

# Haydon Bridge High School - Ridley Hall

## Boarding Wing

Inspection report for boarding school

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC043077         |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 12 November 2009 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Leonard Hird     |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key              |

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| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01434 344282   |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Northumberland County Council  |
| <b>Head / Principal</b>        | John Dowler  |
| <b>Nominated person</b>        | Steven Sand  |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 10 July 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**

Ridley Hall is situated in a rural location, four miles from the main school site. The local authority lease Ridley Hall on behalf of the Trust school who lead and manage the boarding provision. It currently accommodates 45 pupils of both genders aged between 13 and 18 years, from Monday through to Thursday nights only. Boarding is available for pupils who have to travel for more than one and a quarter hours to get to school.

The boarding house also provides education courses, conferences and facilities at times when the boarders are not staying.

### **Summary**

This announced inspection looked at the key national minimum standards for boarding schools relating to the five outcome areas of Every Child Matters.

The boarding provision at the school is providing boarders with a caring, safe and enabling environment which is fully supportive of their social, emotional and educational needs. The school is meeting all of these outcome areas to a good standard and it is outstanding in the promotion of equality and diversity. There has been a significant change made to the management team at the boarding centre since the last inspection with the appointment of a new director of care. Policies and procedures have all been revised and updated appropriately and are in line with current regulatory and social developments.

Boarders speak positively of their life at the school and of their very good relationships with the boarding house staff.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

The nine recommendations made at the last inspection undertaken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection relating to information for boarders and their families, staff training, security and the policy and procedures surrounding complaints and countering bullying have all been addressed.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The provision for the promotion of the health and wellbeing of boarders is good. Boarders are encouraged to have a healthy and active lifestyle whilst living at the school. Members of the boarding house staff, in conjunction with the school's personal, health and social education curriculum provide excellent advice in matters such as relationships and modern day life.

There are good working relationships with all of the local health services. Clear procedures are followed for the management, storage and administration of medication. Parental permissions are in place for the administration of first aid and medication. Members of staff are trained to administer emergency first aid treatment, which helps support children's health in this rural

setting. Staff have not yet received any formal training in the safe handling and administration of medication.

The school has achieved the 'healthy schools' award in recognition of the steps it has taken to develop healthy lifestyles. The boarding house menus are developed and planned by the well qualified catering staff in conjunction with boarders. There is always a choice of meals for boarders to choose from including a vegetarian option. Boarders eat well and have a healthy diet which helps in the promotion of their health and wellbeing.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The school has a comprehensive and up to date policy and procedure in place for countering bullying. There are pamphlets available and information is prominently displayed for boarders throughout the school telling them how to deal with bullying. The school has an 'Independent Listener' who is easily contactable by boarders if they wish to speak to somebody in confidence who is not a member of staff.

Boarders confirm they are aware of the school's countering bullying policy, as well as to whom they could speak to, including the school's link governor about any bullying, complaints or safeguarding issues.

Prior to working at the school all staff have undergone rigorous pre-employment checks

The school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy and procedure in place. There is full involvement with the local authority, in the training of all staff working at the school in safeguarding and child protection procedures. There are four experienced and appropriately trained senior members of staff who are the school's designated safeguarding officers. All staff receive regular, recorded safeguarding training and are in receipt of the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The school's comprehensive complaints policy and procedure is readily available for use by parents and boarders. The boarding pupils are also provided with an easy to read complaints pamphlet that explains how to complain if they need to. The school is maintaining appropriate records of any complaints made either by boarding pupils or parents.

Regular recorded fire, security and safety checks are undertaken in the boarding house and these checks are in line with the school's health and safety policies and procedures, national guidance and regulations. A recent fire service inspection of the boarding house made recommendations about the improvement of some internal fire doors and these have been actioned.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Members of the boarding house staff team work closely with parents, carers and educational staff to ensure boarders are receiving the help and support they require. There is clear guidance available for members of staff to follow when dealing with boarders personal or welfare issues. Boarders confirm they receive good levels of support from boarding house staff and if necessary they can speak either with house staff or the independent listener about any problems.

The school is practising a policy of equal opportunity for all pupils attending the school. Boarding pupils are fully supported by house and educational staff to ensure they successfully enjoy the life of a weekly boarder.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Boarding pupils are being encouraged to take part in the day-to-day running of the boarding house. Boarders confirm that they can influence decisions in the house and the school by their involvement in the regular house meetings and through their representatives on the school council. The school has an open door policy for boarders to speak to any member of staff at any time.

Boarders confirm they use mobile telephones, email and the public telephones to keep in contact with their parents and families during the school week. Members of staff keep in regular recorded contact with parents throughout the school week and term and update them about the progress of their child by phone, e-mail or personal contact.

Great care is given to the support of boarding pupils when they first come into the boarding house. The experienced house staff ensure there is a careful eye kept upon new boarding pupils so that 'homesickness' does not become a problem. Older boarders act in the capacity of supporters for the newer members of the boarding community to help them settle into boarding life.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Boarding pupils have their own lockable facility for storing small personal items, whilst larger valuable possessions and money can be stored securely in the boarding house by staff. Records are maintained of all valuables and money kept in behalf of boarders by the school.

The dormitory and living accommodation provided for boarders is very clean, well furnished, decorated and well maintained. There is a good level of privacy for washing, toileting, showering and bathing throughout the boarding house. A great deal of refurbishment and redecoration work has been undertaken in the boarding house since the last inspection to improve the facilities used by boarders. This refurbishment and redecoration work is not yet fully completed but boarders were highly complimentary about the work completed so far and are looking forward to the completion of the media centre.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Boarders confirm they are treated with understanding and respect by members of staff. The school's equality and diversity policy and procedures are being comprehensively applied. Members of staff positively encourage the boarding community to involve themselves in working with different communities and cultures both locally, nationally and internationally through organisations such as Interact.

The school provides a well-written statement of its principles and practices on boarding for parents and boarders. There are good systems of risk assessment and recording practice in place to ensure the health and safety of boarders.

The head teacher and the senior management team provide strong and effective management support for the boarding house staff team. The very experienced boarding house staff team provide a safe, stable and caring environment for boarders to live in. Boarders confirm they feel well cared for by this well-liked staff team.

The head teacher, in conjunction with the senior management team and director of care, is providing extremely effective management and support for the boarding house staff team. The boarding house staff are experienced in their posts and have received a range of training to enable them to meet the boarding pupils needs. Staffing levels, both during the day and at night, are meeting the current needs of boarders at the school.

All of the boarders spoken with said that they felt well cared for by this staff team.

## 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 |
|----------|--------|----------|
|----------|--------|----------|

### Recommendations

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

- ensure opportunities are provided for training and updating boarding house staff in the safe handling and administration of medication (NMS BS 34)
- ensure that the recommendations made at the last fire inspection are completed with in the timescale indicated (NMS BS26).