

King's College Saint Michael's

Oldwood Road, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire, WR15 8PH

Date of visit 14 April 2016

Purpose of visit

This was an announced visit carried out at the request of the DfE to check that the school has fully implemented the action plan submitted following the unannounced monitoring visit on 12 June 2015. The focus of the visit was on the welfare, health and safety of pupils, in particular the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for safeguarding of pupils and staff recruitment checks, and on the management and development of boarding.

Characteristics of the School

King's College Saint Michael's is a co-educational international boarding school for pupils aged 13 to 19 years, situated about two miles outside the town of Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire. The school is part of the King's Education Group, which is based in Spain and whose executive board oversees the running and management of the school. At the time of the visit, there were 110 pupils on roll, only one of whom was a day pupil. Boarders are drawn from countries around the world and represent around 25 nationalities.

Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [NMS 11]

The school meets the Standard.

The school has updated its safeguarding policy to meet the requirements of the most recent statutory guidance, and the policy is published on the school's website. The policy requires all staff to have read the latest version of Part 1 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015) (KCSIE)*. The policy includes definitions of abuse which match the scope of those provided in statutory guidance. It states clearly that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and that anyone can make a direct referral to the local safeguarding children board (LSCB). It provides guidance for reporting any allegation against the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The policy reflects the school's boarding context and highlights the need for additional care in the way the school responds to relationships in boarding, the potential for abuse by peers and the specific safeguarding needs of overseas boarders.

The policy outlines the distinctive roles and responsibilities of the DSL and the principal, who is also the deputy DSL. It makes clear that the principal should contact the local authority's designated officer within 24 hours if an allegation has been made against a member of staff. The policy provides for comprehensive training in child protection as part of the induction process for new members of staff; the training includes familiarisation with the school's safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, whistleblowing procedures, the identity and

function of the DSL and Part 1 of *KCSIE*. The policy and the staff code of conduct give staff clear guidance on working in one-to-one situations with boarders.

The role of the DSL has changed and been given greater prominence since the unannounced visit in June 2015. A new DSL has been appointed, who has been given more time and administrative support to undertake the role, than was the case at the time of the previous inspection visit. The DSL has received more than the minimum levels of required training, which is appropriate, relevant and up to date. The DSL has thorough understanding of their role and responsibilities. The school's system for recording concerns and maintaining records has been revised; the new centralised system allows the DSL and senior staff to monitor any concerns and ensure that pupils receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. Communication between the DSL and staff has improved, and information is shared in a timely manner. There are new systems for recording guidance given by external agencies and the outcomes of consultations with the local authority's designated officer (LADO); no such consultations have been necessary since the DSL took up post. The DSL has ensured that all staff have received updated training in safeguarding and now maintains a record of each member of staff's safeguarding training.

The board of directors has appointed a director who is resident in the United Kingdom to oversee the school's safeguarding procedures and to report to the board at its termly meetings on their implementation. Although not yet complete, a thorough induction programme for this director has been planned, and the first stages of the programme have been implemented. The board has ensured that the school's policies and procedures have been revised to take into account the action points arising from the unannounced visit in June 2015; all of the necessary steps have been taken to prepare for a rigorous review of the safeguarding policy and its implementation in June 2016.

Discussion with a representative group of teaching and non-teaching staff during the visit indicated that there has been a much greater emphasis on safeguarding since the appointment of the new DSL. Staff confirmed that, as part of the induction programme for all staff at the start of the current school year, they had read Part 1 of *KCSIE* and understood its contents. They demonstrated good understanding of the school's policy and procedures and were clear that every member of staff has responsibility for the safeguarding of pupils and is able to make a referral, if necessary, to the LSCB. They know how to report any allegation against a member of staff, including the principal and the DSL. They confirmed that the training programme for staff is much improved, and acknowledged the changes that have been made to the safeguarding policy with regard to safeguarding procedures for boarders, including how to ensure safety in one-to-one meetings with pupils and appropriate behaviour for staff in a residential context.

A discussion with a representative group of pupils revealed that pupils feel safe in school and consider that the staff look after them well. They have no concerns with regard to the way the school attends to their welfare, health and safety.

Staff recruitment and checks on other adults [NMS 14]

The school meets the Standard.

The school has rectified its previous failure to check all those involved in teaching against the list of prohibited teachers. All new staff have been checked before they commence employment, and a retrospective check has been carried out for any member of staff engaged in teaching activities who had not previously been checked. The date on which each of these checks has been made is now recorded on the school's single central register of appointments (SCR).

Since the previous inspection visit, the school has transferred all of the information from its previous SCR document into a new software program. This allows the school to capture all of the information required to check a new member of staff's suitability and to store copies of

the documents which the school is required to retain. The program has the facility to produce the required information in legible form as required, although needs further refinement to ensure that the printed version makes clear the date on which a person's right to work in the UK has been checked. Documentation stored within the program and copies held within staff files show that the school has been diligent in carrying out these checks.

The management and development of boarding [NMS 13.1 & 13.5]

The school meets the Standard.

The board of directors has taken steps to gain better oversight of boarding and welfare provision and the safeguarding of pupils. The appointment of a UK-based director to oversee these arrangements and to report back to the main board in Spain, has removed many of the barriers to effective governance that were in place at the time of the previous inspection visit. The UK-based director is also designated to liaise with the LSCB in matters of child protection. The director's involvement in safeguarding training and planned forthcoming visits, provides a suitable platform to extend the board's understanding of the school and the way it promotes the welfare, health and safety of boarders.

Regulatory action points

The school meets all of the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2015.