

# Liverpool College

Queen's Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside L18 8BG

<b>Inspection dates</b>	28 June 2016 to 30 June 2016	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of care and support	Good	2
How well children and young people are protected	Good	2
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### The boarding provision is good because

- Students make exceptional progress in relation to their educational attainment. They are outperforming day pupils with regards to their examination results. They said that this is because they have come to the school to learn. As a result, students achieve their personal goals and are able to progress with their education in the United Kingdom or in their home country.
- Students say that they are safe and feel safe here. The school's safeguarding procedures are robust. They work closely with other professionals and parents to ensure students' safety. The premises are safe, but staff should review the practice of wedging open fire doors and when fire drills are carried out. Also, students should have training on food hygiene and the safe storage of food.
- The senior leadership team, governors and staff are all committed to improving the care and support offered to students. Records are in place, but lack sufficient detail and staff have not had training on effective record keeping. Monitoring of records is not yet robust. This is because it has not identified any shortfalls, patterns or emerging trends in records.
- Boarding is an integral part of the school. Students, governors and staff value highly all that this brings to the school. For example, the insight that boarders brought to debates in school around the recent EU referendum. Relationships with parents are strong. Parents chose the school because of its academic success and the recommendations of former students. Students said that they would highly recommend the school to their peers.

## **Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools**

The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Review fire drills to ensure that they are unannounced and staff remain vigilant with regards to the wedging open of fire doors.
- Ensure that records are sufficiently detailed and provide clear insight to students' time at the school, in particular, staff undertake training on record keeping.
- Ensure that monitoring systems scrutinise records and premises to identify shortfalls, patterns or trends and the action taken to address these.
- Enhance students understanding of food hygiene, in particular the importance of storing food safely.

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was formally announced on day one in a telephone call to the school. A tour of the boarding premises was undertaken with students and staff. A range of records was examined. A number of senior staff members, including the principal and head of boarding, were spoken to throughout the inspection and informed of the emerging findings. The inspector also spoke with governors for the academy and also Liverpool College International school. The inspector spent time talking to staff and the students. Evening activities were observed over two nights. Feedback was provided on the final day to the principal and head of boarding, new head of boarding and governors.

## Inspection team

Chris Scully

Lead social care inspector

# **Full Report**

## **Information about this school**

Liverpool College is an academy with state boarding. The boarding facilities are for students aged 15 to 19 years. The boarding accommodation is in one building adjacent to the school. This is within easy access of the school. The boarding provision accommodates a maximum of 30 students. At the time of inspection, there were 29 students in residence. The boarding provision was last inspected in 2012 by the Independent Schools Association.

## Inspection Judgements

### The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

**Good**

Students said that they thoroughly enjoy their time here. They are clear that they have chosen to come here and want to gain the most out of their experience. A student said, 'I chose this school because I liked what I saw here and what the staff had to offer. The staff inspired me to come here.'

As a result, students make excellent progress. Staff said, 'Boarders' attainment is currently plus 2.3 value added, while rest of school is plus 1.7 value added. Boarders are a real addition to the school, they are fantastic in maths, economics and business studies. Another said, 'Progress for boarders is plus 10.4 compared with the plus 3 for the whole school. 'This is a phenomenal result.' This is because of the support from the boarding tutors who help to keep students on task.

Similarly, students are highly committed to their studies. One student set up a maths tuition group to enable his peers to achieve their desired examination results. Students are confident, articulate and enthusiastic about their studies. They are clear that their main priority in coming here was to gain the qualifications that they needed in order to help them to move on with their education and chosen career paths. Students have high aspirations as they wish to become doctors, diplomats or engineers. One student is particularly pleased to be offered a place at Cambridge.

Students enjoy a positive relationship with staff which is built upon mutual respect and trust. Students enjoy boarding and living in the United Kingdom. Students confidently talk about the opportunities that staying here has afforded them. This included the opportunities to be independent, to immerse themselves in a different culture and to explore the cultures of their friends in boarding.

The safety of students is given the highest priority. Safeguarding procedures are effective and concerns are acted upon and shared with the appropriate agencies. As a result, students are safe and feel safe here.

Boarding is well managed. The current head of boarding is leaving at the end of term and her successor is in place to ensure a smooth transition. Boarding is an integral part of the school and senior leaders and governors are committed to improvement. Despite the positive outcomes and good levels of care and support given to students, there are a few areas for improvement to ensure best practice in all areas.

### The quality of care and support

**Good**

Students receive good levels of support from staff who know them well.

Individual needs are known and understood by staff. However, this information is not always comprehensively recorded or up to date within their individual records, such as health issues. This leads to inconsistencies in the records and does not reflect the extensive support that students are provided with. For example, valuable information about young people's health and the action taken by staff are not recorded. This is a recording issue, but may lead to a delay in responding to students' future needs.

Staff spend time talking to students, who are relaxed and open in discussing things that are important to them. Students said that they were very well supported following the recent EU referendum. This has been an anxious time for them, with regards to the impact that an exit vote will have upon their studies. They speak with a maturity beyond their years on the topic and how it may affect them and others. However, they are supportive of one another. They confidently explore the options available to them. School staff work closely and collaboratively with boarding staff to provide consistent support to all students.

Induction for new boarders is robust. Students have the opportunities to visit the school prior to the start of term. Year 13 students effectively act as mentors to help new students to settle. Students said that this was very helpful to them. Parents are complimentary of the induction process and they said, 'The head of sixth form and head of the boarding house were waiting for the boarders to arrive in a lounge. It was very welcoming and the arrangement was very good. They also have some old boarders to present to support the new ones. That was very reassuring for the newcomers, and of course, the parents.'

Arrangements for healthcare are good. Students are registered with the appropriate healthcare professionals and are confident to make and go to their own appointments. Students are able to self-administer their own medication. However, more care needs to be taken as to where they store some of their medication. The recording of the administration of homely remedies is not yet robust. As a result, it is not always clear as to why this was given. This is a recording issue and does not affect the care provided. Students said that staff are always there if they need them and make sure that they get the right care and support when they are unwell.

Student accommodation is comfortable. They share the boarding with students from the Liverpool College International school. The boarding is about to undergo a refurbishment programme, as a result a number of areas appear tired and worn. During the time of inspection, these kitchens had numerous dirty dishes in them. The fridges had food spillages in them that had not been cleaned up and food was inappropriately stored. Students immediately resolved this. However, this could affect their health and well-being. Students have had some induction on food storage and kitchen routines, but this is not specifically around food hygiene, preparation and storage.

Students said that their evening meals have much improved in the last year. This is because they raised this at a boarding meeting as they felt that they were too like school dinners. As a result, a new menu was designed, which has been well received. Though a number of students said that they are amused at our preference for having potatoes with every meal. Students enjoy a relaxed evening meal with their friends. Students are able to prepare meals in the main kitchen in boarding and say that they often cook for one another. During the inspection, students gathered together to have a pizza and film night in the common room.

The education of students is effectively extended and enhanced by the extracurricular activities and in the integration into the school community and wider community. Students enjoy an extensive range of self-chosen activities. Given their ages, they enjoy spending time with their friends, shopping, visiting museums and going to the cinema. Students are fully consulted on all the activities provided and are keen to put forward their suggestions such as go-karting, large shopping centres, Manchester, theme parks and trips to London. This enables students to explore the local community and further afield. Students said that staff were instrumental in helping them to find their bearings

when they arrived. Staff provided maps of the local areas, information on bus and train times and which taxi firms to use so that they could get home safely.

### **How well children and young people are protected**

**Good**

Young people's safety is a priority. Staff have a secure understanding of the school's safeguarding arrangements and work effectively with other agencies when needed to support students. Positive relationships between teaching and boarding staff mean that everyone is aware of any issues which may affect a student's stay in boarding.

Staff are very aware of the individual needs of students and are confident to report any concerns to the designated safeguarding officers. The local education authority safeguarding lead said that the school takes swift and appropriate action to any safeguarding concern. Any child protection or safeguarding concerns are immediately shared with the local authority designated officer and their advice is acted upon by the school. The school has learned from previous safeguarding concerns and has implemented additional strategies to keep students safe, for example a pocket size safeguarding checklist to refer to.

Students are very aware of their own safety. They diligently check people's identification to ensure that they are known to the school prior to letting them into any school or boarding building. They said that it is to keep everyone safe. They are aware to use approved taxi firms and stay with their friends when out in the community. Students are confident about travelling home. They talk knowledgeably about the different airports that they will use and the safeguards that they have in place when travelling.

Health and safety is taken seriously, with routine checks regarding fire, electrical and gas safety, which are recorded. Fire drills are carried out each term, but are announced. This means that students can become complacent when carrying out the drills. A number of fire doors were wedged open during the inspection. Students said that they do this to create a better flow in the building. However, staff should remain vigilant to the closing of fire doors.

Students' behaviour is exemplary. They have a clear understanding of boarding rules and abide by them. Although they would like a later time to be home at night. Sanctions are rarely applied. Records are in place, but contain minimal information. Significant incidents are not recorded, such as students purchasing alcohol. This leaves the school open to challenge. However, an email trail is in place of the conversations with parents and the implications for students.

Students said that bullying or being missing from boarding is not an issue for them. They said, 'We all get on and understand the difficulties of being away from home.' They said that they were confident that should this occur the staff would deal with it if they could not resolve the issue. Students are very aware of world events and the threat of extremism and radicalisation. Staff are knowledgeable about the 'Prevent' strategy and action that they would take should they have a concern about a student.

### **The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers**

**Good**

Senior leaders and governors at the school value the contribution that the boarding team

makes. They are supportive of the continued development and improvement across the whole school. They have high aspirations for boarding and see it as an integral part of the school. It adds value to the school through the breadth of students using the boarding facilities, their life experiences and their discussions with other students, such as the world affairs and the impact upon them. This significantly enhances all students understanding of the world around them.

Since the last inspection, the school has moved from an independent school to an academy. As a result, the governance of boarding has changed. This has been a positive move as there is continued oversight by governors who are active participants in boarding. For example, having evening meals with students and talking to them about the things that are important to them. As a result, students have a strong sense of ownership and feel valued and listened to.

There are some changes taking place in boarding concerning the management. There has been a smooth transition for the new head of boarding, who is eager to improve the service offered to students. In particular, improving the recording systems within boarding. A number of records do not contain sufficient detail about the action taken by staff to support the student, such as health records, medication records, incident forms and sanction records. This means that students do not have an accurate record of their time at the school. This is a recording issue as there is evidence from students and others that issues are being resolved.

Staff feel well supported in their work and formal staff supervision takes place regularly. They attend regular training events on topics such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding. This training equips staff with the specific skills and knowledge that they need to effectively work with the students at the school.

Staff are highly committed to improving outcomes for students and the experiences within school. As a result, a comprehensive development plan is underway to refurbish the boarding accommodation and enhance the amenities for boarders. Staff work well with parents and keep them updated on their child's experiences at the school and in boarding. Parents said, 'We have visited the school and the boarding accommodation last year, and we were delighted to know that our daughter will be safe and well supported during her studying time in the UK.'

## What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework'.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

## School details

**Unique reference number**

**Social care unique reference number** SC411519

**DfE registration number**

This inspection 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.

**Type of school** Boarding school

**Number of boarders on roll** 29

**Gender of boarders** Mixed

**Age range of boarders** 15 to 19

**Headteacher** Mr Hans van Mourik Broekman

**Date of previous boarding inspection**

**Telephone number**

**Email address**

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