

Shaftesbury School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113889
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357448
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Adrian Gray HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act. The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,052
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Brickell
Headteacher	David Booth
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 February 2008
School address	Salisbury Road Shaftesbury Dorset SP7 8ER
Telephone number	01747 854498
Fax number	01747 851208
Email address	office@shaftesburyschool.co.uk

Boarding provision	Shaftesbury School
Social care Unique Reference Number	SC042320
Social care inspector	Thomas Webber

Age group	11–19
Inspection date(s)	8–9 June 2011
Inspection number	357448

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This was an integrated inspection of education and boarding. The pilot inspection of education was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors with four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 38 lessons, an assembly and several tutor periods; meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, staff and managers. They observed the school's work and examined appropriate school documents as well as students' work. Questionnaires were received from 235 parents and carers, 122 students and 105 staff.

The inspection of boarding was carried out by one Social Care Regulatory Inspector and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, who in addition were trialling a proposed new framework for boarding.

Information about the school

Shaftesbury School has contributed to the education of the town and surrounding area for nearly 300 years. Now, through the development of its boarding house, which can accommodate about 100 students, it is also educating young people from across the world. This combination of tradition and internationalism is almost unique among English comprehensive schools. The school has received several awards for its international work and has an ongoing link with Rwanda. Tradition is reflected in its pride in its musical heritage and its close links with the Church of England through its foundation. The school became a specialist sports college in 1999.

The school draws on an area containing the small town of Shaftesbury and many small villages. It has formed a sixth-form partnership with another local school in Sturminster Newton and provides diploma courses through a local consortium. Various vocational courses in areas such as agricultural, health and beauty, and types of engineering are provided through local partners, and the school runs distinctive hospitality and catering courses. The school is of broadly average size. Levels of deprivation are below average, while the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is now above average; many of this group are boarders, several of whom have joined the school as sixth-formers.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
------------------------------	----------

Achievement	3
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	3
Behaviour and safety	3
Boarding	2

Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- Shaftesbury School is a distinctive and caring school where students are happy and safe. However, standards dipped in 2010 and school leaders have not ensured that policies relating to teaching and the management of behaviour are applied evenly in all classrooms. Consequently, the school's overall effectiveness and capacity to improve are satisfactory.
- The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory and good in mathematics, history and geography. However, there has been insufficient improvement in English.
- Teaching was good in most of the lessons seen. Lessons are mostly interesting, build on students' prior knowledge and show them how to improve. There is good specialist support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities but teachers still do not consistently plan for the needs of the full range of students' abilities or promote literacy in all lessons.
- Although the school is a safe environment overall, there is some low-level disruption in lessons and not a coherent and consistent approach to behaviour management by teachers. Parents and carers think this could be better.
- Provision in the sixth form and in the vocational curriculum is rapidly improving. Boarding provision is good and the new facilities are outstanding. The school offers a good level of care but few examples were seen of

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

boarders using their different experiences to widen the understanding of the other students.

- Leadership and management are satisfactory with aspects that are good. Leaders are caring and principled but their vision for the school is not always put into practice. Strategies for ensuring that policies for delivering high-quality lesson planning, learning and behaviour are insufficiently robust to consistently reap the benefits of teaching that is individually good in the majority of lessons. Leaders and managers are ambitious for improvement. The management of curriculum change and the organisation of the boarding provision are good. Members of the governing body provide conscientious support to the school and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management is no better than satisfactory, may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop consistently high-quality teaching by:
 - improving the detail and rigour of monitoring and evaluation so that inconsistencies in practice can be more quickly eliminated
 - ensuring that the development of high-quality teaching includes a focus on planning, expectations of students, the use of questioning to develop understanding, and challenge for all types of pupil
 - making greater use of the best practice in the school, disseminating this more widely
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants always work in effective partnerships.
- Develop consistently high-quality attitudes to learning and behaviour amongst all students by:
 - making more effective use of available behaviour data
 - clarifying expectations and processes so that a single and consistent approach across the whole school reinforces expectations
 - developing responses to persistent low-level disruption that secure change in individuals' behaviour more quickly.
- Provide more consistent support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - developing strategies for planning lessons which better meet students' diverse needs
 - building on the most effective specialist practice
 - developing and implementing a strategy for literacy across the curriculum.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Improve leaders' and managers' impact on school improvement by:
 - clearly communicating the vision and values of the school so that students of all abilities engage with it
 - ensuring that outstanding teaching and outstanding attitudes to learning are recognised and modelled across the school
 - ensuring that all staff feel both challenged and supported in their professional development, including in their teaching.

- Address the recommendations of the boarding report.

Main report

Achievement

The achievement of students at Shaftesbury School is satisfactory because, despite strong performances in some subjects, over a period of time and in some current lessons learning has not always been as rapid or consolidated as it might have been.

Attainment on entry to the school has generally been at or below the national average, but with fewer high-attaining students, so attainment at age 16 tends to be below average, especially in English in 2010. The small number of students known to be eligible for free school meals attained grades well below the level of other students of this group nationally. The proportion of students who attained the highest grades was good in history and low in physical education and English. Attainment at higher grades is also significantly lower at both AS and A level, although, in general, students make at least the progress that is expected. Progress in applied courses is good. As a sports college, the school has reviewed its broad range of physical education options following disappointing GCSE results. Students also take BTEC sports courses and the proportion of students entered for these courses is high.

Students' progress up to age 16 is variable, and in 2010 results in English were well below what was expected, whereas progress in mathematics was good. The progress made by boys was low, and the progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been variable. Post-16 progress is good in applied courses. The current Year 10 students have made satisfactory progress and are expected to attain below the national figures by age 16. Better progress is now being made in English following enhancements.

Inspectors saw similarly uneven progress in lessons. In the best lessons, students made excellent progress due to very effective information about examination criteria which reinforced engaging learning strategies. Developmental questioning helped to accelerate learning as students explained their answers in depth – but only a few teachers used this approach effectively. However, in a few other lessons, progress was limited by students' attitudes or because planning addressed the 'middle ground' rather than meeting the needs of the full range of learners.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The Raising Achievement Department makes an effective contribution to support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also by assisting where students' personal issues impinge on their progress.

Behaviour and safety

Behaviour seen in lessons was often good, especially in the sixth form and when students were engaged and challenged by effective and interesting teaching. Behaviour was less secure in a small number of lessons when it was not well managed by teachers. Expectations were not articulated consistently, so that the school's ground rules were not always clear to students. Students said that behaviour was generally good in most of their lessons but were aware that some lessons could be affected by off-task individuals. In all the surveys of staff, students, and parents and carers, there was a consistent minority who felt behaviour could be better, but almost all parents and carers said their children were happy at school overall.

The school collects much useful data about behaviour. It shows an increase in low-level disruption over the last year, with almost half of the incidents relating to students with special educational needs. Sanctions are not sufficiently effective. A few students have been excluded repeatedly and for lengthy periods.

Students' management of their own safety is often very good. The school provides a safe environment in which there is a good level of mutual respect. Students feel well supported when times are difficult. Where students are educated wholly or partly off-site, the school is well informed about their attendance, behaviour and performance.

Teaching

Teaching is good overall because much of the work of individual teachers promotes good learning in the lesson, but teaching overall lacks consistency in the approaches used so that the cumulative impact on students' learning is less than it might otherwise be. For example, questioning places high expectations on pupils in a number of classes but this approach is not reinforced in some other lessons. A large majority of students feel they are challenged in lessons by good teaching, but many also felt this was not always the case; as a result, inspectors saw the same students responding to teaching in different ways. In the best lessons, teachers share success criteria to raise aspirations and encourage them to solve problems through articulate discussion. Strong and supportive relationships make a very positive contribution to students' learning, but a small minority of parents and carers thought that communication about learning and progress could be better. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of the learning is too slow and planning or objectives imprecise.

Assessment of learning and the promotion of literacy across the curriculum are inconsistent in lessons. Teachers know their students well through the wealth of data available but do not always plan to meet the individual needs of students;

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

additional classroom support is not always deployed well.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory with aspects that are good. The headteacher and senior team have a clear vision for the school which is reflected in their motto 'Aspire' and their vision for the development of the boarding house. Leaders' creditable overarching philosophy has nonetheless been variable in its impact on teaching, learning or students' attitudes. Whereas some students understand that the school strives aspirationally for academic success - with more progressing into higher education - and social and moral development, others find this difficult to understand. More use could be made of the school's best teaching to raise overall standards.

Leaders are conscientious about addressing areas for development, responding energetically to the dip in GCSE performance in some subjects and making use of external expertise. There is a good framework for distributive leadership with middle managers able to take on whole-school roles. There is effective leadership in some subjects such as mathematics.

Leaders have successfully developed vocational and alternative provision. Students have access to a very good range of vocational courses both on and off the school site, including courses such as hospitality and catering, and applied advanced levels have been successful.

Members of the governing body ensure safeguarding is effective and provide conscientious support to the school, modelling good practice through their visits. They have maintained the vision of a boarding school and improved both this and the sixth form, although overall progress since the last inspection has not been as consistent as it might have been.

Leaders emphasise providing for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These aims, though laudable, are not readily grasped by all the students and, as a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is inconsistent, although strengths include links with Rwanda and engagement with the older local community. Students often show concern for each other. Provision for social development is good when students work together or take charge of their own learning, but some feel there is too little opportunity to take part in other developmental activities, such as through an effective school council. The school has an excellent opportunity to model cultural development through its international dimension, but this resource is used only occasionally; as a result, some students are still isolated in their outlook. The school could do more to explain its vision for spiritual development to engage all students and staff; some do not understand the significance of it being a church school.

Boarding

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

The quality of boarding is good. There is a newly appointed head of boarding and a restructured staffing regime. Action has been taken to address the five previous recommendations. However, recommendations are made to further improve management practice. The promotion of diversity and equality is good.

Boarders take responsibility for their personal well-being with staff assisting them to achieve a healthy lifestyle. Boarders' health and emotional care needs are well met, enabling them to make informed choices. There is a healthy and balanced diet and boarders are happy with the choice provided. Specific religious, cultural and dietary needs are catered for in a social and congenial atmosphere.

Boarders feel safe and do not see bullying as a concern. Prompt action is taken when it occurs. The disciplinary policy is seen as fair now that it is consistently applied. Boarders' welfare is protected through clear and robust safeguarding policies and procedures. Boarding staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to be followed and regular ongoing training is developing. Boarders' welfare is protected by robust staff recruitment practices and appropriate fire safety.

Boarders know how to complain and can approach a range of people with any concerns, but not all complaints have been responded to effectively. However, a new robust system is being established for more effective management of complaints.

Boarders can access a range of activities. They can also attend local sports and youth clubs. Although some boarders say they are bored, they do not always take full advantage of the excursions and activities offered.

A strong sense of community exists. Boarders integrate well and relationships between both genders and with staff are good. They do not experience discrimination. Boarders commented that they generally enjoy boarding and have made strong friendships. Boarders are well mannered and conduct themselves in an exemplary manner.

The standard of accommodation is outstanding, having undergone substantial improvement. Boarders live in a homely and relaxed environment which is extremely well maintained. The boarding provision is divided by gender and year groups. Boarders' accommodation supports welfare and study with a very good level of privacy. Staff are vigilant in reinforcing the need for boarders to act responsibly with their possessions but some boarders still have concerns about losses.

Boarders can contribute their views and opinions in the operation of the boarding provision. However, the new boarding policies were introduced without discussion with existing boarders and, as a result, some feel unhappy about some of the changes. The student council now receives written details of any agreed decisions and these will now be displayed prominently within the boarding house.

Boarders maintain contact with their families. However, they feel that the promised wireless internet access would enable them to have easier contact as well as

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

enhance their academic work. Close contact is maintained between the boarding staff and parents and carers to keep them up to date regarding the welfare and progress of their children.

Management and organisation of the boarding provision is good. There are clear aspirational aims for boarding. These are reflected in the guide for parents and carers, and boarders. However, these are not always reflected in practice.

Staffing levels are sufficient to meet boarders' needs; provision is well organised and daily routines run smoothly. Although staff are competent and experienced to meet the needs of boarders, their ongoing training is very limited. Staff have not received all the basic mandatory training. Staff are also not in receipt of regular appraisals to monitor their professional development. However, a new structure and system is due to be implemented to address this deficiency.

Boarders enjoy a good level of care provided by a dedicated and experienced staff team who work well together. They feel well supported by the head of boarding, who is seen as being extremely approachable, supportive and readily available.

Recommendations

- Ensure that a written record is kept of all complaints and their outcomes (NMS 5.5).
- Ensure that the aims reflect the actual current boarding practice (NMS 1.4).
- Ensure that staff receive regular appraisals to monitor their performance (NMS 34.5).
- Ensure that staff receive adequate training in all areas of boarding practice (NMS 34.7).

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shaftesbury School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 235 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1052 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	97	41	133	57	3	1	1	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	102	43	127	54	3	1	2	1
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	73	31	137	58	20	9	1	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	68	29	147	63	15	6	1	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	87	37	138	59	8	3	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	62	26	148	63	10	4	2	1
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	37	16	140	60	42	18	5	2
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	32	14	112	48	64	27	15	6
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	63	27	120	51	22	9	9	4
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	57	24	142	60	25	11	2	1
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	63	27	114	49	38	16	6	3
Q12 The school is well led and managed	68	29	131	56	19	8	4	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Shaftesbury School, Shaftesbury SP7 8ER

As you will know, Ofsted recently inspected your school. We had one group of inspectors working in the main part of the school looking at the quality of the education and we also had two inspectors who spent most of their time looking at the school's boarding provision. During the time we were in the school, we spoke to a large number of you in groups, individually and in lessons. Some of you also filled in our questionnaire, which was very helpful to us.

We also spent a lot of time talking to the headteacher, governors and members of staff. Lots of your parents and carers filled in our questionnaire and also included some comments. We agreed that your headteacher and his team care passionately about the success of the school and are trying to build a school which both educates you and ensures that you develop into balanced and happy young people. For the most part, they are succeeding in this, although we discussed some areas where improvements could be made, such as ensuring that the same high quality of teaching is found across all lessons.

Almost nine out of 10 of you agreed that you like coming to school and that you learn a lot. You told us that you feel safe and that teaching is good. However, some of you felt that behaviour in lessons and around the school could be better so we looked at this in lessons in particular. What we found was that behaviour was generally not a problem, but in some lessons students did not contribute as much as they could. Some of you said you felt more could be done to change the behaviour of those who are a nuisance quite regularly so we have discussed this with the school leaders.

A few of you also said you wanted more opportunity to join clubs and take part in sports. We discussed this with the school and found that there are actually lots of opportunities to take part in things, but they are not always well supported.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Gray
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**