

# Keswick School

Inspection report for Boarding School

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<b>Inspection date</b>	25/01/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Leonard Hird
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Setting address</b>	Keswick School, Vicarage Hill, KESWICK, Cumbria, CA12 5QB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01768 772605
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Local Education Authority
<b>Head/ Principal</b>	Michael Chapman
<b>Nominated person</b>	Michael Chapman
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	15/01/2008

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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## 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**

The school has one boarding house and it is a three storey property set in the school grounds 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 overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an announced key inspection assessing the school's performance against the Every Child Matters outcomes for boarding pupils. The inspection covered all of the key national minimum standards relating to boarding schools.

The inspection reviewed the school's progress in meeting the recommendations made at the last inspection, which have all been met.

The school is good overall, and outstanding in positive contribution and equality and diversity. The boarding environment is well managed and provides a happy and caring environment for boarders to live in. Members of the boarding house staff team ensure that the boarding community are aware of the high importance of protecting themselves from harm in all of their activities, both in and out of school. Boarding pupils are very positive about the boarding experience and are very complimentary about the hard working and supportive staff team. The senior management team of the school is providing strong and effective leadership for the boarding house staff.

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

At the last inspection four recommendations were made relating to medication, seeking the views of boarding pupils and staff appraisal. Medication dosage is accurately recorded by members of the house staff team and there is recorded audit trail of the contents of the medication cabinet. There are systems in place that enable boarding pupils to regularly input their views and opinions about life in the boarding community. Boarding house staff receive appraisal on a regular basis.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Boarding pupils receive good advice, guidance and support in health and personal care issues through the school's comprehensive personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Boarding pupils are given lots of encouragement to lead healthy lifestyles by members of staff who, highlight the importance of avoiding smoking, alcohol and substance misuse. The boarding house staff ensure that the boarding group are made aware of the high importance of protecting themselves from harm in all of their activities, both in and out of school. There are well written health policies and procedures in place and these are regularly reviewed. Boarding pupils are registered with the local health centre and can access more specialist health services if necessary. Parental consents are in place for the administration of prescribed and non-prescribed medication as well as for emergency medical treatment. First aid and the treatment of minor ailments are administered by competent and trained staff; though members of the house staff have yet to receive training in the safe handling and administration of medication. Clear procedures are followed for the management, secure storage and administration of medication and accurate records are maintained. The school has a registered nurse who offers good levels of advice, support and guidance to the boarding house staff team. However, the nurse does not have easy access to professional guidance. There is a good dialogue between boarding house staff and the school nurse regarding the health of boarding pupils and this helps in the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Boarding pupils have a good, balanced and nutritious diet which helps in the promotion of their health and physical well-being. Menus are well-planned in conjunction with the boarding pupils, with a good range of choice available from the daily menu and follow a healthy food and eating programme. The choice includes a number of vegetarian options alongside dishes that are reflective of the diversity of boarding pupils. Any special dietary needs are well catered for and documented. Boarding pupils in spoke positively about the quality and quantity of food served and the catering arrangements. An opinion was expressed by a small number of boarding pupils that there might be a wider choice of food made available at the weekends.

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

The provision is good.

There are robust complaints and anti-bullying policies procedures available in different formats at the school. Detailed information is given to parents, staff and boarding pupils explaining how concerns or complaints will be addressed and resolved. Records are maintained of all complaints made and how they have been addressed. Bullying is regarded as unacceptable by the school. Work is undertaken throughout the school year to address bullying issues in different ways, such as taking part in the national schools' anti-bullying week initiative. Boarding pupils report that very low levels of bullying take place, but if it does occur then the

boarding house staff address it. When incidents of bullying have been identified or reported the school has addressed the issues in conjunction with the relevant agencies and action plans have been implemented to prevent any further issues.

The school's experienced designated person for safeguarding and child protection matters has developed strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board as well as the local authority's designated officer. Good provision is made for the guidance and regular training of staff and governors in child protection including cyber bullying and safer recruitment. All staff working at the school are recruited and vetted in accordance with the relevant regulations and this information is maintained in accordance with data protection guidance.

Health and safety in boarding accommodation is good. Detailed risk assessments are in place to ensure the safety of boarders when taking part in out of school activities and visits. Fire safety equipment in the boarding house is subject to regular recorded checks, to ensure it is in working order. The safety of boarders is paramount and regular recorded fire evacuation drills are being carried out throughout the term. This ensures that everyone is familiar with the actions to take in the event of a fire. Boarding pupils understand the procedures in place and confirm that regular tests and drills are taking place. The boarding house has good security systems in place including coded door locks and window restrictors. The privacy of boarding pupils is respected. Staff knock on their doors before entering bedrooms. Boarding pupils can go to their rooms to spend quiet time without any intrusion. These measures help promote the safety of the boarding community who feel confident they are living in a safe and homely environment.

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

The provision is good.

Boarding house staff work closely with parents and teaching staff to ensure that boarding pupils receive good levels of help and support. Boarding pupils on the whole have very good working relationships with the dedicated boarding house staff team. There are a range of people to whom the boarding pupils can speak with if, they have any concerns or problems. This includes an independent listener, the school's nurse, academic staff or any member of the boarding house staff team. Information is readily available for boarding pupils on how to make contact with different youth support organisations, such as ChildLine. Boarding pupils know they can take any personal or welfare problem to any member of staff and are confident that their concerns would be listened to sympathetically. Some boarding pupils said, 'we can go to any member of staff if we have a problem'.

The school is sensitive to the religious, cultural and special needs of boarding pupils, which is a positive strength of the school. Boarding pupils of all cultures and backgrounds are very well supported by the school to integrate into the boarding community. The school is demonstrating a strong commitment to equal opportunities and avoidance of inappropriate discrimination through its underpinning policies,

procedures and practice.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The head of boarding has an 'open door' policy for boarding pupils to speak to him about any subject at any time. Boarding pupils are actively encouraged to take part in the day-to-day running of the boarding house. They can influence decisions made within the boarding community by becoming members of the school council, taking part in house meetings or having informal discussions with staff. Boarders confirm they can influence decisions made regarding life in the boarding community by their involvement in these various forums.

Boarding pupils are able to maintain excellent contact with their parents, families and friends. Most boarding pupils have mobile telephones as well as having access to email and there public telephones in the boarding house which can be used in private, if required.

Much care is given to supporting boarding pupils when they first join the school's boarding community by both staff and their peers. Parents are positively encouraged to keep in contact with house staff during this often difficult time for themselves and their child. Boarding pupils are given clear information about life in the boarding community which helps them settle into their new lifestyle. The house staff team are very supportive of the welfare and emotional needs of new boarding pupils when they arrive and keep a 'watchful eye' on them to ensure homesickness does not become a problem. Members of staff keep in regular recorded contact with parents and carers to keep them informed on the progress their child is making at school and in the boarding house.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Boarding pupils' possessions and money are protected by providing pupils with a lockable storage facility. If they have valuables, pupils can give them to house staff for safe keeping. Full records are kept by the staff of the storage of these valuables.

The boarding house is purpose built and provides accommodation and facilities for up to 53 pupils with separate floors for boys and girls. The standard of accommodation is good, safe, secure and well maintained. There are very good communal facilities where boarders can relax, watch television and play games. Kitchen facilities are provided for use by the boarding pupils so that they can make snacks and drinks. The rooms visited by invitation during the inspection were found to be pleasantly decorated, warm and well personalised. There are good levels of privacy for showering and bathing in the boarding house. All of the boarders confirm

that they are happy with their living accommodation in particular their shared bedrooms and that the building is pleasant to live and is well maintained.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. The school values boarding pupils individuality and promotes equality. There are very good policies and procedures in place covering equal opportunities, promoting diversity and non discriminatory practice. Boarding pupils' rights are respected by a staff team who are committed to ensuring that boarders have access to a wide range of education, care and health support systems. The school operates an 'open door' policy enabling boarding pupils to have the opportunity to speak to any member of staff about anything that is of concern. Boarders indicate that members of staff are good at listening to them and thereby enabling them to voice their views and opinion.

The school provides an easy to understand statement of its principles and practices for parents, boarders and staff. Members of staff receive a handbook containing detailed information about the school's policies and procedures relating to working with the boarding community. The school also provides a handbook for boarding pupils which contains good information on all aspects of school life.

The management of the boarding house is helping to create a friendly and caring atmosphere for boarding pupils to live and grow up in. The risk assessments, recording and administration systems used in the school are helping to ensure the well-being of the boarding community. The headteacher and designated senior staff monitor complaints, sanctions and accidents to quickly identify and address any emerging trends.

There is an enthusiastic team of experienced boarding house staff employed by the school to ensure the boarding house is effectively managed and run. The boarding house is well organised and the facilities available to boarders are good. Staffing levels are meeting the needs of the boarding community. Members of staff have job descriptions which outlines their duties. There are arrangements in place for reviewing the performance of boarding staff. The governing body have a nominated welfare governor who regularly meets with the boarding house community and senior management. The senior management team of the school is providing strong and effective leadership for the boarding house management and staff.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Compliance with national minimum standards**



The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure the designated school nurse has access to a named doctor for professional guidance and consultation(breach of national minimum standard 15.4)