

# Glenalmond College

## School Care Accommodation Service

Glenalmond  
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**Service provided by:**  
Glenalmond College

**Service provider number:**  
SP2006008263

**Care service number:**  
CS2006118272

## About the service

Glenalmond College is a co-educational independent boarding and day school for boys and girls aged 12 - 18. The college has boarding accommodation for up to 380 boarding pupils at any one time. Boarding accommodation was provided in eight boarding houses, three of which were located within the main school building and the other five within or near the school grounds. The school has extensive grounds, and the campus includes a range of other resources such as swimming pool, gymnasium, music rooms, library, chapel, all-weather pitches and playing fields. Day pupils also attend Glenalmond, however pupils referred to in this report are boarding pupils.

The school's conditions of registration state:

- To provide a schoolcare accommodation service to a maximum of 427 pupils at any one time as follows:

- \* a maximum of 52 pupils may be accommodated in Goodacres House
- \* a maximum of 56 pupils may be accommodated in Home House
- \* a maximum of 66 pupils may be accommodated in Lothian House
- \* a maximum of 50 pupils may be accommodated in Matheson's House
- \* a maximum of 53 pupils may be accommodated in Patchell's House
- \* a maximum of 58 pupils may be accommodated in Reid's House
- \* a maximum of 55 pupils may be accommodated in Skrine's House
- \* a maximum of 37 pupils may be accommodated in Cairnies House.

- The schoolcare accommodation service will be provided during the school terms.

- To comply with the current staffing schedule dated 26 October 2009 which must be displayed together with the certificate.

The school is governed by the College Council. The management and day-to-day running of the school is delegated to the senior management team, including the headmistress, (known as the warden); the subwarden; the depute head - pastoral and the depute head - academic. At the time of the inspection there were 269 pupils boarding.

The school's mission statement is:

"Glenalmond is a school community, rich in heritage, which prepares young people for the future through inspirational teaching, outstanding co-curricular opportunities and the very best in pastoral care".

We check services are meeting the principles of Getting it right for every child (known as GIRFEC). Set up by Scottish Government, GIRFEC is a national approach to working in a consistent way with all children and young people. It is underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach helps services focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people - and what they can do to improve. Getting it right for every child is being woven into all policy, practice, strategy and legislation that affect children, young people and their families.

There are eight wellbeing indicators at the heart of Getting it right for every child. They are: safe; healthy; achieving; nurtured; active; respected; responsible; and included. They are often referred to as the SHANARRI indicators. We use these indicators at inspection, to assess how services are making a positive difference for children.

## What people told us

We spoke with pupils of all ages in a variety of ways: individually; in informal groups; and in focus groups for each year group with our inspection volunteer. We joined pupils informally over meal times and chatted with pupils throughout the inspection. We sought the views of pupils through a short Survey Monkey questionnaire, to which we received 212 responses. We contacted parents/guardians by email to ask them for feedback. Most of the comments we received were very positive. In the small number of responses where we identified trends or areas of concern, we shared these with the warden while maintaining the anonymity of the source.

A sample of some of the comments from pupils included:

"The people in the house are so loving and caring, it feels like home so much."

"I love it and my academic work has improved so much!"

"I feel my housemaster doesn't have enough control over pupils."

"Really happy."

"I hate Cantores."

"The school is a lot of fun but it is very isolated. I wish that we could go into town at the weekend with the school bus."

"I really enjoy Glenalmond, it is a lovely school."

"It would be nice to have a bath facility in the house."

"Occasionally I feel like I am not treated with enough respect by some teachers, as an older pupil."

"There are some cases of bullying which are not reported, for fear of looking weak or being a snitch. I wish bullying was more criticised without prompts in houses and that it is clear that there should be an absolute zero tolerance to bullying, so people can't think they can get away with small pranks or jokes when it is not acceptable."

"We don't have a tuck shop and there is not enough to do."

"There are friendly, short term, overseas students which is good."

"People are kind, minding your own business, there's no chaos or drama."

"People were very welcoming when I was nervous and were a good support."

"I like the house staff - I don't think I could have made it in boarding without them."

"I like how we are always kept busy."

"I think the Medical Centre should swap places with the history classes."

"It's a shame they took away the sandwiches but the salad bar is good."

"The houses are quite small which makes it like a big family."

"There is so much choice at meals."

"I really like how inclusive it is of the day pupils."

"I liked it better when there was a mixture of ages in the houses."

"Prefects are friendly but respected."

"You feel safe here, in the middle of nowhere. You know all the people you are likely to meet."

"The standard of food here is good, you never go hungry."

"I like that we can have breakfast in our pyjamas."

"It's so nice having a girls house in the Quad."

"Glenalmond will leave me with one of the best experiences of my life."

"I eat healthier at school than I do at home."

"We have special meal days and they are delicious."

"There's not much bullying, it's settled at source."

"I would like matron to be nice"

"Prefects are OK; I would go to them for support if I needed any."

"I think we should have cooking equipment so that we can learn some basic skills."

"Our house is the friendliest ; we will all look out for each other."

"I wish we could do volleyball."

"I think that boys could be a bit nicer to the girls, they can be mean."

"Boys think they are superior."

"The school are quite good at careers choices but they could do more to get you ready for life."

Parents/carers comments were mainly very positive, with most parents confirming that their child was very happy at Glenalmond. They confirmed that communication with the school was usually good, however there were suggestions that it would be good to hear more when the pupil was new to the school, and for communication to be translated when English was not the family's first language. Nearly all the parents/carers who responded confirmed they would feel confident in raising any concerns with the warden, and that these would be addressed.

There were some issues particularly with one boarding house which reflected our findings at inspection, and these were discussed with the warden.

## Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate did not request a self assessment for this inspection. We took account of the school's improvement plan in our assessments.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of environment	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

It was evident that the school were establishing a positive culture where pupils and staff were welcoming and were encouraged to care for each other's wellbeing. Since our last inspection the school had introduced a system to assess the needs of pupils and identify where they may need more support. This was in the early stages of development; however we saw positive impact already. Clear plans and strategies were in place (and reviewed routinely) for staff to provide support for pupils who had additional support needs, and the school had established links with appropriate external agencies such as counselling services to provide additional support.

Systems for sharing information between those providing care were working well. The school now needed to embed the systems, linking the different aspects, and support staff in using them effectively.

In most houses, there were very positive relationships between pupils and the pastoral team, including the support and guidance provided by prefects. We acknowledged that the new arrangements at Cairnies were in their first year. The role of the housemaster and pastoral staff were significant in this process. The school needed to strengthen this to allow for role modelling to establish the school ethos and desired culture, and provide opportunities for pupils in Cairnies to have significant and appropriate access to the senior pastoral team. We identified issues of safety which needed to be addressed (see Quality of Management and Leadership).

Staff in the Medical Centre provided effective care for pupils who were unwell or had ongoing medical conditions, including general practitioner(GP) surgeries three times per week. An issue regarding expired medication in one boarding house was identified and addressed during the inspection.

All staff had regular Child Protection training and were confident in the procedures they should follow if they had any safeguarding concerns. Sixth form pupils were given training on child protection and about signs of bullying, so that they could help identify any issues. The Depute Head - Pastoral was identified as the Child Protection Co-ordinator and linked with the Child Protection team in the local area. The school linked with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) to keep updated on the safe use of the internet, and provided guidance to pupils to help them stay safe while using social media. Through these strategies staff and senior pupils in the school were kept updated on current best practice in safeguarding.

Pupils were encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles, with an extensive range of opportunities for sports, activities, outings and experiences as well as attractive, appetising and nutritious meals. Pupils' talents and interests were supported and achievements celebrated. In most of the houses, pupils told us that rules were fair and sanctions appropriate. However, further development was needed to make sure that this was the case in all the houses. We discussed pupils' concerns regarding the fairness of the queuing system at mealtimes. The school confirmed they would continue to monitor this to make sure that this is fair.

Pupils whose families lived far away from the school spent some holidays and weekends with guardians. These arrangements were made by the families, and we saw that the school provided information to the families to guide them in setting up safe arrangements.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of environment

### Findings from the inspection

All of the pupils we spoke with said that they really liked the accommodation in their boarding houses. The houses which had been refurbished presented very high quality accommodation and the school planned to continue with the programme of upgrading and refurbishing the houses, to bring all the accommodation to a high standard. The school continued to progress refurbishment while remaining compliant with legislation regarding the listed building status of some of the buildings. Recent health and safety initiatives were in the process of being implemented, however the school needed to review the implementation to ensure it was effective.

Care and attention had been given to where pupils were placed, reflecting the rich cultural diversity among the pupils. The school should continue to support and build on integration between all the pupils to maximise the potential from this opportunity.

Systems were in place for repairs and routine maintenance, as well checks for Health and Safety; Fire safety; Portable Appliance Testing; Legionella checks and water purity checks. We saw that the school had taken prompt, appropriate action when one of the checks had identified an issue recently. Some of the pupils advised that their beds were not comfortable. We advised that to make sure that beds were comfortable, the school should implement a system to date mark new mattresses and check their comfort regularly by asking pupils.

Very good access to mobile phone and wifi signal was available across most of the campus, which meant that pupils could keep in contact with family and friends. Younger pupils' use of mobiles was restricted at times to ensure they had enough sleep, and help them concentrate on their studies.

Outwith school time pupils could take part in a wide range of pursuits. The campus provided opportunities for use of the extensive grounds; and facilities including swimming pool; drama department; stables; fishing access; Moncrieff centre for social events; music and practice rooms; art and crafts and library as well as the chapel. Photographs of pupils taking part in these activities and examples of pupils' artwork were displayed across the school, reflecting pupils' achievements, while reinforcing community spirit and positive identity.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

The staff team were committed and enthusiastic. They clearly placed high importance on the wellbeing of the pupils. It was evident that staff worked well together to provide a team approach in most houses. We saw very positive examples throughout our inspection. The school needed to continue to develop this ethos throughout all the houses.

We looked at the school's systems for safe recruitment. While we could see that there were appropriate systems in place, there were instances where these had not been used effectively and we advised that the school need to make sure that all staff were recruited using the thorough checking system which was in place; any gaps in the process identified, and promptly rectified. Staff contracts should be signed. **(See recommendation 1.)** We advised that the school looks at the practice for periodic review of PVG checks in line with best practice guidance, and suggested they include a self declaration for staff at annual appraisal.

Staff were appropriately registered with professional bodies; the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC); General Teaching Council (Scotland) (GTCS) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and had access to training in order to maintain their registration. There was evidence that training was effective, and of benefit to the wellbeing of the pupils.

The school had implemented a comprehensive system of staff appraisal, which had been used effectively to identify and challenge some issues of practice. They now needed to extend this to include one-to-one supervision and appraisal for matrons in the boarding houses, and meet the expectations of employers laid out in SSSC Codes of Practice for Employers. We made a recommendation about this at our previous inspections and the school confirmed that they planned to implement this in the near future. To further enhance this process, we suggested that the school arrange for regular meetings for matrons where they could provide mutual support and share learning and practice.

Weekly meetings with the Depute Head - Pastoral for each house parent were confirmed as being very supportive and effective in focusing issues. Reflective practice was offered through an external consultancy. This provided opportunities for staff to think about events and issues, and consider their role in them, as well as factors which may have been an influence. Staff who had taken up this service confirmed that it was very useful and helped them develop their skills and confidence.

Staff led by example, modelling respectful behaviour for pupils to follow. Pupils gave us examples of being routinely treated with respect. The school should continue to build on this to ensure that this ethos was embedded throughout the school. They should immediately review the staffing of Cairnies House to ensure safety at all times, and establish a positive ethos to model the culture which is evident in the rest of the school. **(See recommendation 2.)**

We saw that the extended staff team of administration, catering, mancibles, estates, grounds maintenance and transport all contributed to the smooth running of the school and were valued by the senior management and pupils.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 2

1. It is recommended that the school reviews recruitment practice to make sure that their systems are used effectively; templates followed and contracts signed. They should clarify the role for overview to ensure that any issues are identified promptly and rectified.

National Care Standards for Schoolcare Accommodation. Standard 7: Management and staffing.

2. It is recommended that the school takes immediate action to review the staffing in Cairnies House. From doing this they should ensure that there are sufficient numbers of skilled, experienced and competent staff to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils at all times. Senior managers should have a regular direct overview so that they can identify practice issues and lead by example.

National Care Standards for Schoolcare Accommodation. Standard 7: Management and staffing.

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

## Findings from the inspection

We found that there was a strong vision for the school, supported and shared by the school council. A strong commitment to continued improvement was evident throughout. Effective systems were in place for the school council to have an overview. They were given a regular transparent and comprehensive review of performance, including the pastoral aspect. It was evident that some oversight of boarding was also provided through the appointment of parental governors to the school council. The school should look at extending the overview from governors to have direct contact with staff and pupils in the boarding houses.

The school had a clear pastoral development plan, which was linked to the school strategic development plan. This vision for the future of the school was communicated to, and shared by, the whole school community. The school now needed to identify when targets outlined in the pastoral development plan were achieved or completed.

The senior management team were aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staff in the boarding houses confirmed that they felt well supported by the senior management team, and could approach any of them if they had any concerns or suggestions.

Systems for quality assurance in the boarding houses were in place, however we advised that the school should clarify the management of cleaning staff and the systems for quality assurance of their work. We acknowledged that the school were in the process of appointing a Bursar and it was anticipated that this would result in more clarity in this area.

While we could see that the school were making improvements in recording systems and information sharing, they needed to further develop this to establish a systematic approach. From feedback from parents, it was evident that communication with those who did not have English as a first language could be reviewed to optimise information sharing.

Systems for auditing medication which had previously been in place had not been effective recently, and the school confirmed that they planned to review these to ensue that quality assurance was in place.

As we discussed earlier in this report, there were issues in Cairnies House which caused concern. The school should establish success criteria for the change of use of Cairnies, including method of review and timescales. From doing this it should be clear that senior managers and the school council have a comprehensive oversight of the day-to-day experience of pupils in Cairnies House, and their subsequent transition to the main school campus.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

#### Recommendation 1

It is recommended that the school implements a formal, recorded system of support, supervision and appraisal for all boarding house staff. From doing this the senior management team would be able to monitor staff performance in the quality of care provided, and ensure that adequate training was provided for all staff.

National Care Standards for Schoolcare Accommodation – Standard 7: Management and staffing.

**This recommendation was made on 21 February 2017.**

#### Action taken on previous recommendation

The school had yet to extend support supervision and appraisal to matrons but confirmed this was to be implemented very soon after our inspection.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
3 Nov 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
21 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
17 Nov 2015	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
4 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
28 Oct 2014	Re-grade	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 2 - Weak
14 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
19 Jun 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
30 Oct 2008	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings
		Management and leadership <span style="float: right;">4 - Good</span>

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