

# The Wellington Academy

Tidworth Road, Ludgershall, Wiltshire, SP11 9RR

<b>Inspection dates</b>	07/09/2015 to 09/09/2015	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of care and support	Outstanding	1
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

- Young people receive care from a committed and well trained team who have high expectations for the young people they look after. Young people are very positive about the staff who care for them, with whom they have developed excellent relationships.
- The boarding provision is well managed by an experienced team who have clear plans to drive the improvement forward. Staff use reflective and innovative practice, incorporating findings from associated research. This linked with robust and effective monitoring leads to continuous improvement.
- Young people who board make excellent progress in comparison to pupils who do not. This is due to the additional support and structure they receive.
- Safeguarding and child protection is central to the work the staff team undertake. Staff are well trained in this area and demonstrate a clear understanding. This work is supported by comprehensive recruitment processes which are closely adhered to in practice, which safeguards young people.
- Young people benefit from living in purpose built boarding accommodation which is spacious, well-furnished and has a friendly welcoming atmosphere.
- Young people are able to take part in a wide range of fun and purposeful activities which enable them to build self-confidence and explore their interests and discover new ones.

## **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?

- Ensure behaviour management records record all the work and support provided to a boarder to prevent re-occurrence of inappropriate behaviour.
- Ensure records of the work undertaken to resolve any complaint, contain information of all the work undertaken.

## **Information about this inspection**

Ofsted carried out this inspection with two and a half hours' notice. Inspection activities included: observation of boarding practice over two evenings; formal group meetings with young people, as well as informal discussion during shared meals; meetings and discussions with the Principal, the director of boarding, boarding staff, two Governors and other Academy staff; contact with the local statutory safeguarding authority; a tour of the accommodation; and scrutiny of the wide ranging documentation about boarding. Responses on Parent View and pupil responses to Ofsted's point-in-time surveys were also taken into consideration.

## **Inspection team**

Wendy Anderson

Lead social care inspector

# **Full Report**

## **Information about this school**

Wellington Academy is a co-educational state day and boarding school for students aged 11 – 19 years. The Wellington Academy is sponsored by Wellington College. It replaced the Castledown Foundation School in 2009. The Wellington Academy provides boarding for up to 100 students. At the time of inspection there are 65 young people boarding. The Academy has a high proportion of students from service families stationed in the garrison towns nearby. Many of these students join and leave the school at times other than the start of the academic year.

Boarding accommodation is purpose built and is on the Academy campus. It provides bedroom accommodation for boys and girls in two separate wings.

## Inspection Judgements

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

**Good**

Young people make excellent progress both academically and personally as a result of their boarding experience. They build trusting relationships with the staff who care for them as well as developing self-confidence and self-management strategies. Young people learn tolerance and acceptance of others, due to the multi-cultural environment in which they live. These skills prepare them well for later life.

Young people are living in a safe environment. Staff have young people's safety at the forefront of their practice. They also work effectively with young people to develop their skills in keeping themselves safe in the community and online.

The Academy provides young people with a warm welcoming environment. Induction of new pupils is well-managed and includes a buddy/mentor system, which young people value. They say it helps them settle into life at the Academy quickly.

The boarding provision is well run and is seen as an integral part of the Academy. Young people are proud of their boarding house and feel a sense of ownership. There are a number of avenues which allow boarders to express their views and opinions. At the time of inspection some of these systems were under review to improve their effectiveness.

Young people say that they feel the changes that have been implemented have been positive, although at first they said this was not easy. Now they feel they have a better work ethic which will help them in their future careers. In addition, they said the boarding house is now far less chaotic and more relaxed.

Health care is well managed and young people are provided with any additional support they may need. In addition, young people learn about general good health issues through their well-being work.

### The quality of care and support

**Outstanding**

Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the young people's individual needs and vulnerabilities. This ensures young people receive the help and support they require to reach their full potential. Staff have very high aspirations and expectations around what can be achieved by each young person. This is underpinned by a strong work ethic and is evidenced in the outstanding progress young people make in their personal and academic development.

Staff enable young people to develop their own identity, self-confidence and emotional

resilience. The Springboard project provides good evidence of success in this aspect. This project has enabled the Academy to provide placements for young people from disadvantaged and in some case harmful and dangerous backgrounds, who would not usually have access to a boarding provision.

Young people said there are lots of staff they could talk to if they had a problem. They were particularly positive about the boarding staff saying 'we can talk to them about anything, they are always there for us'. Young people felt their relationships with boarding staff have improved since the last inspection. They praised the new head of boarding for the changes that have been made. There is also an independent listener, known to all young people, who has visited the school and whose contact details are well advertised.

Staff across the Academy campus work closely and cooperatively to ensure young people receive a very high quality of care and support. Due to clear plans and effective information sharing systems all staff are kept apprised of young peoples identified and emerging needs. This enables the provision of cohesive and effective responses to be delivered.

Core values 'happiness, achievement, limitless aspiration, value, respect, self-belief and community 'are woven throughout all the aspect of the Academy's work . These are supported by the Academy's pledge which is 'resilience, equality, success, perseverance, enterprise, creativity and team work'. The Academy is a multi-cultural and inclusive environment where young people's individuality is celebrated and equality of opportunity is promoted. The goal of the staff is to help the young people develop into good citizens who value and respect each other.

The spacious, comfortable, well-furnished accommodation has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Young people are able to personalise their rooms and have ample storage space including lockable storage. Security is discrete and young people said they felt safe in the boarding house.

There are a range of systems for consulting with young people. One of the key elements is the prefect group. Young people felt these consultation processes were effective. Staff plan to extend the consultation with boarders to enhance this work.

Young people are able to take part in a vast range of activities both on and off campus. These include a number of sports clubs and being able to work on the local radio station. Some young people have noticeably increased in confidence and have now developed a positive view of themselves through their achievements. These activities enable young people not only to pursue their interests but have new experiences. Young people work with staff on planning the activities and trips that are on offer.

Young people's health care needs are well managed. As well as an effective system for ensuring young people's medical needs are fully met. Should young people require external specialist help, this is quickly sourced and provided. Systems are in place to

ensure medication is administered and stored safely. This work is supported by clear and comprehensive records which are routinely audited. Where required, very detailed welfare plans are in place to support young people's specific needs. These are kept under close review to ensure they reflect the young person's current situation and needs.

Food provided at the Academy is of a high standard. Meals are varied, well-balanced and nutritious. Feedback is sought from young people on the menus and subsequent changes are then made. At the time of inspection these systems were under review to increase their effectiveness.

Young people are able to maintain contact with family and friends using a variety of methods including phone, email and skype. Some young people said the time difference between Countries can sometimes be an issue but staff work hard to reduce this. The Academy also uses social media to inform parents of events, young people's achievements and general boarding house news.

Staff spoken to demonstrated a clear understanding of the Academy's policies and procedures. These are robustly implemented and provided structure and consistency.

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

**Good**

Young people feel safe at the Academy. There are robust safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures which are strictly adhered to in practice. When interviewed, staff demonstrated a good understanding of these. Records maintained are comprehensive and provide a clear audit trail of all work undertaken in this area. This enables effective monitoring to take place to ensure appropriate actions have been taken. The staff have developed effective working relationship with fellow professionals, including the Local Authority Designated Officer. Staff not only have a good understanding of their role but also a good understanding of indicators that may suggest a boarder is at risk of harm.

The director of boarding is the designated safeguarding officer and is well qualified and experienced for this role. Young people understand the Academy's complaints process and feel this works well. The majority said if they had any concerns they would talk to the boarding staff who they trusted to 'sort things out for them'.

The staff team clearly understand the young people in their care, including their individual vulnerabilities. This knowledge enables the staff to be proactive rather than reactive to situations. In addition, they are able to work with individual young people on developing their understanding of their own needs and thus develop skills to reduce risks

and safely self manage their own safety.

Incidents of young people going missing from the Academy are rare. Where it has happened, staff have swiftly acted in line with this policy. Work is undertaken with the young people involved to establish why this has happened and strategies are developed with them to prevent reoccurrence. These have been very successful.

Young people have been involved in the creation of the 'Boarders Charter' which helps them to achieve positive behaviour through a range of incentives. Staff feel this gives the young people ownership and involvement in boundaries and rules which they are expected to observe. Young people felt this was a good idea and felt that sanctions were fairly applied across the boarding house. Staff record incidents, major and minor sanctions. These records are appropriate but do not consistently contain information on all the additional support and work that staff undertake with young people to reduce the reoccurrence of behaviours.

Young people benefit from work undertaken on developing their understanding on a range of topics such as bullying, discriminatory behaviours, substance abuse and radicalisations. The work the Academy is doing linked to the Prevent strategy and combating radicalisation is excellent. Young people stated that bullying was not an issue at the Academy. They said they would tell staff should they see any bullying and things would quickly be addressed.

E-safety is well managed. The Academy has safeguarding software on their systems but also carries out work with the young people to develop their understanding and the skills to keep themselves safe online.

Staff recruitment follows the safer recruitment guidelines. Comprehensive records are maintained to evidence this. This ensures young people are protected from adults who may wish to harm them.

Risk assessments across the boarding house are of a good quality and kept under review to ensure they reflect the current situations. This also includes the risk assessment for off site visits and activities. Health and safety issues are well managed and supported by appropriate records. Young people have regular fire drills and understand what to do in the event of a fire.

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

**Good**

The Academy's boarding provision is managed by an experienced, well-qualified and aspirational team. The ethos and objective of the boarding provision are clear, understood by all staff and demonstrated throughout their practice. The boarding staff are committed to the young people they care for. They are well trained and take a research based, innovative approach to practice. Since the last inspection a new director



of boarding has been appointed. She has introduced positive change that has been welcomed by staff and young people. The senior management team have taken effective actions in light of the last inspection in January 2014. Now all of the National Minimum Standards have been met, with some being exceeded.

Staffing levels in boarding are appropriate for the number of young people. Boarding staff reported they feel well supported by the senior management. This is supported by good quality supervision and team meetings, where staff are able to reflect on their practice and further develop. Staff feel they are listened to and are able to have a real input and impact on the development of the boarding provision. All staff spoken to have high aspirations not only for the boarders, but for themselves and the Academy. Staff commented that 'this is an exciting time in the life of the Academy and it's great to be a part of it'.

There are effective communication systems across the Academy campus. This ensures staff are kept up to date on young people and the strategies in place to care for them. The standard of communication with external professionals is also good. This approach ensures consistent care and support for young people.

Complaints are dealt with effectively. Outcomes of complaint are used to inform and improve future practice. Records of complaints are maintained effectively and are appropriate. However, these do not reflect all of the work undertaken in this area.

The Academy operates in an open culture and the management team see scrutiny of their work as a key tool in continuous improvement. Internal monitoring systems are successfully used to review and evaluate all aspects of the provision. The governors are a part of this process and their scrutiny has increased and includes monitoring of all aspects of the service against the National Minimum Standards.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135804
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC459408
<b>DfE registration number</b>	

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Boarding School
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	65
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	11 to19
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Mike Milner
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	15 -16 January 2014
<b>Telephone number</b>	01264 405060
<b>Email address</b>	admin@thewellingtonadademy.org.uk

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