individual religious beliefs and moral development are respected and accommodated and all students are expected to be tolerant of each others different beliefs, backgrounds and cultural experiences and tradition. All staff actively address any difficulties that students may have. The college has good systems in place to obtain the views of students, through the use of surveys and through group meetings. Essentially most students believe they have a voice in the college and that staff listen to them.

The staff respond to boarders in a supportive and thoughtful way and boarders are in turn positive about their relationship with the staff. This helps students to feel valued and gives them a sense of ownership of the setting and encourages them to become a real part of college life.

Due to the fact that so many of the students resident at the college are foreign nationals, the college promotes a very positive attitude to students maintaining regular contact with families. Students are encouraged to maintain appropriate contact with friends and family, as the college understands the value and importance of such communication. Broadband internet connections have been improved, following students expressing concerns about slow connection speeds. The college has committed considerable resources to enable them to acquire the best internet connection currently available and has reserve capacity to enable future increases in capacity.

Students are supported to take an interest in the outside world and have daily access to newspapers, telephones, flat screen televisions in many communal areas and access to the internet. In addition students are involved with community based activities and fund-raising, for a variety of charities.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The type, style and standard of accommodation throughout the college is variable, ranging from host families, small houses and larger fully supervised houses, to purpose built student accommodation blocks. Students under 16 years of age live in

fully supervised accommodation in acknowledgement of their potential vulnerability and the need for a greater degree of support.

The use of host families is restricted to students over 18 years of age, unless specific circumstances dictate otherwise, all host families are properly checked prior to being used and these students continue to be monitored by the college's support staff. The standard of all accommodation is variable but generally good; all boarding accommodation is comfortable, well maintained, clean and provides a safe environment for the students. In some houses not all windows, both on the ground floor and those above first floor level, are currently fitted with appropriate opening restrictors, to ensure either the required level of security or safety.

All boarders enjoy either single or twin accommodation which has good individual private study space, they are spacious, clean and appropriately decorated. The college campus is free from graffiti and is clean and well maintained. Students expressed their general satisfaction with their living accommodation and were happy with the level of internal security within the college, stating that very little was ever lost or stolen. Each young person has their own bedroom key some also have keys, or coded key fobs to enable them to enter residential premises, while college buildings are protected by swipe cards or coded key pads.

Students can choose to decorate their bedrooms with suitable pictures or posters, which helps to maintain a homely environment. All accommodation, surrounding buildings and the grounds are maintained to a high standard by a dedicated team of support staff.

The college is located in central Cambridge, with all of the residential accommodation being located around the city, none more than thirty minutes walk from the main teaching campus. This central location, while creating a multiple site campus does provide the majority of students with many opportunities to develop independence and self reliance skills, which is directly in keeping with one of the primary aims of the college as stated in its mission statement. The college has excellent access to a wide variety of local amenities, including shops social and sporting venues.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The college's clearly stated values and mission statement, high expectations and good leadership help students to not only achieve at a good academic level, but also helps to create a supportive environment in which students learn to respect others and to celebrate diversity and achievement.

The college has a comprehensive range of documents that clearly reflect their commitment to boarding practices and principles. The students' and parents' handbooks give all required information to young people and their families on the services available, in a format that is easy to understand. This includes the philosophy of care and the expectations of the college.

The Principal and senior management team provide strong leadership to students and staff. They are actively involved in the day to day operation of the college and via appropriate delegation the boarding houses.

The health and safety of boarders within the college and when off campus is taken extremely seriously. The college's accommodation management team ensures that this aspect of care is co-ordinated across the college site, giving support to those with delegated responsibility for specific health and safety tasks. A range of relevant documents, including the accident log, reveal that there is proper assessment of potential risks to students within the college. These include: risk from intruders; use of apparatus; outings and spread of infections as well as other risks specific to other more specialised off-site activities. All these potential hazards are given due consideration and where necessary measures are in place to reduce them.

Students make good academic progress at the college because staffing is well organised and effectively managed. Their welfare is comprehensively monitored with regular discussions within staff meetings, effective communication systems exist across the college site.

The senior management team effectively monitor all relevant records, such as the complaints, child protection and discipline. This ensures proper scrutiny of all aspects of the students' care. Any shortfalls in these areas are identified and addressed. This quality monitoring and other similar initiatives contribute to periodic reports to the executive committee and the college's overall development plan.

The college has a well-established crisis management plan that anticipates a wide range of foreseeable incidents or crises. The crisis management plan names individuals undertaking specific roles and appropriately allocates responsibilities with specific timescales.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. All of the college's recording systems take account of potential needs in relation to a young person's diversity such as identity, race, culture and religion. The college provides an environment where the value of equality and diversity is understood, promoted and celebrated.

Boarding houses are organised and operate well, they are focused on the needs of the young people in residence. The current boarding arrangement contributes effectively to boarders' welfare, with all of the houses working closely together to ensure that experiences for all students are focused to their needs, abilities and capabilities. The physical condition and standard of decoration and equipment in the boarding houses is variable most are of a good standard, however, Masters House was the least homely and while being considered to be satisfactory was not of the same quality. For example, there was some evidence of minor vandalism and several carpets were heavily stained.

Boarding houses that accommodate young people under 18 years of age are appropriately staffed and young people are well supervised. Students confirmed that

they can always find staff if they need assistance.

Boarding houses are well supervised by staff and the college has effective cover arrangements for staff who report in sick. Staff are appropriately aware of the whereabouts of boarders at all times, including when they are off the college premises on trips or visits.

In houses accommodating young people aged under 18 years, staff members sleep-in each night and boarders know how to contact staff should they require assistance, either by knocking on duty staffs' doors or using the internal intercom system.

The college has substantial strengths, where areas for improvement emerge the college recognises and manages these well. The senior management team provides effective monitoring and evaluation of relevant records in responding to parent or student complaints and any perceived child protection issues. The college has made appropriate reference to the Local Safeguarding Board when necessary and this inspection has not revealed any issues that the college should have referred, but has failed to do so. The college willingly embraces working appropriately with outside agencies and regulators and has a good record of consulting with these agencies when it is appropriate to do so.

Staff and students at all levels are given numerous opportunities in forums such as meetings and individual assessments, to help with the college's organisation and development. This consultation and regular communication ensures proper scrutiny and advancement of all aspects of the students' care. Any shortfalls in these areas are identified and addressed very quickly. This quality monitoring and other similar initiatives contribute to reports to the governing body and the college's overall strategic plan and implementation.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the college has secured, and follows, qualified medical or nursing advice in a written protocol on the provision of non-prescribed 'household' medication to boarders. (NMS 15.9)
- ensure that all windows on the ground floor of boarding houses are fitted with security locks, opening restrictors or intruder alarms (NMS 41.5)
- ensure that all windows accessible to boarders above the ground floor and presenting a risk to safety are fitted with suitable opening restrictors or alternative safety measures (NMS 47.3)