

Education and boarding inspection summary for Ampleforth College

Ampleforth, York, North Yorkshire, YO62 4ER

Inspection dates: 30 November - 3 December 2021

Outcome

The education overall effectiveness judgement is: inadequate

The judgement for the experiences and progress of children in the boarding provision is: inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

- The arrangements to safeguard pupils, including the most vulnerable, at Ampleforth College remain ineffective.
- There have been some improvements to the school's safeguarding arrangements since the previous inspection in March 2021. Most, but not all, pupils say they feel safe. However, pupils are at risk of harm. Inspectors became aware of serious safeguarding incidents before, during and after the inspection. Leaders do not accept responsibility readily for the harm experienced by pupils in their care.
- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils academically. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well at Ampleforth College. Pupils study for a wide range of qualifications, including in the sixth form.
- During the school day, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms, corridors and outdoors. The vast majority of pupils behave well. Pupils know which repeated actions constitute bullying. As part of Anti-Bullying Week, they organised a charitable 'bake sale', heard from the school's monitors about the impact of bullying and took part in Odd Socks Day. Pupils were immersed in anti-bullying activities all week long.
- Pupils enjoy a wide and diverse range of enrichment opportunities. For example, they can join the combined cadet force, take part in equestrian

events and carry out investigations in science club. The school's extensive co-curricular offer provides pupils with a range of rich experiences in the arts, music, debating, sports and much more. The Christian living curriculum enables pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and offline. Recently, the Christian living curriculum has included workshops for pupils on harmful sexual behaviour and harassment.

- Pupils have access to independent and impartial careers advice. Careers education is planned for and delivered to Years 7 to 13. The school's careers programme helps pupils to make well-informed choices about their next steps in education, employment or training.

The school **does not meet the independent school standards** relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils, and the quality of leadership and management in schools.

The Inspectors made **six recommendations** to help the school improve covering safeguarding of pupils, the quality of education, and leadership and management.

What is it like to board at this school?

- Whilst there are some strengths in the boarding provision, pupils' overall experiences and progress is inadequate. This is because leaders and staff fail to take appropriate action to protect pupils from serious harm.
- Most pupils enjoy boarding in this school. They have a sense of belonging to their individual boarding houses and to the wider school. Many pupils say that they feel they are part of a boarding family, and that they value the relationships that they develop with staff and other pupils. These relationships help pupils to feel secure about boarding at the school.
- Pupils' social skills and confidence improve, due to their experience of boarding. Staff encourage older pupils to help those who are new to boarding. Pupils become increasingly independent as they get older. There is an emphasis on preparing pupils to be able to manage well when they move on to the next stage of lives, including going to university. Older pupils report they feel ready to move on, because of the ethos of the boarding provision.
- Boarding houses that needed to be updated have been decorated. All boarding houses are now of an acceptable standard and pupils feel comfortable in their surroundings. They individualise their bedrooms, particularly as they get older. Younger pupils share bedrooms with up to four other pupils. Most of the time, these arrangements work well. When they do not, boarding staff move pupils, taking into account their views. As a result, most pupils are pleased with the boarding house in which they live.
- Pupils do a wide range of activities. They describe the opportunities for different hobbies as being 'endless'. Many such activities are sporting in nature. However, pupils can also become involved in a variety of other pastimes such as art, theatre craft and cooking. This means that all pupils have access to enjoyable activities that provide them with structure and routine outside of the school day. This is a strength of the boarding provision.
- Pupils' educational needs are well supported by boarding staff. Academic tutors form part of the boarding staff team. They help pupils with their homework and preparation for the next day's lessons. Pupils value this support. As a result, their academic ability increases, which helps them to achieve their potential.
- A large proportion, 37%, of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). An experienced special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) informs the help offered to these pupils in lessons. This means that teaching for these pupils is increasingly effective. However, boarding staff do not receive the same level of information and advice about these pupils'

needs. This leaves some pupils being cared for by staff who do not know how to understand and respond to their behaviour.

- Pupils' health needs are met. Each house has a 'matron', who oversees the physical and emotional wellbeing of pupils. The on-site infirmary is permanently staffed by qualified medical practitioners. Boarding staff take pupils for appointments further afield. Within the school, some pupils receive individualised support from counsellors and other staff based in the learning hub. The school has strong links with a local general practitioner and a psychiatrist who offer regular appointments to pupils who need this input. The approach to meeting pupils' physical and mental health needs means that they receive the care they need.
- Boarding staff provide support to pupils moving into and from the boarding houses. Staff try to allocate younger pupils to boarding houses which they have chosen after meeting with the house master or house mistress. This includes recognising the particular needs of pupils from overseas. Older pupils receive careers advice or encouragement with their applications to university. This means that pupils are content with the help they receive to feel settled and are prepared for the next stages of their lives.

The school **does not meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools** relating to child protection, management and development of boarding, staff and supervision, and keeping children safe in education.

The inspectors made **six recommendations** to help the school improve covering safeguarding of pupils, leadership and management, and staffing and development.

- View the full inspection report for the education provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/121735>
- View the full inspection report for the boarding provision:
<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/1/SC007916>



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