



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Ripon Grammar School

**Clotherholme Road
Ripon
North Yorkshire
HG4 2DG**

Lead Inspector
David Martin

Key Announced Inspection
18th January 2007 09:30 am

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Boarding Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of school	Ripon Grammar School
Address	Clotherholme Road Ripon North Yorkshire HG4 2DG
Telephone number	01765 602647
Fax number	
Email address	murraym@ripongrammar.co.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	North Yorkshire County Council
Name of Head	Mr M Pearman
Name of Head of Care	Miss M Murray
Age range of boarding pupils	11 - 18
Date of last welfare inspection	03/02/04 & 04/02/04

Brief Description of the School:

Ripon Grammar School is a co-educational, selective grammar school with approximately 820 pupils. The school was founded in 1555 and is owned and operated by North Yorkshire County Council Local Education Authority. It has a Board of Governors. The current Headmaster and Deputy Head were appointed in September 2004.

There are two boarding houses, School House and Johnson House, separately accommodating girls and boys. There are currently 26 boy boarders and 34 girl boarders. A total of 17 are full boarders and 43 board on a weekly basis.

The fees are as follows:

First form -termly £2715, weekly £2240.

Second - Fifth year- termly £2215, weekly £1740.

Sixth form - termly £1955, weekly £1530.

SUMMARY

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

The inspector telephoned the Head teacher at Ripon Grammar School to agree the date for inspection. A meeting was held before the inspection with the Head and Deputy Head to plan times for the inspectors to meet with young people and talk with staff in the school.

The inspectors went to Ripon Grammar School on the morning of Tuesday 16th January 2007 and finished the inspection in the afternoon of 18th January 2007. During this time the inspectors:

- Met many of the boarders.
- Spoke with the Head and Deputy Head.
- Looked at some files and other records.
- Watched how young people and staff got on together.
- Met with one of the Governors.
- Met with other staff with responsibility for boarding.

As well as talking to people, the inspectors sent out questionnaires to ask students and their parents for their views on the school.

The inspector would like to thank everyone who took part in this inspection.

What the school does well:

- The school makes sure that the health care needs of boarders are met.
- The school makes sure that the boarders are safe and secure.
- Bullying is kept to a minimum and is dealt with promptly when it occurs.
- The boarder's views on school life are listened to and changes are made as a result.
- There are excellent policy and procedure files.
- Boarding life is well managed.

Boarders said:

- 'We have a forum meeting every Thursday.'
- 'Here I have friends my own age and can also go into town.'
- 'The house has improved since the Christmas holidays.'

What has improved since the last inspection?

- There have been further improvements to the décor.
- Additional furniture has been purchased including beds and settees.
- An excellent crisis management file has been introduced.
- A new child protection policy has been adopted and staff received training in this area.
- A 'buddying' system has been introduced for the girls which is appreciated by them and their parents.
- Communication between school and parents has been improved.

What they could do better:

The school works hard to bring about improvements and it has already identified things it would like to do better.

- The quality of food provided has been a problem which the school is addressing.
- The school needs to continue to develop with boarders a full and varied boarding experience.

Boarders said:

- I have felt that views are not always responded to.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Enjoying and Achieving

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Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

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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)

The Commission considers Standards 6 and 15 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

6, 15 & 24.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Boarder's health care needs are met.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Children's health care needs are promoted by the school. There are health care records for each child and welfare plans are held on file. These are subject to an annual audit by one of the governors. The school's medical officer confirmed that he has no cause to question the medical care given to the boarders by the house parents. All children are registered with the school doctor. The school does not have a nurse but the matron holds daily surgeries and has completed first aid training. If any child is ill they are moved from their dormitory to the sick room. For the girls this means coming up to the main school building. Parents are always informed when their child is ill and in the case of weekly boarders, parents often request that they are returned

home. There are good policies and procedures in place relating to the health care needs of children.

The school administers a small amount of medication and, in general, there are systems in place to ensure this is carried out safely. One of the governors is a pharmacist and will be able to inspect the current arrangements. The school holds a stock of drugs and needs to make sure it has a system in place to account for all medication. The school is currently reviewing its drugs policy.

All health care matters such as smoking, the misuse of alcohol and other substances, and sexual health are addressed in PHSCE and there is evidence that outside speakers are brought in for particular topics.

A number of students and their parents commented on the quality of the food and said that there are times when it is poor, with a limited range of choice at weekends. The school is aware that it has some problems relating to the meals provided in School House and is pursuing this through continuous dialogue with its caterers.

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 appropriately responded to.(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 and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.(NMS 39)
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion. (NMS 41)
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.(NMS 47)

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

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

2, 3, 4, 5, 26, 37, 38, 39 & 41.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The boarders are kept safe.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

There is little evidence of any ongoing serious bullying in the school. Any incidents are followed up promptly. In the main, the boarders said in their questionnaires and in conversation that they are not being bullied. One incident was highlighted in the course of the inspection and the school responded appropriately. The school's policies in respect of its anti-bullying approach are good. The children have access to an independent listener and both counselling and peer-listening is available.

There have been no recent child protection issues at the school. All staff have received an appropriate level of training in this area and this has recently been opened up to the governors. There are child protection procedures in place. During the inspection, a couple of pupils raised some concerns about the conduct of one member of staff. This was passed to the school and it was resolved appropriately.

There is a sanctions book which indicates that any disciplinary matters are dealt with promptly and proportionately. The boarders have been consulted about the use of sanctions and rewards. The girls expressed the view that sanctions are not applied consistently but there was little evidence to support this view. A staff training day was held focussing on positive behaviour in boarding.

There is a complaints book which provides evidence that complaints are dealt with quickly and that the school responds appropriately.

Fire safety precautions are in place and the various systems are tested in accordance with guidance issued by the Fire and Rescue Service. The fire risk assessment is up-to-date.

Recruitment checks are made on all staff including CRB, references, proof of identity and employment history.

The school grounds have been made as secure as possible. They are well lit after dark and additional lighting has been installed. The buildings have been fitted with security locks. There have been some incidents where local youths have accessed the grounds but these have been dealt with by the school. New fencing and a gate have been erected on the school perimeter.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- 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)

The Commission considers Standards 14 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

11, 14 & 18.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Children are supported to achieve educationally and socially to maximise their potential. There is a limited range of activities at weekends.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The young people told the inspectors that there is a wide range of activities available through the week but much less to do for the full boarders at weekends. They said there is little structure and they are left to their own devices. The school's perception of this is different, suggesting that there are organised activities and arrangements in place to make sure the younger children are not isolated. This difference in view is difficult to reconcile.

Some staff are picked out as being particularly approachable. The young people said that the relationship between staff and students is generally good but some staff are less respectful. There are some comments in the students' questionnaires that other staff are more difficult to get on with and are less friendly. This was reported to the school and by way of explanation it was suggested that these remarks have been made as the result of disagreements.

The school needs to review the relationship between boarding staff and boarders in light of the students' comments.

The students come from a range of ethnic background and there is no evidence to suggest that any child is treated unfairly or discriminated against because of their ethnic origin. Diversity and equality are valued within the school.

Many students raised concerns about the restrictions that are placed on the use of the Internet. They are unable to access many sites which would help them with their studies. The controls have been imposed by North Yorkshire County Council and the school is unable to change the situation. Some students complained that they would not use the school's email system because their emails can be checked on. Whilst this may be true, the school said it does not have the time or the inclination to read students emails where there are no obvious causes for concern. The school agreed that it needs to talk to the students about issues of confidentiality in relation to their email accounts.

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 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)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 19 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

12 & 19.

Quality in this outcome area is **adequate**.

The school enables boarders to contribute their views but some boarders don't feel listened to.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

Many boarders complained in their questionnaires that they are not listened to. There is evidence to the contrary. There are regular meetings held in the school where young people are encouraged to express their views. There are weekly meetings in School House and there is a student forum. A school council will be introduced in September 2007. The school said it has responded to students' views and provided several examples where it has listened and made changes to the running of the school: a healthy eating survey resulted in the introduction of more salad at mealtimes; in Johnson House the sanctions and rewards were revised; and, students have suggested various new activities. The school needs to address the difference in perception as to how well it listens to boarders.

There is a good 'buddying' system in Johnson House which is appreciated by the girls and their parents. The school has an independent listener and her number is freely available. She is a regular visitor to the school and has explained her role in school assemblies.

All boarders are encouraged to maintain contact with home. The majority of boarders return home at weekends. Boarders have access to a private telephone and many have mobile telephones. House staff have parents' contact details and make regular contact via email.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

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)
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted. (NMS 51)

The Commission considers Standard 51 the key standard to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

40 & 51.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The boarding accommodation is adequate but the school has a comprehensive development plan.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

An application was made in May 2006 to the DfES for a grant to build a new boarding house. Unfortunately, the application was unsuccessful but the school plans to submit a further application in the future. School House is a Grade II listed building and although it has been upgraded the school acknowledges that a new boarding facility would be preferable. A planning application has also been made for a new sports hall.

There is a refurbishment programme in place for both Johnson House and School House. Recently the school has installed additional showers in both houses and redecoration has taken place in consultation with the boarders.

New furniture has been purchased including settees and beds. All boarders are provided with a lockable space and each house has recreational facilities.

The boarders and some parents complained that there are insufficient numbers of showers and that the hot water runs out. The school is committed to improving these facilities further.

At the time of the inspection the boarding houses were clean and tidy but a number of students and some parents suggested that this is not always the case. This matter was reported on in feedback and the school indicated that this probably referred to a 2-day period when they were experiencing difficulties. Ordinarily, there are sufficient numbers of cleaning staff.

Management

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 effectively managed. (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 adequately supervised 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 with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training. (NMS 34)
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice. (NMS 35)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 23, 31 and 34 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1, 23, 31 & 34.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The school is well-managed and boarding life is well organised.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The school has a succinct statement of purpose. It is freely available to boarders and their parents. It is available in the prospectus and in the staff

handbook. Students understand the principles of the school and are aware of the rules.

There are risk assessments in place for the premises and for all activities undertaken both within the school and on trips out. They are contained in an accessible file. The school has also created an excellent crisis management folder detailing action to be taken in the case of an emergency. Staff confirmed that they are aware of its content.

In general, boarders are adequately supervised. However, a small number of parents felt this was not the case and gave examples from their own experiences. There are a number of resident staff including the senior housemaster, the senior housemistress, the matron, the deputy housemaster and a further member of the teaching staff. Additional night cover is provided by housemistresses. All the above staff have a clearly defined role in the management of boarding life. Staff also understand their specific roles and responsibilities in and around the school. There are clear lines of communication and the ongoing safety and welfare of boarders is paramount.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
6	3
7	X
15	3
16	X
17	X
24	2
25	X
48	X
49	X

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
3	3
4	3
5	3
13	X
22	X
26	3
28	X
29	X
37	3
38	3
39	3
41	3
47	X

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	3
14	2
18	3
27	X
43	X
46	X

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	2
19	3
21	X
30	X
36	X

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
20	X
40	3
42	X
44	X
45	X
50	3
51	X

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	X
9	X
10	X
23	3
31	3
32	X
33	X
34	3
35	X
52	X

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? No

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)

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