

Advice note for a material change inspection of an independent school seeking to open or change existing boarding or residential provision – welfare only

School name	Holyport College
DfE registration number	868/4001
Unique reference number (URN)	1654
URN for social care	SC
Inspection number	
Inspection dates	18 August 2014
Lead inspector	Keith Riley

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Information about the inspection

This inspection of boarding/residential provision was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It 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.^{1,2,3}

Information about the school

Holyport College is an all ability, coeducational day and boarding free school. The college has applied to be registered for 500 boys and girls aged from 11 to 19, of which there will be up to 225 boarders. There has been a separate education registration visit on 19 June 2014 for which there is also an advice note.

The college will reflect a Christian ethos but welcomes children from all faiths. It is located in a green belt setting in the village of Holyport in Berkshire. There are close links with Eton College who will support the school by taking a leading role on the governing body. Residential pupils will be able to access some of Eton's facilities. The college will have its own bursary scheme and will provide places for children from vulnerable backgrounds. The college also plans to cater for children with parents in the armed services.

Purpose of the inspection

The purpose of this visit was to assess whether the newly built accommodation and refurbished accommodation is suitable for use by residential pupils boarding at the school. The school is seeking approval to accommodate up to 225 residential pupils in four separate residential wings, consisting of 84 bedrooms in total.

Advice to the Department for Education

On 18 August 2014 I visited the school site in Holyport, Berkshire. During the visit I met with the headteacher, bursar and building site manager. Internal chattels and fixings are incomplete as well as some external ground-works. I examined various documents and policies. I undertook a tour of the boarding accommodation, kitchen and medical centre.

The accommodation is purpose-built and is spacious and modern. Decor, where finished, is of a high standard. Ventilation and lighting are good, heating is provided through radiators in each room. Dormitories can accommodate two, three or four residential pupils at one time. There are necessary adaptations to suit the needs of pupils with limited mobility, such as wheelchair users. Dormitories are currently being equipped with bespoke furniture by a specialist company. There is suitable

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents.

³ www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

separation between male and female residential pupils. Access to the accommodation is restricted to those who have approval through a biometric entry system. There are suitable toilet and washing facilities, which provide appropriate privacy and are accessible from the sleeping accommodation. This includes toilets for use by wheelchair users or en-suite facilities in rooms identified for use by residential pupils with limited mobility. Residential pupils have access to all parts of the building they need including areas where they can study or be alone if they so desire. CCTV is external and used for the purpose of security, it does not intrude on the privacy of residential pupils. Staff accommodation is within each boarding wing and there is suitable security. The premises are of an excellent standard to accommodate residential pupils and keep them as safe as possible.

I met with the key members of staff and checked documents to ascertain whether the building will be ready to accommodate residential pupils in the 2014 to 2015 academic year. All necessary work is complete such as the removal of asbestos, relaying of water pipe work, installation of heating plant, electrical work and fire systems. Internal fixings, installation of furniture and the external ground works are on schedule. The building control has not yet been signed off, but should happen on 29th of August 2014. This is on schedule.

There are suitable and comprehensive safeguarding and child protection policies in place. There are clear structures and arrangements for managing allegations or child protection concerns with the headteacher taking the lead as the child protection liaison officer. Safer recruitment practices are adopted and there is a single central register in place which complies with the requirements. There is a code of conduct which clearly sets out the expectations of behaviour with a behaviour management policy outlining appropriate sanctions to address different levels of poor behaviour. There are no current plans to use gap students but there are suitable processes in place to obtain the necessary checks for anyone employed from overseas. There is a countering bullying procedure in place with guidance for staff, pupils and parents. This encompasses cyber-bullying. A missing person procedure guides staff in what to do in the event of a residential pupil going missing from the school. Environmental risks are suitably assessed and managed. There are clear procedures to assess the risks, such as residential pupils accessing activities off the site.

The health needs of residential pupils will be met with registration at a local doctor's surgery and easy access to other services such as dentist and optician. There is a medical centre and a qualified nurse will be employed. Residential pupils will have ready access to medical advice and there are suitable arrangements in place for the administration of medication and first aid. Emotional well-being is provided for through the house mistress, house principal and nurse. In addition there is an independent visitor scheduled to come to the school regularly and meet with the residential pupils. Eton College will provide older boys to mentor residential pupils with clear arrangements in place to provide a suitable and safe structure.

The kitchen and dining area are custom-built to meet the needs of the residential pupils at the school. Experienced contractors will be used to provide the meals. There are suitable arrangements for the oversight of the menu and the attention to

special diets for reason of health or religion. Snacks and drinks will be readily available in boarding time where boarders have access to a kitchenette on each wing. Supper will be provided through this facility also.

Residential pupils will have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is access to the sports facilities as well as substantial available outdoor space. All staff are expected to support the extra-curricular activities such as drama, debating, a charity committee and team sports. Activities will be creative as well as intellectual and physical. Strong links are in place with Eton College where residential pupils will have access to rowing activities.

Boarding staff are well qualified and have sufficient experience. There are good staffing ratios in boarding time with suitable arrangements at night. Residential pupils are able to contact staff at night if they need to. Senior management are on call to provide additional support, guidance or advice where necessary. The role of any other adults living on site is clearly written down.

The voice of residential pupils will be heard. As well as day-to-day interactions there are more formal opportunities such as in house meetings or through the school council. An independent visitor will also meet regularly with residential pupils. There is a complaints procedure that can be accessed to raise more formal concerns.

There is an equal opportunities policy which underpins the expectation for all staff to provide an inclusive and collaborative ethos and to deal with any prejudice related incidents that might occur. Tolerance and understanding will be fostered in an inclusive environment.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding/residential special schools

The school is likely to meet all national minimum standards.

Recommendation

- The school can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the following matters:

Final building control sign off including arrangements for fire protection.

For number of boarders: 225