

Marathon Science School

Severn Hills Trust

1-9 Evelyn Street, Surrey Quays, London SE8 5RQ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this boarding school

Marathon Science School is an independent secondary boarding school with an Islamic ethos. It is registered for boys aged 10 to 19 years. The school is located near Surrey Quays. Boarders are housed in two separate residences on two sites, Hackney House and Lewisham House. Most of the pupils are of Turkish background and speak English as an additional language.

At the time of the inspection, the school had 49 children on the school roll, 44 of whom were boarding.

The head of boarding has been in post since September 2019 and has an appropriate qualification.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 29 to 31 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The boarding school provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good care and support from boarding staff. Children spoke highly of their boarding provision and the learning experiences at this school. They say that they are well cared for and speak positively about the approachable staff and say they have good relationships with them.

Children have developed positive relationships with peers and staff. Children are relaxed in their boarding house, and they interact freely. Children describe the boarding community as a family to them. Children benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities, including football and swimming. They attend prayers throughout the day and understand that this is an expectation of the school and in line with the school's ethos.

New children have a sensitive induction that helps them to settle in the boarding school. Children develop a feeling of belonging to the school. Some staff were themselves boarders at the school. Some children talked about how this helps boarding staff to empathise with children and really understand them.

Children who become unwell while at school receive a caring response from staff in both houses. One child talked about his positive experience when he was unwell and how the head of boarding ensured that he had everything he needed. Suitable arrangements are in place for first aid and medication. Staff work well with parents, who usually take their unwell children home to recover and seek medical attention if needed. However, staff do not record medication administered to children appropriately.

Children are confident and able to share their views and opinions. There is a school council with representatives from each year, who bring issues to the meetings to raise with staff. However, the school does not use the school council well to support their development and some students do not feel that they have been heard, especially concerning the quality of the food. Children do feel they can voice opinions to staff and are positive about the boarding provision.

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

Children say they are happy and feel safe in the boarding provision. They know who to talk to when they are worried or upset. Staff understand children's individual needs well and provide consistent routines and nurture that help children to feel secure.

Children know how to raise concerns. A system is in place for them to raise concerns and suggestions. Managers take appropriate action to resolve these concerns. Children know who the independent listener is, and they know how to contact them. As a result, children feel safe and secure in the boarding provision.

Children's behaviour is exceptional. They say that bullying is not an issue. Children say there is a positive sense of community and friendship. When incidents occur between children, these are appropriately managed by the staff. There have been no incidents requiring physical intervention.

Staff have good knowledge of safeguarding procedures and a good awareness of statutory guidance. They have completed appropriate safeguarding training and are able to identify concerns. Managers take appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are identified. There have been very few safeguarding concerns in the boarding provision since the last inspection.

The school's safeguarding and child protection policy provides comprehensive guidance to staff. This guidance, together with training on a wide range of safeguarding topics, enables staff to have good safeguarding awareness.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The physical environment is safe for the children. Staff and leaders have plans to improve the boarding accommodation. Children are generally positive about the accommodation. However, there are areas where maintenance has not been monitored appropriately. Some of the required repairs were completed during the inspection. These issues should have been identified by the provider before the inspection, without external prompting.

The head of boarding has regular meetings with boarding staff about their practice and children's well-being. Staff feel supported and guided and staff morale is high. Staff have individual meetings with their managers, however, records are brief, and managers are unclear about the differences between staff supervision and appraisals.

School leaders are highly visible at the school. They know staff and children well. There is a whole-school approach to monitoring children's experiences and progress and helping them to grow and develop.

School leaders and staff have extremely good relationships with parents, who provided unanimously positive feedback about the quality of care. Parents highlight the excellent levels of communication and the rich depth of children's experiences, alongside their academic progress, as strengths of the school.

The school has an effective board of governors who have completed relevant training. Governors have good oversight of what is happening in boarding and visit regularly. They know boarders very well and are actively involved in monitoring the boarding provision to ensure that good standards are maintained.

Staff are good role models for children. Some are former students at the school and bring a unique insight into understanding the support that boarders need in order to thrive. Children talk positively about staff and the care they receive.

What does the boarding school need to do to improve? Compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding schools

The school does not meet the following national minimum standards for boarding schools:

- Boarding houses and other accommodation provided for boarders are well lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained, and reasonable adjustments are made to provide accessible accommodation for any boarders with disabilities. (Boarding schools: national minimum standard 4.4)
- All medication is stored safely and securely, and accurate records are kept of its administration. Staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need when administering medicines. Prescribed medicines are given only to the boarders to whom they are prescribed. Boarders allowed to self-medicate are assessed as being sufficiently responsible to do so. Where applicable, schools have regard to government guidance. (Boarding schools: national minimum standard 7.6)
- The school's leadership and management fulfil their responsibilities consistently and effectively so that the standards are met. (Boarding schools: national minimum standard 2.4)

Points for improvement

- School leaders should ensure that boarding staff supervision records reflect the discussions that happen between staff and their managers and include objectives and actions for staff to improve their practice.
- School leaders should review the school council to better define its role in the school to help students participate meaningfully.
- School leaders should continue to engage with children about how the meals in the school can be developed so that children are provided with a healthy, balanced diet of good-quality food.

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: SC400622

Headteacher/teacher in charge: Mr Uzeyir Onur

Type of school: Boarding school

Telephone number: 02072 313232

Email address: finance@marathonschool.com

Inspectors

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector

Karol Keenan, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024