Royal Grammar School

Royal Grammar School High Wycombe

Royal Grammar School, Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP13 6QT

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

This school is a selective maintained school with academy status for boys aged 11 to 19 years. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,492 students on roll and 68 boarders. Accommodation for boarders is on the school site.

This was a social care inspection of the boarding provision only.

Inspection dates: 20 to 22 October 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	**outstanding**
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

The boarding school provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the school contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2023

Summary of findings

Children make excellent progress while boarding at this school. They benefit from nurturing relationships with highly committed staff who provide consistent support and promote both academic achievement and personal development. Safeguarding is highly effective, underpinned by strong leadership, robust health and safety arrangements, an inclusive culture, excellent management of health needs and a strong focus on online safety. Leadership is exceptionally strong, with leaders placing children's needs at the heart of decision-making. Boarders thrive in a supportive, aspirational environment that promotes confidence, wellbeing, achievement and outstanding outcomes for all children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children benefit from stable and highly positive relationships with a dedicated staff team that is ambitious for their futures. Staff create a culture of high expectations, mutual respect and encouragement, helping boarders to develop confidence, resilience and aspirations for the future.

The dual role of staff as teachers and boarding tutors enables strong, trusting relationships and consistent support. Boarders value the guidance they receive from familiar adults and recognise the positive impact this has on their progress and wellbeing.

Leaders and staff place equal importance on academic achievement and personal development. Children are encouraged to discover and pursue their individual interests, talents and ambitions through a wide range of activities. Their achievements are celebrated, helping to build self-esteem and a strong sense of belonging.

Children actively contribute to boarding life and know their views matter. Leaders are highly responsive to children's needs and take a proactive approach to addressing concerns at an early stage. As a result, children feel listened to, valued and safe. The highly effective support, ambitious leadership and exceptional opportunities available enable children to make excellent progress from their starting points.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Safeguarding is highly effective. Leaders, governors and the designated safeguarding lead team maintain strong oversight of both the school and boarding provision. Staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and respond promptly to concerns. Children know who to approach if they need help, and safeguarding

information is highly visible throughout the school, contributing to a strong culture of vigilance and protection.

Boarders live in a safe and well-maintained environment. Health and safety arrangements, including fire safety and risk management, are robust. Maintenance issues are addressed swiftly, and staff ensure children understand how to keep themselves and others safe in an emergency.

The boarding provision is highly inclusive. Equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded throughout practice, with staff actively promoting a culture of belonging, kindness and respect. Individual needs are recognised and celebrated, helping children feel valued and accepted.

Children's health needs are exceptionally well managed. Staff work closely with the matron to ensure medical needs, allergies and medication are handled safely and effectively. Clear information-sharing and strong oversight contribute to children's safety and wellbeing. There have been no medication errors since the last inspection. Staff know children well and create an environment in which children feel comfortable sharing worries or concerns. Children know how to make a complaint and are confident that they will be listened to and helped. Positive partnerships with parents further strengthen safeguarding arrangements.

Online safety is a particular strength. Leaders maintain an up-to-date understanding of emerging risks, including those associated with artificial intelligence, and provide children with regular guidance to help them stay safe online.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leadership of the boarding provision is exceptional. The head of boarding is highly experienced, child centred and an unwavering advocate for boarders. His ambitious and reflective leadership creates a culture in which children thrive, contributing directly to the exceptional progress boarders make across all areas of their lives.

Leaders maintain strong oversight of the boarding provision and ensure that children's needs, views and experiences remain at the heart of decision-making. There is a deeply embedded culture of inclusivity, with leaders demonstrating flexibility and determination to ensure that every boarder receives the support they need to succeed.

Boarders benefit from a nurturing environment in which they are listened to, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the impact of boarding, describing it as a 'home from home', where kindness, wellbeing and personal development are prioritised. They speak highly of the significant difference boarding staff make to their children's lives and future prospects.

Staff morale is exceptionally high. A strong culture of mutual respect, support and professional development enables staff to fulfil their roles effectively. Recruitment, training, supervision and appraisal arrangements are robust and ensure staff have the skills and knowledge required to meet boarders' needs. Staff value the unique opportunity to support children, both academically and pastorally, resulting in strong and meaningful relationships.

Leaders have created a culture of aspiration and positive role modelling. Boarders are inspired by the achievements of former students and older peers, who actively support younger children through mentoring and leadership opportunities. This helps to reinforce high expectations and a strong sense of community.

The progress made by boarders is exceptionally strong. Leaders can clearly demonstrate how boarding contributes to improved academic attainment, personal development, confidence and future success.

No recommendations were made at this inspection.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

Boarding school details

Social care unique reference number: SC049244

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Philip Wayne

Type of school: Boarding school

Telephone number: 01494 524 955

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Inspectors

Emma Haskell, Social Care Regulatory Inspector
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