

Keswick School

Inspection report for boarding school

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Inspector	Stewart Waddell
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Date of last inspection	19 October 2006

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Keswick School's has one boarding house, Lairthwaite House. It is a three storey property set in the grounds of Keswick School adjacent to the main school buildings. The boarding house can accommodate a maximum of 50 boarders of either gender. Young people only share rooms with other young people of their own gender. Bedroom accommodation is sited so that all female boarders are accommodated in separate areas from male boarders. All bedroom accommodation is sited on the upper floors of the building. The ground floor contains a large communal lounge, with recreational areas containing a snooker table, table football game and a computer, with internet access, for boarders use. There is a small kitchen for the preparation of food and drinks. Staff offices and medical room are sited on the ground floor. The boarding house has a paved patio area adjacent to it for boarders use.

Summary

The purpose of this key announced inspection was to fully assess all 21 key standards of the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards. The section Economic Wellbeing was not assessed. At the time of the inspection there were 49 young people accommodated in the boarding house. The inspector spoke with approximately twenty of them during the inspection. Boarders' health needs are well met, and boarders are kept safe, secure and protected from bullying. Boarders have forums through which to express their views and opinions, some which more opportunity to raise their views about boarding house issues. The boarding house is well managed and suitably run.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

There have been significant improvements made to the residential facilities provided in the boarding house, ensuring boarders are provided with a good standard of accommodation.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The school and boarding house have appropriate policies in place to safeguard and promote boarders health. Boarders receive appropriate information and guidance on major health risks, including substance abuse, through the education curriculum in classes such as 'Citizenship'. Staff from specialist agencies have visited the school and spoke to young people about such issues. Boarders are fully aware of the boarding house's policies regarding possession of alcohol, cigarettes or illegal substances. All staff are aware of the school's and boarding house's policies on alcohol, smoking and illegal substance abuse by boarders. There are good systems in place to ensure all boarders can access medical, dental and optical treatment as required. The boarding house handbook also contains detailed policies for staff informing them what to do should a boarder become unwell and require medical attention, and on how to manage specific medical conditions. The school employ a fully qualified nurse on a full time basis. One of the boarding house staff is also a qualified nurse. The school have access to professional medical advice and guidance if needed. Boarders are registered with local doctors, dentists and opticians practice, unless parents specifically request they are not. Boarders can choose to see health specialists unaccompanied by staff and can choose to see a female or male doctor if they so wish. Boarding

house staff have received appropriate first aid training, ensuring any such treatment is given by competent staff. Prescribed medication is only given to whom it is prescribed for - such medication is not kept for general use or added to stock, and all unused prescribed medication is returned to chemists. The school has a written policy on the provision of non prescription and homeopathic medication to boarders. Medication is kept securely in medicine cabinets sited in a suitable, lockable room. Boarding house staff do not keep a running total of the contents of the cabinets. Boarders who self medicate have a lockable area in their bedrooms in which they can securely store medication. The house ensures any boarders keeping and administering their own medication are responsible enough to do so. A written record is kept of all medication, treatment and first aid administered to boarders. Records do not always show dosage given, and not all entries are signed by staff. A written record is kept of all significant illnesses, accidents or injuries to boarders. Written parental permission has been received for all boarders covering first aid, prescribed medication, non-prescribed medication, and medical, dental and optical treatment as required. These actions show boarders health needs are well met whilst they are boarding at Keswick School.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The school has a very comprehensive whole school anti-bullying policy, and a separate smaller policy specifically relating to the boarding provision. The policies are appropriate and cover measures to prevent bullying, how to respond to observed or reported bullying, and a definition of bullying. The bullying policy is available to all boarders, parents and staff, through the school's web site. The boarding house handbook details these policies and states 'bullying will not be tolerated'. Boarders and staff stated no 'initiation ceremonies' take place. Forty-seven boarders returned completed pre-inspection questionnaires and these show bullying is not a significant issue or concern for any boarder. The school's policies state any boarder being bullied will be supported and any boarder bullying other boarders will be worked with and given suitable help and guidance. These action show the school ensure young people are protected from bullying. The school have written child protection policies that meet with requirements. Policies are regularly reviewed, and are available to all staff and adults working at the school. Policies stress the need for all staff to report any suspicions or concerns they have, details who to report them to, and that staff have the right to report suspicions on to relevant agencies if they feel school has not dealt with their concerns properly. All staff, including new staff and ancillary staff, are given training on how to respond to any suspicions or allegations of abuse. Boarders said they 'feel safe' at the school. The school has designated a senior staff member to take responsibility for child protection policy and issues. They have received appropriate training for this role, and hold copies of appropriate good practice documentation and guidance All boarding house staff are aware of the school's policy for searching for, and if necessary reporting, any boarder missing from school. If such an incident occurs a written record is kept, detailing action taken and any reason given by the pupil for being missing. The school has suitable written policies on discipline, punishments and rewards, including a policy on the use of physical restraint, that are available to all staff, parents and boarders. Instances of physical restraints of young people occurring in the boarding house are very rare. Full written details would be kept of any such incident. The school have specific guidelines for staff on 'Dealing with Boarding Offences' and 'Managing Difficult Behaviour'. Standards of behaviour displayed by boarders throughout the inspection were very satisfactory. Sanctions and punishments used are fair and conform to the requirements of the Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards (boarding school NMS). The boarding house has a prefect group, but they are not given any direct

disciplinary powers. Any major punishments imposed on boarders are recorded in writing in the 'punishment' book. The record contains the name of the boarder, what the punishment was, reason for the punishment, and person administering the punishment. The school's complaints procedure is available to all staff, boarders and parents. Documentation is provided to parents informing them of how they can raise any complaint or concern. Boarders and parents are informed they can contact other agencies with any complaint about welfare at the school. A written log is kept of any serious complaints, and this is regularly reviewed by senior staff. The 'Boarding House Pupil Guide' details what boarders should do if they have any complaint, details the role of the independent listener, and informs boarders they may make a complaint to outside organisations. Boarders know emergency evacuation procedures from sleeping and living areas in the boarding house. Fire drills are carried out at least once per term. Regular tests are carried out on emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment, and the results recorded. There are no outstanding recommendations from the fire officer. There is always sufficient staff on duty to ensure appropriate supervision of boarders takes place. Staff are available to boarders at all times. Staff regularly check all areas of the boarding facilities to ensure boarders safety. Staff supervise boarders in a manner that keeps boarders safe but is not overly intrusive. Boarders right to privacy is respected, and staff are sensitive to boarders privacy needs at times such as bedtimes or shower times. Amendments have been made to the school's recruitment procedures, documentation and record keeping which ensure recruitment processes, documentation and checks meet with the requirements of the boarding school NMS. The school have carried out suitable Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB) checks on all adults who are not employed at the school but live in the boarding house. The school do not employ GAP students or agency staff. The school take reasonable steps ensure taxi drivers booked by the school to drive boarders unaccompanied by staff have had suitable CRB checks carried out on them. All visitors to the boarding house are kept under suitable staff supervision and not allowed unreasonable access to boarders or boarding accommodation. Boarding accommodation and facilities are for the exclusive use of boarders. The school has a clear policy restricting access to boarding facilities and boarders by people from outside the school. Suitable security measures are taken to prevent unauthorised access to boarding houses and school grounds. No electronic surveillance equipment is used inside the boarding house. The school ensures any public use of general school facilities does not allow unsupervised access to boarders or boarding accommodation. No significant hazards to boarders safety were observed in the boarding house during the inspection. All windows accessible to boarders above the ground floor are fitted with suitable restrictors. Some internal windows where there is a higher risk of impact are fitted with safety glass. Boarders are aware of which areas and activities are out of bounds. The school has suitable health and safety policies that are available to all staff, and suitable risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed. Staff responsible for compiling risk assessments have received appropriate training for this. These actions show the school take all reasonable steps to ensure young people are kept safe and live in a safe and secure environment.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There are systems in place to ensure all boarders have at least one member of staff to whom they can turn for personal support and guidance. The boarding house has a policy that makes clear boarders can take concerns or problems to any staff member and boarding house staff actively encourage this. The school has two independent listeners, both of whom have been suitably CRB checked. Boarders can contact them directly with any problems or concerns.

Boarders know who the independent listeners are and how they can be contacted. Boarders also have access to a staff member, who is a trained counsellor, from an external organisation who visit the school regularly. The school have suitable policies and practices in place showing a commitment to equal opportunities and challenging discrimination at all times. Minority groups amongst boarders are supported and helped to integrate. Allocation of sleeping accommodation is structured to prevent isolation from other groups. Boarders from minority groups had no complaints to make and speak positively about the boarding at the school. The school caters appropriately for any pupil's with special dietary needs, dress or religious observance requirements, or needs due to their religious or cultural background. Suitable support is available for any boarders for whom English is not their first language.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Boarders have various forums through which they can express their views and opinions, such as the school council, weekly house meetings and food council. All boarders have form tutors they have regular access to, and all are allocated a prefect group within the boarding house. Some boarders felt their views on boarding house issues were not always taken in to account. Boarders have daily access to boarding house staff. The school are involved in survey work with pupils and have specifically targeted the boarding pupils as a user group for this. Online parental questionnaires are used to get parents views on the services the school provides. These show parents believe their children are happy to be boarders at the school. The school assists and encourages boarders to maintain contact with their parents. Many parents have visited the school and boarding house. Boarders have access to a telephone where they can make private calls at reasonable times without having to inform, or seek permission from, staff. Helpline numbers are displayed by this telephone and contained in the 'pupil's guide to the boarding house' handbook. Almost all boarders have mobile phones - staff keep a list of each young person's mobile phone number for contact purposes. Boarders hand their mobile phones in at lights out. Most boarders have their own laptops and have access to the internet from the boarding house, thus they can send and receive e-mails. Boarders can send and receive letters. The school contact parents immediately should they have any significant welfare concerns about their child.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

This section was not assessed at this inspection.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The school have a 'statement of boarding principles' that covers all areas required by the boarding school NMS. The Statement is up to date and available to parents, prospective parents, staff and boarders. All boarders are provided with a copy of the boarding house pupil handbook entitled 'The Lairthwaite House Pupil Guide', which contains all relevant information, including the 'statement of boarding principles'. All the school's policies are available for viewing via the school's web site. Senior staff members regularly monitor the records of the school. Records monitored include risk assessments, major punishments, complaints and accidents. Action is taken in response to any trend identified by this monitoring process. The school take reasonable actions to ensure any risks to pupils identified by risk assessments are reduced. The school

ensures satisfactory staffing levels in the boarding house are maintained at all times, including weekends, with sufficient staff on duty to appropriately supervise the number of boarders accommodated. Boarders know which staff are on duty at all times, and which member of staff is responsible for them. Staff on duty can call for, and receive, help and support if necessary. The boarding house can accommodate 52 boarders and all places are currently filled. To meet the needs of boarders the boarding house has a staff team of 10, including two domestic cleaners; this staff team is a mix of genders. The school has suitable systems in place to cover for boarding house staff sickness and absence. All boarding house staff receive job descriptions which reflect their duties and responsibilities. All staff are aware to whom they are accountable. All new staff receive induction training in the schools boarding procedures, policies and practices, including guidance on child protection issues. Any roles for spouses or partners of staff within the boarding house is made clear and all non-staff adults living in the boarding house are appropriately CRB checked. There are suitable arrangements for the supervision of boarding house domestic staff. Boarding house staff's performance is regularly reviewed by the Head of House, but there is no formal process for this. The school provides opportunities for staff to have further training and updates on boarding practices.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that staff record the exact dosage of medication given to boarders, and sign any entries they make in medication and medical records (NMS 15)
- ensure an accurate, running total of the contents of the boarding house medicine cabinets is kept (NMS 15)
- review the systems for seeking boarders' views and opinions about boarding issues and consider re-introducing the boarding house council (NMS 12)
- ensure systems are in place to regularly review the performance of boarding house staff. (NMS 34)

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for boarding school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' health is promoted (NMS 6)
- safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- boarders' receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 15)
- boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill (NMS 16)
- boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 17)
- boarders receive good quality catering provision (NMS 24)
- boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 25)
- boarders are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 48)
- boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 49).

Ofsted considers 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are protected from bullying (NMS 2)
- boarders are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- boarders' complaints are responded to appropriately (NMS 5)
- the operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare (NMS 13)
- boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school (NMS 22)
- boarders are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 26)
- the welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school (NMS 28)
- boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 29)
- boarders' personal privacy is respected (NMS 37)
- there is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders (NMS 38)
- boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures; all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises are supervised (NMS 39)
- boarders have their own accommodation, which is secure from public intrusion (NMS 41)
- boarders are protected from safety hazards (NMS 47)

Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39, 41 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 18)
- boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 27)
- boarders have satisfactory provision to study (NMS 43)
- boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas (NMS 46)

Ofsted considers 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school (NMS 12)
- boarders receive personal support from staff (NMS 14)
- boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 19)
- new boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in (NMS 21)
- boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school (NMS 30)
- there are sound relationships between staff and boarders (NMS 36)

Ofsted considers 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- boarders' possessions and money are protected (NMS 20)
- boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation (NMS 40)
- boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 42)
- boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 44)
- boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day (NMS 45)
- boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school (NMS 50)

Ofsted considers 51 the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- a suitable statement of the school's principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff (NMS 1)
- there is clear leadership of boarding in the school (NMS 8)
- crises affecting boarders' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- the school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare (NMS 10)
- risk assessment and school record-keeping contribute to boarders' welfare (NMS 23)
- boarders are supervised adequately by staff (NMS 31)
- staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site (NMS 32)
- boarders are adequately supervised at night (NMS 33)
- boarders are looked after by staff which have specific boarding duties, and have received adequate induction and continued training (NMS 34)
- boarders are looked after by staff which follow clear boarding policies and practice (NMS 35)
- the welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 51)
- the welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

Ofsted considers 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.