



**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**CAMBRIDGE TUTORS COLLEGE**

**BOARDING WELFARE**

**INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

## Cambridge Tutors College

Full Name of College	<b>Cambridge Tutors College</b>
DfE Number	<b>306/6095</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>312878</b>
Address	<b>Cambridge Tutors College Water Tower Hill Croydon Surrey CR0 5SX</b>
Telephone Number	<b>020 86885284</b>
Fax Number	<b>020 86869220</b>
Email Address	<b>info@ctc.ac.uk</b>
Principal	<b>Mr Mario Di Clemente</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Robin Worthington</b>
Age Range	<b>15 to 19</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>221</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (117 boys; 104 girls)</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total: <b>59</b>
Number of Boarders	Total: <b>162</b> Full: <b>162</b> Weekly: <b>0</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>04 Feb 2014 to 06 Feb 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing primarily on compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS). The inspection occurs over a period of two and a half continuous days in the school.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. From September 2011 the inspection of boarding welfare forms part of the inspection process. This inspection focuses on the school's compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the recommendations set out in the most recent statutory boarding inspection. Boarding inspections were previously carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills. The relevant Ofsted report refers to an inspection in March 2010 and can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgement.

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors conducted formal interviews with boarders, and held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of the trust. They visited a sample of the host families that accommodate boarders and the facilities for sick or injured students. Inspectors talked to boarders both at the college and at their host families' homes. The responses of parents and boarding pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Ian Newton

Reporting Inspector

Ms Elizabeth Worthington

Team Inspector for Boarding  
(Senior Deputy Head, HMC school)

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## **1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

- 1.1 Cambridge Tutors College was originally founded in Warlingham, Surrey as an establishment to support students who needed additional help with examination courses. It moved to its present site in a residential area in south Croydon in 1967 and became a charitable trust in 1973. It is now overseen by the Trust Council, whose membership includes both trustees and senior members of staff. In recent years the college's focus has changed. It now provides mainly sixth-form education. Students come mostly from overseas, with a much smaller number of day students coming from the local area; a few students enter Year 11 and take GCSE courses before moving into the sixth form.
- 1.2 Students come from 25 different countries, the majority from China and south east Asia. They are drawn from business and professional families who have a strong ambition that their children should enter universities in the UK. Students live with one of about one hundred and sixty host families in the south Croydon area. All students have a short walk or a single bus or tram journey to the college.
- 1.3 The college aims to promote high standards, to foster international understanding and to create an adult-focused environment in which to prepare students for higher education.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection there were 221 students, of whom 117 were boys and 104 were girls. Of these, 162 were boarders. There have been no major changes in the college since the previous inspection.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the college.

## **2. SUMMARY**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.1 The college meets all the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools 2013.

### **(ii) Recommendation for further improvement**

2.2 The college is advised to make the following improvement.

1. Ensure that records relating to checks on host families are comprehensively maintained.

### **(iii) Progress since the previous inspection**

2.3 The previous boarding welfare inspection was undertaken by Ofsted in March 2010. In response to the actions identified, the college has consulted with students further, improving the quality of meals, and ensured that evidence of the vetting of staff is robust.

### **3. COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS**

#### **3.(a) Boarding provision and care**

- 3.1 The college meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.2 New students receive useful guidance before they arrive and said that the help they receive on arrival enables them to settle quickly. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, almost all students were confident that they have someone to talk to if they have a concern. They know that they can approach any member of staff, but particularly appreciate support from the welfare staff. They meet their personal tutor regularly and discuss boarding experiences as well as academic matters. Information is widely publicised about people to whom students may talk, such as the independent listener, the Children's Rights Director and children's organisations. [NMS 2]
- 3.3 The college has comprehensive procedures to deal with injuries and maintains careful records. It has appropriate facilities for students who are ill, and qualified first aiders are available. Information about any students with particular medical conditions is shared with staff and host families as necessary. Appropriate arrangements are in place for medical care. Parents give permission for homely remedies to be given. Students are registered with general practitioners, who refer students to other medical services as necessary. The college assists in the management of medication if needed. Students confirm that host families provide suitable care if they are ill, and welfare staff provide additional support. Appropriate attention is given to students' confidentiality. [NMS 3]
- 3.4 Students may contact their families easily and in private, both online and using their host families' telephones. [NMS 4]
- 3.5 Accommodation is of a high standard and is varied. Students have comfortable rooms for sleeping, working and relaxing. Where a family hosts more than one student, the students are of the same gender. Bathrooms are well appointed and provide adequate privacy. Houses are well maintained, clean and comfortable, and are warm and welcoming. Students enjoy making rooms their own and their privacy is respected. CCTV at the college does not intrude on students' privacy. [NMS 5]
- 3.6 In response to the questionnaire, a few students were critical about the provision of food. Inspectors found that the college cafeteria provides a good selection of hot and cold food at lunch, which reflects students' cultural and dietary needs. Sandwiches are freshly made on the premises. Host families are sensitive to the students' dietary needs. They take considerable trouble to provide food that students enjoy at breakfast and supper, and students appreciate joining family meals. Drinking water and snacks are easily available. [NMS 8]
- 3.7 Almost all students said that their possessions are safe, and they have good storage space in their bedrooms. Their laundry is carried out efficiently. Stationery and other items are easily available either in college or in local shops. [NMS 9]
- 3.8 A small minority of both pupils and parents felt that the choice of activities is limited. Inspection evidence shows that there is a suitable choice of activities each day, taken up by a good number of students. The monthly programme of weekend trips, for example to a film set, for shopping or to a cultural event, reflects the students' interests. Many students enjoy the opportunity to go out with their friends, or use the weekends to further their studies. At college, students have facilities in which to



relax, including the common room and outside areas. Students keep abreast of world events through the internet and newspapers. [NMS 10]

### **3.(b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding**

- 3.9 The college meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.10 Health and safety procedures are thorough. Suitable risk assessments are drawn up, and the health and safety committee meets at least termly. The college takes appropriate action when any concerns are raised. Electronic systems enable staff to monitor effectively who is on site. All trips are appropriately risk assessed and parents' permission sought. Host families pay due regard to health and safety matters. Students say that they feel safe; personal safety is covered in personal, social and health education. [NMS 6]
- 3.11 The college has appropriate arrangements for fire safety. Suitable fire drills are conducted regularly, logged and evaluated. Fire equipment is tested weekly. Host family homes are checked for fire safety. [NMS 7]
- 3.12 Safeguarding procedures are robust and follow appropriate guidance. They are in line with the local safeguarding children's board, with whom the college maintains active links. Records are secure and material is suitably documented. Staff training occurs at appropriate intervals, including for the designated person, and all new staff are trained in child protection. The Trust Council undertakes an annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures. [NMS 11]
- 3.13 The college has a clear policy to promote good behaviour. Students confirm that any rare instances of bullying are well dealt with. Incidents of cyber-bullying are taken equally seriously. There are few formal sanctions. As required, the college has a policy on searching students and gives clear guidance on how to report this. It also has a suitable policy, as required, on the use of physical restraint. [NMS 12].
- 3.14 The college operates robust recruitment procedures for appointing staff and trustees, and records evidence consistently. Clear guidance is given to ensure that host families supervise any visitors. The college does not appoint guardians. [NMS 14]

### **3.(c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision**

- 3.15 The college meets all of the NMS under this section.
- 3.16 The college provides and implements a clear statement of the management of boarding, which is widely available to students, parents and staff. [NMS 1]
- 3.17 The welfare department initiates and oversees boarding arrangements; it liaises closely with students and host families. Staff are easily available, so that communication is always prompt and convenient. In response to the questionnaire, parents were almost unanimous in saying that boarding is managed well. Welfare staff maintain effective links with academic staff. A meeting at the start of each year between host families and academic tutors successfully facilitates the sharing of information about students. Welfare staff are very experienced and the college maintains and monitors all necessary records, as appropriate. [NMS 13]
- 3.18 Staff who work with boarders have clear job descriptions and hosts receive clear guidance about what is expected of them and their families. Welfare staff are appraised under the annual review cycle, which forms part of their professional development. Students are well supervised while at college, and host families

monitor their movements carefully in the evenings and at weekends, often keeping in touch by text. They know what to do if a student goes missing and that they may contact a senior member of college staff at any time. Hosts ensure that there is always someone at home overnight, so that students can contact an adult if necessary. The provision of accommodation within a family home provides appropriate support and privacy for the students. [NMS 15]

- 3.19 The college promotes equality amongst students and works hard to ensure that their particular needs are met, for example in placing them with families of similar faith or cultural backgrounds should they so wish. [NMS 16]
- 3.20 A few students expressed that the college does not listen to their views. Inspectors found that the school committee provides satisfactory opportunities to initiate change and responds to points raised. [NMS 17]
- 3.21 The college has an appropriate procedure for dealing with complaints from parents. The overwhelming majority of those who responded to the questionnaire felt that their concerns are well handled. Records of complaints show that the college's procedures are operated appropriately. [NMS 18]
- 3.22 The college does not appoint prefects. [NMS 19]
- 3.23 The college takes great care in the selection and oversight of host family accommodation. It makes clear to parents that it is responsible for selecting accommodation. It checks the suitability of accommodation and interviews the designated responsible adult before use, and visits homes at least once a year thereafter. However, although the occurrence of visits is logged, records are not always detailed. Careful consideration is given to ensuring that students receive a warm and supportive welcome from the families with whom they live. All members of host families over the age of 16 receive criminal record checks, and families sign a formal agreement, including, for example, that they will declare any changes to their circumstances. References are taken up on adult family members. Host families are given detailed guidance on how to accommodate students consistently with the college's established practice, and have ready access to any advice they need. Students are invited to give feedback about their accommodation both in questionnaires and in discussion with their academic tutors each term, and the college responds swiftly to any concerns that are raised. [NMS 20]