



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

Boarding School

Ashville College

Green Lane

Harrogate

North Yorkshire

HG2 9JR

24th February 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

Ashville College

Address

Green Lane, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 9JR

Tel No:

01423 566358

Fax No:

Email Address

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

Chair of Governors, Mr. R. W. Search

Name of Head

Mr. A. Fleck

NCSC Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Independent School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

09/11/00

Date of Inspection Visit		24th February 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Monica Hargreaves	137644
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		Myra Rodgers	
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.		N/A	
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		MR. A. FLECK	

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

Brief Description of the school and Boarding Provision

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings

What the school does well in Boarding Welfare

What the school should do better in Boarding Welfare

Conclusions and overview of findings on Boarding Welfare

Notifications to Local Education Authority or Secretary of State

Implementation of Recommended Actions from last inspection

Recommended Actions from this inspection

Advisory Recommendations from this inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods Used & Findings

Inspection Methods Used

- 1. Welfare Policies and Procedures**
- 2. Organisation and Management**
- 3. Welfare Support to Boarders**
- 4. Staffing**
- 5. Premises**

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Head's Response

D.1. Comments

D.2. Action Plan Status

D.3. Agreement

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 Ashville College.

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.

Ashville is a co-educational independent day and boarding school for children aged from 4 to 18 years. On the day of the inspection there were 146 pupils boarding in the junior school and senior school combined, of whom 3 were weekly boarders. The school is set in large grounds within the boundaries of Harrogate, in North Yorkshire. Boarding accommodation is provided in 4 houses. One of these houses accommodates junior and senior girls. The two senior boys houses accommodate boys aged 13-18 and the junior boys' house accommodates boys aged 9-13.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school has developed sound boarding principles that are well defined in the boarding handbook. The induction of new boarders into the system is very well managed and clear information is made available to parents and new boarders. Staff work hard to ensure that all boarders are made part of the community and understand the additional needs of those students for whom English is not a first language. The school has systems to support boarders in this respect. There is a strong anti-bullying culture within the school and child protection procedures are clear. Staff are knowledgeable and clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to boarding. The school provides good accommodation and excellent health facilities and a good range of sporting and other activities for its boarders.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school should develop a policy on the use of restraint. The implementation of boarding house committees should be considered to enable those boarders with less confidence to express their views. Written records of welfare plans for any boarders who have particular needs, should be developed. The Head of Boarding and the Headmaster should assess the effectiveness of the systems that operate in the younger boys' boarding house.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This the first inspection for this school since the inception of National Minimum Standards and it is anticipated that the number of recommendations would reduce at the next inspection.

In general boarding is well managed in the school. Staff are knowledgeable and experienced. There are sound systems in place to ensure that staff, parents and boarders are well informed and that young people are appropriately supported and supervised. The school works hard to be inclusive and has developed a good induction system for pupils new to boarding. Inspectors observed that young people are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility and independence and students confirmed that they benefited from the experience of boarding.

Inspectors identified some areas for further development, with regard to individual policies and procedures which are detailed in this report. Recommendations were also made that the routines and structures within the junior boys' boarding house should be re-assessed.

Staff and boarders were all very helpful during the inspection and inspectors would like to record their thanks to everyone and in particular the Head of Boarding and the Headmaster for the efforts made in preparation for and during the process of the inspection.

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	
	BS17	Individual welfare plans should be developed for boarders with particular needs.	To be completed by 01/10/04
2	BS29	Permission slips sent to parents should include a list of all activities that might be undertaken and give parents space to refuse specific activities on the list.	To be completed by 01/10/05
3	BS34	A system of staff appraisals, specifically relating to boarding duties should be implemented.	To be completed by 01/01/05
4	BS36	The Head of School and the Head of Boarding should review the structures and practice of boarding the junior school boarding house to ensure that this accords with those principles identified in the boarding handbook.	To be completed by 01/08/04
5	BS41	The school should ensure that separate changing facilities are made available within the sports centre for the use of boarders during those times that the centre is used by the public.	To be completed by 01/08/04

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	BS2	The existing policy on countering bullying should include details of the support the school will offer if any instance of bullying is reported.
2	BS4	The school should develop a policy on the use of restraint that is made known to staff, parents and boarders.
3	BS12	The school should consider the development of boarding house committees to enable all boarders to contribute their views effectively.
4	BS19	Measures should be taken to ensure that all boarders are able to have access to the public telephones in the boarding houses at appropriate times.
5	BS25	The girls' boarding house should be provided with a hob, similar to that in the older boys' houses, to allow the girls to cook supper in the evenings.

*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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Services • Fire Service • Environmental Health • DfES • School Doctor • Independent Person or Counsellor • Chair of Governors 	YES
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	NO
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)	NO

Date of Inspection	24/02/04
Time of Inspection	9.00
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	64
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**

8

TO

19

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

Boys	92
Girls	55
Total	147
Number of separate Boarding Houses	4

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?"

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"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?

4

The Head of Boarding has produced an excellent document detailing the school's boarding principles and practice. It is clearly written and gives full details of the admission criteria, the facilities available within the school and welfare support services for boarders. It is made available to all parents, boarders and staff.

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

Staff were clearly aware of the need to identify any situations of bullying and the school has a clear policy on countering bullying. This is made known to all boarders, staff and parents. The document includes definitions of bullying. The school were advised that the document should also contain comments on the support offered to individual pupils, both those who might be bullied and those who are bullying

See advisory recommendation No. 1

Although at the time of the inspection the majority of boarders stated that they did not believe bullying to be an issue within the school community, the Headmaster was made aware that the inspectors had been told by older pupils that bullying had been an issue in the boarding house accommodating the younger pupils and some believed this still to be the case.

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?	3
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The school has a designated person responsible for the co-ordination of responses to child protection issues. There is a clearly written child protection policy and the school also has a copy of the relevant ACPC procedures. All staff are made aware of the procedure and training in child protection takes place regularly. Staff demonstrated an understanding of child protection issues and the appropriate course of action to pursue.

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
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The school has and follows an appropriate policy on behaviour and discipline and the use of punishments. This is made known to boarders, staff and parents. The boarders stated that they felt the school's use of punishments was generally fair. The document does not at present include a statement on the school's policy on the use of restraint.

See advisory recommendation No. 2.

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
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There is a good complaints policy provided for boarders that is clear and easy to follow. Boarders confirmed in discussion and in the questionnaires, that they understood how to make complaints and that they believed these would be properly considered. The Head of the school has recently re-written the complaints policy given to parents.

Number of complaints, if any, received by NCSC about the school during last 12 months:	0
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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

Discussions with various groups of staff revealed an awareness of the school's policy on and response to issues of alcohol, smoking and illegal substance abuse by boarders. Policy statements seen during the inspection were clear and boarders understood them.

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 medical centre is managed by three trained and qualified nurses, who are able to provide 24 hour cover between them. The health and medication administration records examined were seen to be well kept and contained all the required information. The nursing staff administer medication and all information is securely kept.

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?

4

Management and leadership in relation to the practice of boarding within the school is good. The Headmaster, head of boarding and senior staff are all experienced in the practice of boarding. Ongoing training is made available to boarding house staff. The Chairman of Governors has experience of boarding as a pupil and the school's governing body has systems in place to monitor the welfare provision throughout the boarding environment.

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 are crisis management plans in place and the Head of Pastoral care has delegated responsibility for these issues. Plans were seen during the inspection.

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 separated by gender and age. There is no major discrepancy of quality of boarding provision for different genders. The issue of the provision of a cooker in the girls' boarding house is dealt with later in this report.

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?	4
There are two sports halls on site offering a full range of sporting activity and boarders are also able to take part in a range of other activities such as drama and music. The school is situated within Harrogate and boarders are able to access facilities in the town. There is also sufficient free time each day to allow boarders to pursue activities. This was confirmed in questionnaires and in pupil discussion groups.		

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
Boarders in general stated that they are able to talk individually to staff within the boarding house. Each house holds a meeting every evening and boarders are able to put forward their views. These are necessarily large meetings and inspectors were told by boarders that due to the number of pupils present, they sometimes find it difficult to contribute on these occasions. Inspectors felt that the process of consultation could be improved by the provision of house committees whose members could seek the views of their peers and feed them back to staff.		
See advisory recommendation No. 3		

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 prefect system works well. Boarders confirmed that in general prefects were fair. There were no complaints that prefects had abused their power. The duties of prefects are made clear to them by those in charge of the boarding houses and prefects are provided with an induction course prior to taking up their position. Staff maintain a visible presence in the house to support prefects and monitor the boarders.		

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
Boarders told inspectors that they are able to approach all the staff in the boarding houses. They were aware of the existence of the independent listener, whose number was made available to them. The school chaplain visits boarding houses in turn and runs a 'manse group' for the older boarders. Inspectors were able to observe interactions between boarding staff and boarders and relationships were found to be positive.		

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?

4

The school's facilities for medical treatment and first aid are commendable. All boarders are registered with a local GP and doctors visit the school 3 times per week. Boarders are able to see either a male or female doctor. The medical centre has a staff team of 3 fully qualified nurses who maintain medication records. Full health records are requested from parents prior to admission to the school and staff also seek parental permission for medication and treatment. These records were all seen during the inspection. Medical centre staff arrange dentist and optician appointments and also develop plans with individuals about particular health needs or sensitive issues such as bed wetting. Health issues are treated confidentially on a 'need to know' basis. Clear records are kept of all significant illnesses, accidents or injuries.

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?	4
Boarders who are ill are sent to the medical centre for assessment by the nurse on duty. Thereafter, they are kept in the medical centre if they are too ill for school. If an illness lasts more than a few days, boarders are sent home, if distance allows. Nursing staff are on call throughout the day and night and boarders are able to summon staff assistance in the boarding houses in case of sudden illness.		

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?	2
There was evidence that issues such as bed wetting are sensitively dealt with and boarders with particular medical needs have those difficulties properly addressed. Boarding staff demonstrated knowledge of the needs of the young people in their care and were aware of those who might be homesick or undergoing personal stress. Inspectors did not find individual written welfare plans and recommended that these be drawn up for any student with special welfare needs or those who do not see their parents at least three times a year.		
See recommended action No. 1		

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?	3
This standard is met. The school is committed to equality of opportunity for all students and makes efforts to ensure that boarders from minority groups are supported. Boarding staff interviewed were aware of the need to ensure that boarders for whom English is not their first language, receive additional support as needed. Boarders are offered extra language classes and are encouraged to communicate in English to help develop their skills. Older students from similar ethnic backgrounds are also encouraged to support newcomers to the boarding environment. Staff are aware of the tensions that can exist between groups of young people from different ethnic backgrounds and work hard to integrate boarders.		

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6) Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Each boarding house is provided with a telephone that boarders can use to contact their families. Students also have mobile phones and are able to send and receive 'e' mails through the school. They are encouraged to send letters. Telephones provided have the names and numbers of helplines placed near them. A number of the overseas students stated that they have experienced some difficulty in contacting their parents by telephone from the boarding house, due to time differences and the fact that other boarders may stay on the telephone for a lengthy period of time. This can limit the number of boarders who can use the phone before prep time.</p> <p>See advisory recommendation No. 4</p>		

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>This standard is met. There is a lockable space provided for all boarders to keep their personal possessions. Records are kept of any pocket money received from and given out to boarders.</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?	4
<p>The induction of new boarders is very well managed. All families receive information about the school prior to admission. Young people are invited to the school two days before the start of term and boarding staff and older students return early to help with the process of welcoming newcomers to the school. The induction process is detailed in the Boarding Handbook. This system allows the staff the time to ensure that they have received all the necessary information about new students and that new boarders are able to begin to settle in before the rest of the school returns.</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?	3
<p>Guardians are not appointed by the school. Parents are informed that any guardians used are to be arranged by families.</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
The Headmaster regularly monitors the school's records of punishments and complaints and the Bursar has responsibility for the monitoring of risk assessments. Records are regularly scrutinised by representatives from the Board of Governors.		

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?	3
Inspectors were able to take several meals with the boarders. The school operates a self-service style dining hall. Choice of food was always made available, including vegetarian options. Food was plentiful, varied and nutritious. There is a large catering department that is well managed. Staff have received appropriate training in food handling and hygiene. Recent reports from Environmental Health Service were seen and revealed no outstanding recommendations. In their responses in questionnaires and in some discussion groups, a minority of boarders stated that some food portions are insufficient. Others stated that at times younger children were given too much food. However, inspectors observed that food portions were appropriate and that those who wished could return for a second helping.		

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 water is available within the boarding houses and the school. All boarding houses have facilities for boarders to make drinks and such snacks as toast and instant noodles etc. The older boys' houses have in addition, cooker hobs that allow them to cook suppers in the evenings. The girls' house has no such facility. This discrepancy in provision was raised with the inspectors on several occasions and inspectors felt that the school should consider the provision of suitable cooking facilities in the girls' boarding house to enable them to enjoy the same privileges as the boys.		
See advisory recommendation No. 5		

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
Regular fire drills are undertaken and routine checks are made on all equipment. Boarders confirmed that drills take place and records were inspected. The Bursar has responsibility for health and safety issues and keeps records of all risk assessments undertaken.		

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?	3
This standard is met. Boarders stated that they have sufficient free time each day. Observations during the inspection confirmed this.		

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?	9
This standard does not apply.		

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?	2
Risk assessments are routinely undertaken with regard to activities. Any high risk activity is organised through bodies holding appropriate qualifications. Parents are asked to sign a permission slip that covers all activities. Inspectors felt that these should identify specific activities that may be undertaken to allow parents the opportunity to refuse permission for any individual activity.		
See recommended action no. 2		

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

All boarders are able to leave the school site, with supervision appropriate to their age. Internet access is made available, with relevant safety measures and all boarders have access to television newspapers and other information media.

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?

3

Staff rotas were seen during the inspection and inspectors were able to observe the routine of the boarding houses. Prefects supervise the first part of prep in the evening, with staff support. There is a sufficient number of staff on duty throughout the evening and night to ensure that the boarders are appropriately monitored.

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

Boarding houses have a system that requires students to seek permission to leave the house. Boarders are required to sign in and out to ensure that their whereabouts are known to staff at all times. All organised school trips are appropriately supervised.

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 boarding house has at least one member of staff sleeping in and houses are regularly checked at night to ensure that all boarders have returned. The arrangements made for signing in and out are also used to ensure that all boarders are back in the boarding house by the required time. Young people confirmed that they are able to contact a member of staff during the 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
All staff have job descriptions and are given a handbook on appointment. This outlines their duties and responsibilities. Staff confirmed that they receive training and supervision. Teaching staff have regular appraisals of performance in relation to their teaching duties, but inspectors were unable to find evidence of regular staff appraisals in relation to boarding duties.		
See recommended action No. 3		

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?	4
All staff are given a handbook and a copy of the boarding hand book. As stated earlier in this report, the boarding handbook has been well written and contains all the guidance and information staff need to enable them to understand their duties and responsibilities.		

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4) There are sound staff/boarder relationships.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Relationships between the boarding staff and the boys in the older boys' houses and girls in their boarding house, were observed to be very good. This was confirmed in discussion groups and in the questionnaires. Boarders from these houses spoke very highly about staff and felt that they were treated fairly.</p> <p>Inspectors were made aware however, that this was not always the case in the junior boys' boarding house. Some boarders felt that the senior staff in charge of the house, could be unfair and did not deal with serious problems (such as significant fights between boys) appropriately. These views were confirmed by more junior staff. This house accommodates some of the younger boarders within the school, many of whom do not have English as a first language and are a long distance from their parents. Inspectors felt that the Headmaster and the Head of Boarding should consider how issues of discipline are dealt with in this boarding house and assess the quality of the relationships between the boys and the senior staff in charge. This issue was raised with the Headmaster during the inspection.</p> <p>See recommended action No. 4</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>This standard is met. Boarders confirmed that staff supervision is not intrusive and that staff respect their privacy.</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?	3
<p>The school has an appropriate policy for the recruitment and selection of staff. Staff files were seen during the inspection. CRB checks are undertaken and references received prior to appointment. Appropriate qualification checks are also made. Written confirmation is received of checks undertaken on gap year students.</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
<p>Inspectors checked a sample of staff files. These revealed appropriate checks. No member of staff is allowed to work unsupervised with boarders unless a satisfactory CRB clearance has been received.</p>		

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?

3

All four boarding houses were seen and found to be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated. They were suitably furnished and in good decorative order. There was evidence that boarders are able to personalise their rooms and the houses were clean. Although a minority of students complained that bedroom walls were 'too thin', boarders in general felt that the houses were not too noisy. This was confirmed by inspectors during observation of evening routines.

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?	2
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Measures are taken to prevent unauthorised access to the boarding houses. These are secure and kept for the exclusive use of boarders during the school terms. The school has also taken reasonable measures to deter unauthorised public access to the grounds, including the recent provision of a fence at the edge of the playing fields.

The school allows public use of its sports hall facilities outside school times, to people who can become members of the sports centre. Activities in this building are supervised by three staff, employed specifically at the sports centre. but there is no supervision of changing facilities, which are communal. As boarders use the facilities in their free time, at the same time as the public, the school should take measures to ensure that there are separate changing facilities available for the use of students to which the public will not have access.

See recommended action no. 5

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
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Boarding houses are separated into boys' and girls' houses. Younger girls have accommodation which is separate from older girls and there is a separate house that accommodates younger boys. Dormitories are of adequate size and not overcrowded. All sleeping areas were found to have suitable floor covering and boarders have adequate storage facilities. Inspectors found evidence that boarders are able to personalise their rooms.

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
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All boarding houses had suitable facilities for study. Older boarders are able to use their rooms, and younger students have prep rooms, in which study is supervised.

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?	3
All boarding houses are equipped with an adequate number of toilets and bathing facilities. Staff have separate facilities. Boarders confirmed that there were not significant queues for the use of bathrooms. At the time of the inspection, the shower and bathroom blocks in the two older boys' houses were undergoing extensive renovation. This meant that boys were using temporary facilities. Both boarders and staff said that the refurbishment was very welcome.		

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3) Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
This standard was met. There are changing facilities in the sports centre which are used during the day.		

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
All boarding houses have comfortable lounges equipped with tv and music facilities and are also provided with computers, books and games. The school offers a range of sporting and other activities and boarders said that they felt these were sufficient. Boarders do not access staff accommodation without appropriate supervision.		

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
The school bursar ensures that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken in relation to the premises and grounds and that these are reviewed. Written records were seen. The school's policies make clear which areas of the school and grounds are out of bounds and boarders were aware of these. All electrical appliances brought into the school by boarders, are required to be checked prior to use. Students know this and there was evidence that these checks had taken place. During the inspection, it was noted that 4-way sockets were in use in some of the bedrooms and concerns were raised that these could become overloaded. Staff said that regular checks are undertaken and boarders are reminded about this safety issue. Inspectors were informed that the school has been advised by electrical health and safety specialists that this is an acceptable connection.		

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?	4
Provision for sick pupils is commendable. The sanatorium is well staffed, by qualified and experienced nurses offers a good standard of accommodation. There are good links with the local GP practice. Systems in place are sound.		

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Matrons within the boarding houses have responsibility for the oversight of laundering. All laundry is done regularly. Boarders confirmed that their clothing is well cared for and that matrons will repair clothes or arrange for these to be dry-cleaned when appropriate.		

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
All boarders are able to leave the site and make necessary purchases from the shops in the vicinity. Older boarders make unsupervised shopping trips to the town centre and nearby city.		

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?	9
The school does not make arrangements for lodgings.		

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 ensures that all accommodation used for trips and activities is checked and students are supervised. Any family accommodation used in exchange trips will be seen by staff who accompany students. Arrangements are made prior to such trips, to ensure that any young person who is unhappy about his/her host family can be moved and accommodated with the member of staff supervising the trip.		

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

[Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary]

Lay Assessor N/A **Signature** _____

Date _____

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 24th February 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

The manner in which this boarding inspection was conducted was one of mutual cooperation and respect. The inspectors were suitably experienced and professional in their work. The inspection was not intrusive and we found the initial verbal feedback accurate and useful.

Since then, the production of the report has been unsatisfactory and despite ongoing correspondence between February and June 2004, I remain dissatisfied with the manner in which it has been constructed. This is not a reflection on the reporting inspector whose work is undermined by flawed methodology.

The term 'minimum' as applied to these standards suggests that it is possible to exceed these standards, an impression reinforced by the grading system, which indicates that they may be exceeded by a grade 4 (Standard Exceeded). However, ongoing correspondence has revealed that inspectors cannot assign beyond grade 3 for an unspecified number of standards. This means that it is impossible to differentiate between the standards the school has met (grade 3) and those that it has exceeded (grade 4) but which have been recorded as met (grade 3). Despite requests for clarification which standards this ceiling applies to and what criteria are used to determine each grading, no clear information has been forthcoming.

I regret that such a valuable opportunity to assess and refine the quality of boarding and pastoral care should have been marred by such basic procedural errors. These have undermined the work of the inspector and diminished the confidence that I have in this report.

Andrew Fleck
Headmaster
Ashville College
July 2004

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

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Comments were received from the Head	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
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	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.

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

Action plan was required	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Head has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I _____ of _____ 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 _____ 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.