



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

Boarding School

Ackworth Boarding School

Ackworth

Pontefract

West Yorkshire

WF7 7LT

15th and 16th March 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- 4 - Standard Exceeded (Commendable)
- 3 - Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
- 2 - Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls)
- 1 - Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Ackworth Boarding School

Address

Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF7 7LT

Tel No:

01977 611401

Fax No:

01977 616225

Email Address

ackworth@aol.com

Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Name of Head

Martin J Dickinson

NCSC Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

1.12.00

Date of Inspection Visit		15 th & 16 th March 2004		ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am		
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Cathy Howarth	073582	
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Victoria Garside	073580	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	-		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4	-		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		Jane Ward		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		-		
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?				NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		MRS LORNA ANTHONY		

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended.

Inspections are carried out by the NCSC, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by NCSC may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Ackworth Boarding School.

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Recommended Action by the school
- Advisory recommendations on boarding welfare
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the lay assessor (where relevant)
- The Head's response and proposed action plan to address findings

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections are undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 as amended, with additional visits as required.

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Ackworth School is a boarding and day school for pupils of both sexes from ages 11 to 18. The school also has a separate unit for juniors, which is also sited in the school grounds. There are no junior boarders.

The school was founded in 1779 as a school for the sons and daughters of Quakers and operates within the spirit and ethos of the Quaker tradition. The school is in the village of Ackworth, near to Pontefract and Wakefield. The school is located within spacious grounds and substantial buildings.

Pupils come predominantly from Great Britain but boarders attend Ackworth School from a wide range of overseas destinations.

In addition to teaching academic subjects as required by the National Curriculum, the school also has a co-ordinator supporting pupils with dyslexia, a department responsible for the teaching of English as a foreign language and a range of sporting and extra curricular activities, all of which can be accessed by boarding students.

The school provides full boarding during term time, for 89 pupils at the time of this inspection. There are currently marginally more girls than boys. Boarding houses for boys and girls are separate. Each of the houses has a house master or mistress with a number of assistants who monitor and maintain the welfare of the children.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

This was the first inspection of Ackworth School under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The National Minimum Standards were implemented in April 2002.

- The school offers a good environment for young people to learn and develop themselves. The Quaker ethos is evident in the approach taken throughout every aspect of the school's daily life.
- The inspectors gained the impression of a school that is well-run and caring in its approach towards pupils' welfare.
- The school appeared to be a happy, friendly place and for the most part inspectors found evidence of good pupil/staff relationships.
- The support offered to boarders is by the whole staff team, not just boarding house staff.
- The School Officer system, whereby staff and senior pupils take responsibility for welfare within boarding, works well, providing an extra level of support for boarders from peers.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

- Child protection training needs to be extended to include ancillary staff.
- The school extend its arrangements for encouraging comments and complaints from pupils and most importantly in tracking these.
- The school should address actual and perceived differences in the treatment of boys and girls.
- Sick bay arrangements for boys should be improved.
- Improvements to the premises are needed
- Staff recruitment records need improvement and Criminal Records Bureau disclosures at enhanced level should be extended to ancillary staff.
- Arrangements for food should continue to be reviewed.
- The planned IT improvements need to be continued.
- Support and appraisal systems for boarding staff should be improved.
- An induction handbook could be useful for new boarders.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

Overall, inspectors found that the school provides a good service, a caring and supportive atmosphere to young people approaching adulthood. The school has strength in that it recognises areas where improvements need to be made and is proactively seeking to address these.

There is a strong emphasis within the school in supporting and nurturing others. Inspectors gained the impression of a friendly and supportive community where young people can help themselves and others to develop and thrive.

Where inspectors have made recommendations, it is on the basis that the school is already working towards making improvements in many of these areas and is open to the advice of a 'critical friend'.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

[illegible]

NA

No	Standard*	Recommended Actions	

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how Recommended Action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION			
Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	BS3	Ancillary staff should have training in child protection at an appropriate level. Key house staff should have more in depth training.	30.9.04
2	BS16 BS48	Suitable accommodation should be available for the separation of boarders who are ill.	30.6.04
3	BS24	Inspectors recommend a holistic review of catering arrangements within the school.	30.9.04
4	BS40	The school should ensure that heating is adequate in all bedrooms used by boarders and sufficient spare bedding is readily available in winter.	31.10.04
		Cracked and broken windows must be repaired without delay.	16.3.04
		Bedroom windows need to have better insulation.	31.10.04
5	BS44	The school should review the use of the common room next to the girls' toilets in Colonnade.	30.4.04
		Consideration should be given to fitting doors to the washroom facility in Richardson House.	30.4.04

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

Identified below are advisory recommendations on welfare matters addressed in the main body of the report and based on the National Minimum Standards, made for consideration by the school.

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	BS5	The school should find further ways of encouraging comments and complaints from pupils and tracking these effectively to identify patterns.
2	BS12	Meetings of the boarding council should be recorded to help track issues raised by boarders.
3	BS14	Childline numbers should be on display in each telephone box for pupils around the school.
4	BS18	The school should develop a more detailed policy relating to equal opportunities and issues of diversity. Issues of differential treatment between boys and girls should be investigated and appropriate action taken to equalise their treatment.
5	BS21	A welcome pack could be of benefit to some new boarders.
6	BS34	A system of regular appraisal for boarding staff is recommended along with access to developmental training in boarding welfare.

*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been used in the production of this report.

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil guided tour of accommodation	YES
Pupil guided tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations and Individuals

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person or Counsellor	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	NO
Group discussion with Gap students	NA
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	NA
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	YES

Date of Inspection	15/03/04
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	50
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	6

Pre-inspection information and the Head's evaluative statement, provided by the school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.

SCHOOL INFORMATION:**AGE RANGE OF BOARDING
PUPILS****FRO
M**

11

TO

19

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:**Boys**

43

Girls

46

Total

89

Number of separate Boarding Houses

2

The following pages summarise the Key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 - Standard Exceeded | (Commendable) |
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"0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
There is a brief leaflet available to prospective pupils and parents, and a more detailed statement, which outlines the principles and practices of the school in relation to boarders. The detailed document includes information about; the accommodation offered, staffing, boarders' routines, care and discipline, personal space, family contacts, privacy and fire safety.		

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6)

The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
The school has a very clear policy of not tolerating bullying behaviour throughout the school. In responding to the pre-inspection questionnaires pupils said overwhelmingly that they are not bullied at the school. The school's approach is to deal swiftly with any minor incidents to ensure that they do not escalate into larger concerns. The school is also proactive in encouraging friendly behaviour – e.g. tips for boarders in the school organiser.		

PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED

90

%

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

2

The school has a policy in place and a designated person taking responsibility for Child Protection within the school. All teaching staff have had basic training, but there is a definite plan for a further training session to be held with all staff. It was agreed that ancillary staff would be included in this training.

The inspectors recommend that key staff, particularly the Housemaster and Housemistress receive training in recognising and managing abuse allegations.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school's policy on managing behaviour is in line with the Quaker ethos of the school. Pupils showed through discussions that they were clear about the rules of the school and what to expect generally if they fail to comply with rules. In general pupils felt that the punishments used are fair. Some pupils, however, raised the concern that often different punishments are given to boys and girls for the same misdemeanours. It is not clear that this is actually the case, but is clearly perceived as such by some pupils. One other area, which was raised by pupils was being given lines by sixth formers as a punishment. Pupils said they do not like this.

Pupils did not report any use of physical restraint as a punishment used within the school.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

There is new guidance on making complaints available to parents and parents are encouraged to contact the school as soon as possible if they have any concerns about the school or any aspect of their child's care or education. This has not been circulated to parents as yet, so it was not possible to identify how well the procedure may work. In respect of pupils, from conversations with them there were indications that pupils felt that they could not easily raise issues. Inspectors have therefore suggested that the school develops a system to encourage pupils to come forward with comments and complaints and that these might be written. This may help with 'niggly' comments that, individually, may not be significant but that taken as a whole may indicate a wider or more deep seated problem, and may be picked up through monitoring processes.

Number of complaints, if any, received by NCSC about the school during last 12 months:

0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
The school has an extensive programme of education on Personal and Social Education. There are also very clear policies and guidance in place regarding the use of alcohol, illegal substances, smoking and on sexual relationships within the school.		

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5) Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
The school has a medical centre, staffed by a nurse and a visiting GP once a week. Records on pupils are kept here on all matters relating to their health. There are records within the houses for boarders regarding any administration of medication, information about allergies and significant health issues that need to be monitored. The confidentiality of boarders' records is maintained.		

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

3

The system at Ackworth School for the overall management of the school and boarding is clear and effective. Regular meetings of senior staff are designed to pick up issues promptly and deal swiftly with any problems. There is also an emphasis on looking forward and planning for the future. Therefore the management team are actively planning ahead for future developments and identifying priorities in boarding as part of the whole school development.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

3

There is a written crisis management plan within the school and there is a clear understanding of what the process of response would be. In addition the school has prepared a box of necessary information that would be needed if an evacuation was necessary, just to be picked up and taken out. This contains all pupil details and contact numbers. The senior management team are clear about how decisions would be made and who would be involved in this.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)

The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****3**

Boarding houses are offered separately to boys and girls and within this they are also separated by age within the houses.

As the school has embarked on a programme of refurbishment, currently the provision for older boys is significantly better than that offered to the girls, having ensuite facilities to bedrooms. However, there will be further improvements as the programme is rolled out to other parts of the boarding facilities.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****3**

Boarders have sufficient and suitable timed free time each day. They have a good range of activities to choose from each weekday, whilst at weekends their timetable is less structured allowing them to go off site or rest. The weekend programme provides a mixture of some compulsory and some free choice activities. The opportunities of trips off site are commendable.

Inspectors were impressed with the range of clubs and societies offered for pupils to take part in throughout the week.

One area identified by pupils as an issue for them was access to the internet on evenings and weekends. The school has acknowledged these concerns, particularly around overseas students having email contact with friends and relatives, and is making efforts to improve this. The facility has been available for pupils to access the internet with a password at weekends, however to date few have availed themselves of this opportunity.

There is a programme in place to gradually enlarge the IT system and improve access to it.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)

Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****3**

There is a boarding council in operation within the school. Each year group is represented and the representatives are encouraged to bring forward issues raised by all boarders. At present these meetings are not minuted, just basic notes are kept. The inspectors thought that it might be helpful to keep a more detailed record so that any issues raised and actions taken in response could be tracked more clearly.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)

Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school does not have prefects as such but the Sixth Form pupils do take on duties in supervising and in supporting younger pupils. Any pupils in this role do so under the supervision of staff.

The school has senior officers, head boy and girl and deputy head boy and girl and heads of House. They contribute to boarding staff meetings and are seen as a source of support for younger pupils.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

There are various support systems within the school, from support from other pupils, boarding staff, teachers, the school nurse and the independent counsellor, who is a teacher at present but is due to retire and will fulfil this role after retirement. Some boarders indicated that they were aware they could contact this person and that they would feel able to do so. The school has stated that Childline numbers should be available in all telephone boxes within the school, but unfortunately only one was found by inspectors on this visit. These should therefore be put back on display for any pupil who may need to make contact. The number is however provided in the School Organiser.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.
- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision.
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has a medical centre, staffed by a nurse and a visiting GP once a week. Immediate day-to day care is offered on a twenty-four hour basis by boarding staff and access to medical services when the Sister is off duty is through a deputising service at the local practice or NHS Direct. Pupils can access dental and optical services off-site and would ordinarily be accompanied on these appointments.

Medication prescribed is kept usually by boarding house staff and administered according to the GP's instructions. If senior pupils wish to keep this themselves then a risk assessment is carried out to ensure they are competent to do this.

Parental consent is sought from parents for any treatments are embarked upon and parents are informed of any illnesses.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3)

Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

1

The school policy is that Boarders who are ill are usually kept in House. If they need to be isolated then the person they share with would be removed to another room. Pupils reported that when they are ill, they are not allowed to leave their rooms and they find this difficult and boring. When they are recovered enough the school has reported that they would be allowed to use facilities within house. There may be contradiction at times between the pupils' wishes and GP advice. They can summon assistance if they need it. The lack of a sanatorium did raise the question of whether pupils would be able to summon assistance rapidly if necessary, particularly if there is more than one person ill at the same time.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

There are clear arrangements in place to address any significant ongoing health and personal problems for boarders. The school nurse would develop a welfare plan if there was a problem such as enuresis. Outside expert advice would be sought if necessary.

The school addresses issues such as homesickness as a matter of course, ensuring that older children take care of younger ones where possible to help them settle into the school. Any long term problem would be dealt with through discussions with parents and a planned approach within the boarding team.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6)

Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****2**

Ackworth school has a universal statement concerning its approach to equality of opportunity within the school. The school's Quaker principles encapsulate an ethos of respect for all people of whatever creed, colour, culture and background. The school does not have a document which outlines how this overarching philosophy will be implemented in practice in relation to countering any discrimination against any particular groups within the school, or what steps the school takes or intends to take in order to meet its goals in this respect. However, inspectors did note that the school allows space for pupils from all religions to adhere to their own practices and read their own religious scripts at the meetings for worship.

The inspectors did not find evidence of any clear discriminatory practices against overseas pupils and there was evidence that pupils from overseas are supported when they need help to develop certain skills, for example in language.

Dietary needs relating to culture or beliefs are also accommodated within the school meals. There was some evidence, both reported by pupils and confirmed by staff, that there are some differences in approach taken between boys and girls. This was the cause of some complaint, for example, that girls have to hand their mobile phones in at night and boys do not, and that Sixth Form girls have access to laundry equipment where the boys reported they do not. The school reports that they have offered boys this opportunity a couple of years ago but they refused it. It may be helpful to reiterate the offer to the new cohort of pupils.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6)

Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****3**

Pupils have access to telephones within the school and many boarders now have mobile phones to ensure they can keep in contact with families. Some pupils from the far east complained that they have difficulties using phone contact as the time zone difference makes it difficult to find an appropriate time to call. The issue of access to email at evenings and weekends was raised in this context. One parent who contacted inspectors also raised this as an issue.

As noted earlier in this report, the school has made arrangement for access at weekend via a password and hopefully pupils will use this service to enable better contact with home.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3) Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Each boarder has access to a lockable cabinet within their bed where treasured items can be stored safely. However for some boarders the restricted space within the bedrooms makes access to this impossible. It would be helpful for extra lockable boxes to be provided to these few boarders.</p> <p>Pocket money is kept by house staff and pocket money is given out every evening at 4pm on request.</p>		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3) There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>New boarders are supported through peers largely and those who spoke with inspectors reported that this has worked well for them. There is extra support via an EFL course for those who arrive needing to improve their English language skills in order to help them settle in to the school and benefit from the opportunities on offer.</p> <p>The school allocates mentors for new pupils but pupils themselves said that many other pupils provide support in addition to this.</p> <p>Inspectors felt that some written material in the form of a welcome pack for new boarders might be of benefit for some pupils.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4) Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	0
<p>The school does not appoint guardians for pupils.</p>		

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4) The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The Deputy Head and Bursar monitor these and any issues arising would be taken to a senior management meeting if they required specific actions or policy decisions. The Deputy Head and Bursar make day- to- day decisions about these matters.</p>		

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****2**

Pupils who responded to the boarders' survey reported that the quality, quantity and healthiness of food was a major issue for them. Twenty-five of the thirty-eight respondents to the questionnaire said the food was usually poor or very poor indeed. One person specifically raised the concern that food was not labelled to show if it contains eggs, nuts or meat. Inspectors found that vegetarian food was provided each day and the catering manager said that any food made on the premises would be labelled if it contained nuts, however pre-packed food might not be so labelled. The inspectors noted that many children who spoke with them commented that the food was not good, with only a few saying it was OK. One parent who contacted the inspectors raised the concern that she was aware that her child did not eat the food often because they did not like it and that she was concerned that the intake of food could not be adequately monitored. This concern was mirrored by the inspectors' experience, observing that many children had made very limited choices at the meals where inspectors were present.

The inspectors judged that meals are adequate in quantity, quality and choice whilst acknowledging that they continue to be a source of complaint from the pupils. There is an opportunity via the Boarders Council for pupils to express their dissatisfaction and the Catering department has offered changes to menu options as requested from time to time. Inspectors felt that it might be helpful for the school to carry out a holistic review of catering arrangements to address issues of waste and pupils buying takeaways and food ingredients for themselves and cooking it to their satisfaction. Further consultations between the catering manager and the boarders might be helpful.

The Environmental Health Report 18.6.03 expressed approval of the catering facilities and made recommendations which have been implemented.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5)

Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?****3**

Drinking fountains are due to be installed in the near future. Boarders have access to water at meal times and break times in the house kitchen and the dining rooms. Each house has good fridge and cupboard facilities for storage of food and drink items. There are certain sensible constraints on use of equipment according to age and ability. The pupils are provided with additional drinks and snack ingredients in their house kitchens. They do however make considerable use of the tuck shop, local shops and take-away deliveries. One specific request made by pupils was for fresh fruit to be available in the boarding houses.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)
Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
Boarders are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures. There are adequate fire notices, diagrams, extinguishers and blankets. The school has a termly programme of evacuations, one night time one and one during the school day. There are also occasional unintentional fire alarms, which are responded to efficiently. The West Yorkshire Fire Authority recommendations 18.3.03 have been addressed except for the suggestions of doors dividing the corridors to isolate the staircases. This is under consideration taking into account the school's listed building status and negotiations about how best to achieve the necessary level of fire safety are ongoing.		

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)
Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	0
The school does not make unusual or onerous demands on pupils.		

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2)
The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	0
The school does not accommodate other children except for lettings where the organisations making the letting are responsible for any supervision.		

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)
Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
The risk assessment procedures in place are good for both on site and off site activities. High risk activities are assessed as per the policy and parental consent is requested following school guidelines.		

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5)
Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.

Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
Boarders have access to newspapers, T.V. and internet in a number of places in the school and boarding house. They have access to local facilities and services with the permission of house staff according to their age. Access further afield is supervised according to the assessed risks involved.		

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

4

Inspectors found that there were sufficient numbers of staff to adequately supervise pupils during all times of the day and night.

The school reported that the introduction of a Master on Duty patrolling the grounds and local area has brought extra benefits in ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils. This offers a degree of extra safety and profile for the school within the local area and is commended.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has very clear guidelines for both staff and pupils to follow in terms of pupils being allowed off site. The pupils have contact numbers for the school and clear instructions about contacting staff if there are any difficulties.

Pupils leaving the site to visit the local shops or to go further afield at weekends are checked in and out by staff on duty.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5) Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
Each night staff are on duty within the boarding houses. There is a 'check-in' system, which enables staff to know which pupils are in the house each night.		

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7) All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Boarding staff have job descriptions, which give a clear indication of what is expected of them in their role. All new staff go through a basic two week induction, which includes information about child protection from the designated child protection co-ordinator. In addition there is ongoing support for new staff until they have gained a good grounding in the ethos and policies within the school. There is a programme of regular INSET training for all staff.</p> <p>The inspectors acknowledge that there is a great deal of experience within the staff team but some key house staff may benefit from specific training opportunities in boarding welfare as part of their development.</p> <p>At present there is no specific appraisal system in place for boarding staff. Again regular supervision/appraisal is recommended.</p>		

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4) All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
There is a staff handbook, which covers most of the key policy areas for staff to be aware of in respect of boarders.		

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4) There are sound staff/boarder relationships.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>In general pupils reported that staff /boarder relationships are good. Pupils reported that they are generally well supported by boarding staff and would turn to them for support in times of difficulty.</p> <p>One area was identified as a problem by a significant number of pupils responding to the survey and in the group discussions held as part of the inspection. They felt that relationships with certain key staff were affecting the atmosphere within the boarding houses. However these issues had not been raised in any other forum, despite the fact that there appeared to be a high level of agreement amongst pupils that this was a problem. The inspectors thought that this was an area where a more accessible and robust complaints/ comments system might prevent some difficulties from arising. The inspectors discussed the matters with key staff during the inspection and it was agreed to actively seek out a full and open discussion of the problems with representatives of the boarding houses.</p>		

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2) Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Again this was an area raised in the survey. Boys in particular said they were disturbed at night frequently by staff checking on them and that they felt that the level of supervision was intrusive. In discussion with staff and pupils it was discovered that this relates largely to pupils being up into the early hours of the morning and staff being concerned for their welfare.</p>		

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10) Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Teaching staff, house staff and spouses of staff have Criminal Records Bureau disclosure certificates completed at enhanced level. Currently, domestic and other ancillary staff only have disclosures at standard level. It is recommended that all staff who have contact with pupils, have enhanced level disclosures. Staff do not begin working at the school without satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau checks.</p> <p>There is a recruitment procedure in place for all staff. However on examining these records, the inspectors found that some had only one reference and those that had references had not always been verified as to authenticity. Information on files relating to identity checks was not found, although it is acknowledged that these must have been seen in order to complete checks.</p>		

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

Key findings and evidence**Standard met?**

3

Staff do not begin working at the school without satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau checks. As previously mentioned inspectors have recommended that enhanced level checks be carried out for all staff having contact with pupils. No volunteers are used within the school.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

Key findings and evidence

Standard met?

2

The school has made significant improvements in the boarding accommodation in recent years. The school has a plan to continue these improvements over the next few years to upgrade all the boarding areas of the school.

In responding to questionnaires, a significant number of boarders complained about the rooms being cold especially at night and said that this prevented them from being able to sleep sometimes. Some boarders also mentioned ill-fitting windows contributing to this problem. Noisy accommodation was particularly mentioned by girls as a problem, with noisy corridors and people talking at night causing difficulties with sleeping.

Inspectors noted during the tour of accommodation that many boarders had sleeping bags or extra bedding that they had brought to keep warm. Poor insulation around windows means that they are very draughty. Several pupils had reportedly purchased their own heaters for their bedrooms. There are obvious dangers associated with this. There is a fair amount of variability of heating within the building, this is due to an old system and the fact that while some rooms have radiators, others only have wide pipes to heat the room. This may account for the fact that some pupils also complained of the rooms being too stuffy. The school needs to address this problem as part of its forward planning for the future development of the premises.

The boarding houses have a planned, rolling programme for maintenance and apart from a few instances of cracked window panes, the accommodation was found to be in a good state of repair.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8) Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
Most of the accommodation for boarders is separate from the main part of the school and is protected by security locks.		

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14) Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Two boarders share bedrooms normally although there are a small number of single rooms, occupied by older boarders. All bedrooms have been fitted with new 'cabin' style beds, incorporating storage beneath the bed. The furniture is of good quality.</p> <p>Boys and girls houses are separate and older boys and girls are likewise separated. Staff who occupy parts of the houses have their own accommodation including bathing and toilet facilities.</p>		

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2) Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
There are plenty of opportunities for study in common and private study areas throughout the school.		

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10) Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	2
In general the toilet facilities are adequate and there is appropriate privacy. However one toilet area used by girls is open to a common room used by day pupils. This means that girls have to pass through this public area to use toilet facilities. This is unpopular with the girls, and is less than satisfactory particularly if they are ill and need to use the toilet during the day when confined to their rooms. Also the washroom area in Richardson House used by younger boys has no doors or screening from the corridor.		

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3) Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
There are appropriate changing facilities for Sports changing within the school. Also boarders can access boarding houses during breaks and lunch time if they need to change clothing for any other reason.		

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6) Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There are ample facilities within the school for recreation. There are many common rooms, sports areas and grounds. The library is available for use after school also.</p> <p>Outdoor areas are patrolled by the Master on Duty and pupils are clear which areas are out of bounds after dark and before dark.</p>		

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9) Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>A risk assessment has been carried out to identify any particular areas of concern and appropriate steps taken to minimise risks.</p>		

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4) Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	1
<p>The school does not have a Sanatorium as such. There is a health centre but ill boarders can not be accommodated there. At present if pupils are ill they usually stay in their own rooms. In the girls' boarding house there is one room available for use by sick boarders next to the housemistresses accommodation. This would be used if a girl needed to be isolated. In the boys' house there is no such facility. This is unsatisfactory and some appropriate arrangements need to be made for the isolation of boys who are ill and may be infectious.</p>		

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There is a laundry on site, which deals with the boarders' clothes and bedding on a rota basis. The senior girls have use of washing machines and dryers. A similar facility is available for the senior boys, the use of which is being considered. Matrons supervise the collection and distribution of clothes; any unmarked items, once identified, are named by the Matron or pupil.</p> <p>This was another area identified as problematic by some boarders in their responses to the survey. Several complained that they had had clothing ruined or shrunk in the school wash. Sixth Form students are allowed to use washing machines in the house. Some younger boarders have said they would like to have access to this facility for certain items of clothing.</p>		

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2) Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
Minor personal items can be purchased from the house staff whilst others are obtained from the local shops.		

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11) Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	0
This standard is not applicable.		

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8) Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.		
Key findings and evidence	Standard met?	3
The school uses reputable and known facilities for field trips and holidays. These are checked by staff wherever possible in advance.		

PART C**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY****(where applicable)**

N/a

Lay Assessor

NA

Signature

NA

Date

NA

Lead Inspector

Cathy Howarth

Signature**Second Inspector**

Victoria Garside

Signature**Locality Manager**

Niall Roche

Signature**Date**

24 May 2004

PART D**HEAD'S RESPONSE****D.1 Head's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.**

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 15th March 2004 of Ackworth Boarding School and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Action taken by the NCSC in response to Head's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the Head

NO

Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2

Status of the Head's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion

Head has declined to provide an action plan

Other:

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

Head's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of Ackworth Boarding School confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I, _____ of Ackworth Boarding School am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

--

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.