

Godolphin School (The)

Inspection report for boarding school

Unique reference number	SC036722
Inspection date	23 January 2008
Inspector	Veronica Crowley / Sue Shaw
Type of Inspection	Key

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Date of last inspection	4 November 2004

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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

The Godolphin School is an independent boarding school for girls aged 11 to 18 years of age. Founded in 1726 in the tradition of the Church of England, Godolphin also welcomes those of other denominations and faiths. The school is situated on the outskirts of the City of Salisbury. The school has three junior boarding houses and two senior boarding houses all of which have their own sitting room, games room, music practise room and dining room. Godolphin's ethos combines an emphasis on traditional values with a commitment to innovative development. The school encourages pupils to develop responsibility, initiative, independence, sensitivity and tolerance within a vibrant and supportive community. The school offers an extensive academic curriculum and a wide range of activities. At the time of this inspection the school had 178 boarders and 256 day pupils.

Summary

The Godolphin School operates its boarding provision to a very high standard with outstanding outcomes for its boarders. This inspection was carried out as part of the normal inspection process on an announced basis. The aim of the inspection was to review the 21 key standards for Boarding Schools. As part of the inspection process questionnaires were sent to parents and boarders to gain their views. Responses received were all extremely complimentary and indicated a high level of satisfaction with the pastoral care provided. The school demonstrates good attention to health care where boarders feel well looked after if unwell. Minor additions to record keeping procedures are highlighted as areas for improvement. There are extensive and robust systems in place, adopted throughout the school, which aim to protect boarders and ensure that effective responses are made in all safeguarding areas. Boarders benefit from excellent levels of individual support from both staff and external agencies. A further strength of the school is the tradition of 'vertical boarding', where boarders between the first and fourth years share dormitories. This factor, coupled with the strong, nurturing relationships that exist between staff and boarders, fosters a real sense of family living. The school clearly demonstrates its commitment to anti-discriminatory practice, valuing and embracing diversity. There is an abundance of forums, both formal and informal, for boarders to contribute their views to the boarding practice. Staff are encouraged and well supported to undertake training opportunities and have their performances reviewed on a regular basis. There is very strong leadership overseeing and monitoring all aspects of the care provided.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There were several recommendations made at the last inspection carried out in November 2004. Areas highlighted for improvement related mainly to minor health issues, boarders' safety and organisational matters. The school promptly addressed all recommendations, clearly demonstrating their commitment to providing high quality care for boarders. Separate records for prescribed medication are now being kept. All boarders who self medicate have secure storage facilities available. Child protection training has been extended to all staff and the child protection policy is in line with current legislation and guidance. Central records for both sanctions imposed and complaints received are being kept. All fire precautions and minor health and safety issues are in line with expectations. The school's recruitment process is robust and

exceeds the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools. The school can ably demonstrate how they monitor and oversee the majority of risk assessments. One minor recommendation, relating to risk assessments is carried forward at this inspection.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Boarders' personal and social health education (PSHE) is well promoted through an extensive range of policies and procedures, which the staff actively put into effect. The programme is wide ranging and covers smoking, alcohol, drugs, healthy eating and sex education. In addition areas relating to bullying, sexuality, stress management and self harm are well covered. Boarders enjoy additional input provided by the nursing staff, who both educate and support in all aspects of emotional, social and physical health. The medical centre also provides a wide variety of informative leaflets on a range of health matters. Boarders benefit from a flexible PSHE programme as tutors, liaising with parents and housemistresses, are responsive to current events. The recent anniversary of the Wolfenden report on homosexuality is an example of this. External agencies have also provided sessions on drug abuse and self defence. Boarders' health is maintained through a well organised medical centre. Nursing staff employed at the medical centre all hold relevant qualifications in order to ensure the wellbeing of the boarders. Boarders, parents and staff are all extremely complimentary about the care extended by the nursing staff. Much effort has been made to ensure the centre itself is welcoming and child friendly. Boarders' health is protected and promoted by the safe storage of all medication. Comprehensive records, backed up on the school's data base, provide detailed health histories for each boarder. Although, in the main, recording procedures are stringent there is a lack of audit trail on some medication, once dispensed from the medical centre to the boarding houses. This occasional omission does not necessarily pose any risk to boarders. The current medical permission consent forms from parents do not hold all the information required, in order to ensure that emergency treatment can be given. There are no risk assessments for boarders who self medicate in order to substantiate whether they are sufficiently responsible to do so.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders are protected effectively through the school's positive approach to dealing with bullying. An excellent, comprehensive policy is followed in practice. Any form of bullying is taken very seriously and responsive action taken immediately. Staff are committed to addressing issues of bullying, and the impact it has on all concerned. This is achieved both through the academic curriculum and the pastoral system within the boarding houses. Boarders report very low levels of bullying incidents throughout the school. Boarders live in a very stable and safe environment where their welfare is paramount. All staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of boarders and how best to safeguard them. There are robust child protection procedures in place, which are in line with the 'Local Safeguarding Children' procedures. Boarders are protected by the designated 'child protection officer' for the school demonstrating a purposeful awareness of changing legislation and guidance. The school has invested in a contractual agreement with Wiltshire County Council to provide training, training materials and guidance in all safeguarding matters. In addition, staff are supported to access 'online' training from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to ensure boarders are kept safe at all times. No child protection referrals have been made since the last inspection in November 2004 and boarders confirm they feel staff afford high priority to keeping them

safe. Currently two of the boarding houses have no separate bathing/toilet facilities for staff to use. Staff are therefore sharing the same facilities as the boarders. This compromises both staff and boarders. Boarders develop positively through the culture adopted at the school to celebrate achievement. Very few punishments are given. Boarders are aware of the punishment system and feel it is both fair and appropriate. Reward incentives are supported throughout the school both on a formal and informal basis for academic progress, good behaviour and helping others. These rewards include commendations, book tokens, and specific prizes at formal prize giving days, in addition to verbal recognition and praise. Boarders benefit from the positive, nurturing relationships that are fostered throughout the school. Boarding houses are run on trust and building good working and living relationships. Boarders are protected and their welfare promoted through an extensive and highly effective complaints procedure. There is a clear understanding within the school that any concern/complaint will be taken seriously and properly resolved, either formally or informally. Boarders confirmed they knew how to raise any concern or worry and that it would be dealt with appropriately and promptly. Two formal complaints had been fully investigated since the last inspection carried out in November 2004. Records demonstrate that staff act, in line with their policies and procedures, to ensure satisfactory outcomes are achieved. Boarders are safeguarded by an efficient and committed team of prefects. They are elected by staff and pupils and act as role models and leaders, taking their responsibilities very seriously. Prefects receive an induction programme which includes child protection and anti bullying. They meet regularly both as a team and with the Headmistress to discuss general issues and ensure the best interests of the school are always adhered to. Other leadership opportunities for boarders include involvement in the charities committee, student council, debating society and in the roles of 'godmothers'. This is a mentoring role traditionally adopted to support new students to the school. Boarders are protected from fire by stringent safety precautions and well trained staff. Regular fire evacuations take place and all fire safety equipment is checked with meticulous records kept. Boarders demonstrate a very good understanding of the school's fire evacuation procedure. Boarders' privacy is respected by non-intrusive staff that are sensitive when entering dormitories or bathrooms. Boarders' welfare is protected by a robust staff recruitment process. The school follows a very clear policy on recruitment in line with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCFS) guidance. The procedure also includes a medical declaration form; an addition that exceeds the National Minimum Standards for boarding schools. The school maintains detailed records of the selection process undertaken and ensures rigorous checks are in place prior to new staff commencing work. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks at enhanced level are undertaken on all staff employed at the school prior to employment. Boarders are further protected as all staff of external transport firms used by the school are also rigorously checked through the CRB process. Any adult not employed by the school but living in the same building as boarding accommodation has a suitable agreement specifying their terms of accommodation. Boarders' welfare is safeguarded through significant security measures. The school has a comprehensive process restricting public access that is reviewed regularly. Boarding accommodation is reserved solely for the use of those boarders designated to it. All boarding areas are suitably protected by the use of window restrictors, door key pads and locks. Security staff are employed by the school and undertake regular checks. The school has established positive links with the local community police and are registered with the National Schools Safety Alert System for effective sharing of relevant information between schools. Boarders are safeguarded by an extensive health and safety policy, effective risk assessments and well trained staff. Maintenance issues are prioritised and dedicated staff make particular efforts to ensure boarders are protected from unavoidable hazards. Boarders are protected by effective

checking of electrical appliances and gas installations, water checking and safe storage of all substances hazardous to health. Boarders' welfare is promoted through a raft of risk assessments relating to activities undertaken, the school grounds and any other known risks.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders benefit from excellent levels of individual support received from both pastoral and academic staff. Tutors play a pivotal role in the wellbeing of the boarders, providing the link between the academic and pastoral systems. In addition there are numerous staff readily available to support and encourage the boarders to flourish and fulfil their individual potential, regardless of ability. These staff include the housemistresses, deputy housemistresses, the members of staff responsible for English as an additional language, learning support, the nursing staff and the Chaplain. Although boarders have known access to the independent listeners they rely mainly on the strong relationships built within the boarding houses. The tradition of 'vertical boarding', where boarders between the first and fourth years share dormitories, further promotes the strong sense of family that exists within the school. Boarders' lives are enhanced through the school's commitment to equal opportunities and the reciprocal, caring ethos experienced by them. The school positively welcomes, embraces and celebrates the diversity of its boarders. Appropriate arrangements are made for boarders whose first language is not English and there are two dedicated members of staff specifically overseeing, supporting and promoting the integration of the international students. Individualised support provided to boarders is sensitive to specific cultural/personal welfare needs. Excellent provision is made, where feasible and desired, for boarders with any special dietary or religious observance requirements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Boarders have an abundance of opportunities to contribute their views regarding the operation of the boarding provision. These include the newly reformed student council, the charity committee, debating society, the school magazine, boarding house meetings, and on a one to one basis with staff. There is also opportunity to comment on, or make suggestions for the food/menu by completing forms in the dining room. Recent changes made as a result of consultation with boarders include: choices in redecoration of boarding houses, house trips, evening routines, contributing to recycling, and developing the concept and facilities for the sixth form centre. Boarders' welfare is enhanced and maintained through positive contact with their parents, families and friends. They have their own email addresses and can use the boarding house landlines in addition to their personal mobile telephones. Communication between parents and staff is very good. There is close contact between house staff, tutors and nursing staff to ensure parents are kept up to date with progress or any worries that may arise.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The statement of boarding principles and practice is readily available to parents, boarders and staff. In addition the school provides a comprehensive and clear information book for students

between the ages of 11 and 16. For students/boarders joining the school in the sixth form, students themselves have created a sixth form student information book. All publications give an excellent introduction and overview as to what to expect of the school and school life. Boarders benefit from a very well run school. The monitoring of punishments, complaints and accidents is exemplary. This also applies to the majority of risk assessments. However, boarding house specific risk assessments are in different stages of review. This poses no immediate risk, but does not yet give an up to date picture of improvement or where action needs to be taken. Various weekly meetings take place between personnel on the Senior Management Team to ensure consistency across all disciplines. The Headmistress submits detailed reports to the Board of Governors three times a year and meets with them regularly. Boarders' welfare is protected and promoted by adequate staffing levels, day and night, with relevant experience to meet their needs. Boarders confirmed they always knew who was on duty at any one time and how to summon assistance should the need arise. There are good arrangements for managing and supervising staff throughout the 24 hour day. Boarders enjoy the care provided by dedicated and well trained staff. Staff meet regularly through various forums to ensure consistency for boarders. Staff receive induction and are encouraged and supported to access further development opportunities. Each member of staff receives a regular appraisal. Parents commented favourably on the kindness and supportive approach adopted by the staff towards their children.

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

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

- ensure that the Senior Sister has a complete overview of all medication throughout the school. (Std 15)
- ensure that the written consent form for parents includes permissions for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication to boarders and to seek medical, dental or optical treatment when required. (Std 15)
- carry out risk assessments on boarders who are self medicating. (Std 15)
- provide separate toilet and bathing facilities for staff on duty in boarding houses. (Std 3 & 44)
- review and update house specific risk assessments in boarding houses on an annual basis. (Std 23)

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for boarding school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' health is promoted (NMS 6)
- safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 15)
- boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill (NMS 16)
- boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 17)
- boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 25)
- boarders are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 48)
- boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 49).

Ofsted considers 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are protected from bullying (NMS 2)
- boarders are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- boarders' complaints are responded to appropriately (NMS 5)
- the operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school (NMS 22)
- boarders are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 26)
- the welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school (NMS 28)
- boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 29)
- boarders' personal privacy is respected (NMS 37)
- there is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders (NMS 38)
- boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures; all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises are supervised (NMS 39)
- boarders have their own accommodation, which is secure from public intrusion (NMS 41)
- boarders are protected from safety hazards (NMS 47)

Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 18)
- boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 27)
- boarders have satisfactory provision to study (NMS 43)
- boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas (NMS 46)

Ofsted considers 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school (NMS 12)
- boarders receive personal support from staff (NMS 14)
- boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 19)
- new boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in (NMS 21)
- boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school (NMS 30)
- there are sound relationships between staff and boarders (NMS 36)

Ofsted considers 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' possessions and money are protected (NMS 20)
- boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation (NMS 40)
- boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 42)
- boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 44)
- boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day (NMS 45)
- boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school (NMS 50)

Ofsted considers 51 the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- a suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- there is clear leadership of boarding in the school (NMS 8)
- crises affecting boarders' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- the school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare (NMS 10)
- risk assessment and school record-keeping contribute to boarders' welfare (NMS 23)
- boarders are supervised adequately by staff (NMS 31)
- staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site (NMS 32)
- boarders are adequately supervised at night (NMS 33)
- boarders are looked after by staff which have specific boarding duties, and have received adequate induction and continued training (NMS 34)
- boarders are looked after by staff which follow clear boarding policies and practice (NMS 35)
- the welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 51)
- the welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

Ofsted considers 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.