

Glenalmond College

School Care Accommodation Service

Glenalmond
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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 3 November 2016

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 380 pupils at any one time as follows:
 - * a maximum of 44 pupils may be accommodated in Goodacres House
 - * a maximum of 58 pupils may be accommodated in Home House
 - * a maximum of 62 pupils may be accommodated in Lothian House
 - * a maximum of 43 pupils may be accommodated in Matheson's House
 - * a maximum of 44 pupils may be accommodated in Patchell's House
 - * a maximum of 44 pupils may be accommodated in Reid's House
 - * a maximum of 50 pupils may be accommodated in Skrine's House
 - * a maximum of 35 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, and the subwarden, the depute head - pastoral and the depute head - academic.

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".

What people told us

We spoke with several pupils informally over four mealtimes; four pupils being shown round the premises; and groups of pupils in the boarding houses we visited. We also conducted an online feedback survey for boarding pupils to which we had 71 responses. Comments throughout were generally positive and specific issues mentioned were raised with the warden while preserving anonymity.

Issues were raised to us through these discussions about the varying quality of meals and the length of time spent queuing to enter the dining hall for meals. Some of those pupils who stayed in boarding houses at some distance from the dining hall suggested that they would prefer to have breakfast and supper in their boarding houses.

In reply to being asked in our online survey whether they felt safe in the boarding houses, more than 90% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'. However 7% either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' which meant that five of

those who responded did not feel safe in the boarding houses. This may link with the response to the question we asked "If any pupils are bullied this is dealt with quickly and sensitively so it stops" to which 15 of those who responded either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed'. While 50 pupils 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that "Staff usually notice if I need help or support with anything and make sure I get it", 14 'disagreed' and one 'strongly disagreed'.

Some of the comments included:

- "It's good here, you have quite a bit of freedom."
- "You can do what you want, within limits, and you are not watched all the time."
- "This is definitely a good place to live."
- "The new house master is much better, much more integrated with us."
- "Meals are great there are always three options as well as salad and baked potatoes."
- "I think we should have more opportunities for socializing with girls."
- "I think it would be good if we had opportunities to go shopping or fun activities or outings on weekends because it can get quite dull."
- "I feel I could complain but I'm not sure if I would be taken seriously."

Self assessment

We did not receive an updated self assessment before the inspection. This was due to an administrative difficulty on the part of the Care Inspectorate and the school were in the process of completing one at the time of writing the report.

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

Since our last inspection the service had developed a computer based system for data recording. This provided the means to record relevant details regarding each pupil, as well as GIRFEC care plans where necessary. The system allowed all staff access for inputting information. There were different levels of access for viewing information so sensitive information was shared only with those members of staff who needed to know.

The service now needed to further develop this system to indicate clearly at what point a GIRFEC care plan would be developed; how often it would be reviewed and when. Records should show how the young person's views were included, indicate progress made and any changes needed.

We suggested there could be further developments in this system to support analysis and overview of any incidents/ accidents or administration of medication. The school should provide support and clear guidance for all staff in their use of the system.

Staff had very positive relationships with pupils. We saw that pupils were clearly enjoying their life at Glenalmond and having fun, as well as being supported to gain their education. The school gave guidance on the ethos of respect and nurture which they wanted to encourage. The selection and training for prefects reinforced that their role was to guide and encourage younger pupils, and to lead by example rather than by authority.

Sixth form pupils had appropriate training on child protection and bullying so that they were aware of what they should do if they had any concerns about the wellbeing of a pupil. The school needed to continue to work on embedding this ethos throughout, so that all pupils felt protected from bullying and any instances were dealt with quickly and sensitively.

Effective systems were in place to ensure that pupils maintained good health, through the school's medical centre which was staffed 24 hours per day, and with general practitioner (GP) surgery provided three times per week. Medication records could be updated onto the electronic database in future. Pupils were encouraged to develop healthy, active lifestyles eating a nutritious diet and with a wide range of interests. Staff in some of the boarding houses helped to create warm, homely atmospheres which helped the pupils feel comfortable. This was not so evident in some of the older boarding houses in the main building and the school were looking at ways to address this.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The school had effective systems for ensuring the buildings and grounds were well-maintained. Those areas where work or refurbishment was needed were identified and plans were in place for addressing any issues. The estates team had clear roles and lines of responsibility and systems in place so that repairs were carried out promptly. A range of health and safety checks were carried out in accordance with current legislation. Due to the age and listed building status of some of the buildings, there were obstacles to overcome in order to comply with current safety legislation and the school were working towards addressing these issues. There were plans for refurbishment and we suggested that the school made sure that all the boarding houses were warm, homely and welcoming to ensure the same standard throughout.

An accredited contactor had carried out a security assessment for the service and an action plan drawn up with areas prioritised. Most boarding houses now had doorbells.

Sports accidents were recorded appropriately and rugby coaches were trained by Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) in 'Rugby Ready'. The SRU were notified of those injuries which met their criteria for referral.

The school had reviewed their policy on drugs and alcohol and made sure that their expectations were explicit. All the senior pupils we spoke with confirmed that they knew what these were. The school had taken appropriate action when pupils had not kept to these guidelines. They now needed to make sure their reviewed policy was reflected in all handbooks and guidance for staff and pupils, and support with further information for pupils through their classwork and in boarding houses.

Staff were aware of the procedures to follow if they had any child protection concerns and had been given updated child protection training. The school linked with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) to keep updated on guidelines for the safe use of the internet. Since the school now had a mobile phone signal, staff were vigilant in helping pupils learn about the safe use of social media via their mobile phones, and restricted use of mobile phones at times for younger pupils to help them concentrate on studies and sleep.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

All staff we spoke with were positive about working at Glenalmond and motivated towards continued improvements. They were enthusiastic about the impact of the new warden and senior team. It was evident that a more positive culture was being established and staff confirmed they felt valued by the senior team. While staff acknowledged that change was not easy they recognised that improvements would take time and they continued to embrace more change.

We saw that house masters and mistresses showed warm, friendly attitudes which helped pupils feel cared for and nurtured, while establishing clear limits to behaviour.

The school had appointed a human resources manager who was in the process of updating employment policies, procedures, systems and practice. The school should build on this positive start to make sure they keep up with current best practice and comply with current legislation on employment.

Most staff now had access to a system of supervision and annual appraisal and the school should ensure that this was further developed for all staff to ensure practice was monitored and continuous professional development offered. The previous recommendation we made about this was not yet met and therefore will be continued. **(See recommendation 1).**

Both recruitment and induction procedures had been reviewed to include a checklist and we advised that the school develop and implement formal induction specifically for house masters and mistresses, so that they could be assured that they had a full awareness of the expectations of their role, as well as the policies and procedures they needed to follow. House masters and mistresses confirmed that they would have no hesitation in contacting the depute head - pastoral and boarding if they were unsure of anything, and found the senior management team to be very supportive. They had access to training to support them in their role and shared knowledge between themselves. We suggested the database could be further developed to provide a training overview for each member of staff and for the whole service.

Matrons told us that they now felt part of the pastoral care team and their contribution was valued. Those staff for whom it was necessary were appropriately registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and had taken up (or were engaged in) training to gain the qualifications necessary for registration. Matrons met together fortnightly, with the depute head - pastoral and boarding, which helped them to share experiences and gain support from each other.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

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.

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Since our last inspection the senior management team had been restructured, and it was evident that lines of responsibility had been established. The staff handbook clearly defined these roles and responsibilities and accountability.

The senior management team were working to the school strategic plan, which had outlined key objectives, identifying who would be responsible, with timescales and progress noted. Some of the tasks which had been undertaken included reviewing policies and procedures, and roles and responsibilities for prefects. We were told that members of the senior management team had a regular presence in the boarding houses, which meant that they had opportunities for overview as well as helping staff and pupils become familiar with them through their being present. This could encourage feedback to be given directly to them, as well as allowing them to monitor the quality of the service provided. We agreed this progress could be built on as part of their formal quality assurance processes.

The electronic database system provided some opportunities for monitoring and overview, and we suggested that the school continues to develop this so that they can provide in-depth analysis and correlation from accidents and incidents, linking with the groups set up to look at these. We advised that the school continued to develop formal systems of quality assurance and records of audit for all aspects of the service, which may be possible through further developments of the database.

The college council were responsible for day-to-day management of the school through committees which were formed to report to the board. We saw that governors had responsibilities for aspects of school life and updated the board on progress in these areas. Reports were made to the council to keep them updated. We discussed best practice in this area, where opportunities could be extended to allow board members a more direct overview of the quality of the service provided through regular direct contact with staff and pupils. The warden explained that there were now more opportunities through governors involvement in classes. We welcomed this approach and suggested the school continue to build on the progress made.

The Care Inspectorate had been appropriately notified following incidents and the school were co-operative with our regulatory activities. However, we noted that numbers in boarding houses did not comply with those annotated on the school's certificate of registration and we advised the school take immediate action to rectify this. This was being progressed at the time of writing the report.

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

In order to ensure pupils are cared for in a warm and caring environment, where staff and pupils actively challenge and combat any form of bullying or discrimination, we recommend that the school further considers the ethos and traditions in place. Following this, in line with best practice, they need to continue to be proactive in embedding a positive culture throughout, by support and guidance for staff and pupils at all levels.

National Care Standards for Schoolcare Accommodation - Standard 3: Care and Protection.

This recommendation was made on 18 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

We looked at this in Quality Theme 1. The school had continued to work on embedding their ethos of encouragement, responsibility and nurture. They recognised that traditions had been in place for a very long time and continued to look at ways to help pupils, staff and parents to work together on the positive culture they wished to encourage. This was in order to minimise opportunities for bullying and address any instances appropriately and promptly.

Recommendation 2

By reviewing their policies and procedures, and providing training for staff and pupils, the school could help ensure that pupils developed healthy lifestyles and responsible attitudes to alcohol and drugs. Through making the school's expectations explicit they could help staff, pupils and parents have a shared understanding of their policy and the consequences to expect if this is not followed.

National Care Standards for Schoolcare Accommodation - Standard 12 Keeping well - Lifestyle.

This recommendation was made on 18 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

The school had reviewed their policies to make their expectations on the use of alcohol and drugs clear. We saw that they had taken appropriate action when there had been any issues regarding drugs or alcohol, and had given all staff and pupils guidance so that they fully understood the consequences from abusing drugs or alcohol at Glenalmond.

Recommendation 3

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 support and training was provided for all staff.

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

This recommendation was made on 18 May 2016.

Action taken on previous recommendation

While the school had implemented formal systems for most staff to receive support, supervision, and annual appraisal they had not yet ensured that this was in place for all staff and this recommendation is repeated in Quality Theme 3.

Complaints

A complaint was upheld which related to matters regarding care plans which the school had subsequently addressed. Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Enforcement

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
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

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
14 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed Not assessed 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
19 Jun 2009	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed
30 Oct 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good 4 - Good

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