



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

BOARDING SCHOOL

Ashville College

**Green Lane
Harrogate
North Yorkshire
HG2 9LP**

Lead Inspector
Stephen Sharp

Key Announced Inspection
18th January 2007 09:30

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

Reader Information

Document Purpose	Inspection Report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General Public
Further copies from	0870 240 7535 (telephone order line)
Copyright	This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI
Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

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	Ashville College
Address	Green Lane Harrogate North Yorkshire HG2 9LP
Telephone number	01423 566358
Fax number	
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Ashville College Trustee Limited
Name of Head	Mr A Fleck
Name of Head of Care	Mr N Cornforth
Age range of boarding pupils	7 – 18
Date of last welfare inspection	24 February 2004

Brief Description of the School:

Ashville College 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 122 boarders in the junior and senior schools combined.

The school is set in large grounds within the town of Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Boarding accommodation is provided in four houses: two for senior boys (29 in each); one for junior boys (16) and one for girls (48).

On the day of inspection the fees for boarding were between £6,960 and £7,725.

SUMMARY

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

The purpose of the inspection was to check to see how well boarders are cared for in the school. The inspectors did this by looking at what the quality of life is for boarders. Also they looked to see if the standards for boarding schools set by the government were being met.

There were two inspectors who knew about how children should be looked after when living away from their parents in a school. One is a social worker and the other an ex-headmaster. Because they were from different backgrounds they could combine their views to obtain a more accurate picture of life in the school for boarders. They visited the school over three days so they had enough time to talk to boarders and the people who look after them. They looked at where boarders live and spend their time. They also looked at what is written down about the arrangements for boarding: how it should be done (policies, procedure and guidance). They also looked at records about boarders, the people who look after them and the arrangements in place to make them and the buildings safe.

The inspectors had some information before they came to the school. The headmaster had given inspectors details about the school and what he thinks the school does well or could do better. Most boarders - 113 from 122 – had already given their views on life at the school in answers to a questionnaire. One set of parents had replied to a letter asking for parents' views. The Fire and Rescue Service had written to say the school was safe from fire. This helped the inspectors plan what to look for at the inspection.

After three days at the school the inspectors decided that all the minimum standards were met and boarders were happy and safe at Ashville College. The school cares for boarders excellently.

What the school does well:

Everyone looking after the boarders treats them with respect and makes it their job to make sure that boarders are cared for and protected at all times. Working closely together they know the individual boarders so well they can really make sure boarders are all right.

Boarders enjoy life at school; they respect each other and adults. They behave well and accept rules for the benefit of themselves and others. They act responsibly and care for others. They are self-confident and proud of their achievements.

This means that boarders are safe and happy.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Important information about boarders and staff is now written down so it can be checked and not missed.

What they could do better:

The school meets standards but could improve on these.

The school knows that the boarding houses could be made more homely if the boarders could have baths as well as showers, if there were more room in the showers, if boarders could do more cooking for themselves and if they had somewhere to keep personal items more securely.

The school has an ongoing plan to improve the dining room and to ensure that mealtimes provide the best social environment for boarders.

Governors could look at boarding houses and talk to boarders more often so they can find out what life is like for boarders themselves. This would keep them more in touch with boarders and help them decide what they need to ask the headmaster to do for the boarders.

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

CONTENTS

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Recommended Actions identified during the inspection

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):

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**

Boarders' health is promoted in a number of ways and they receive excellent health care when necessary

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

EVIDENCE:

The boarders' survey was extremely positive – a large majority said they were well looked after when ill and cared for by staff.

The school has a purpose built sanatorium staffed by three qualified nurses. There is discrete accommodation for boys and girls. Records are kept securely and confidentiality is maintained. The nurses are on call on a 24-hour basis. House parents keep welfare records. Welfare and health matters are discussed regularly in weekly house meetings, weekly matrons meetings and management meetings that include the nurses. Medical support is provided by a GP practice, which has both male and female doctors. Boarders

can see GPs at any time, are supported where necessary but can also see GPs in private.

All staff – including domestic staff – are fully involved in monitoring the health of boarders. All individuals are well known and any problem or change in behaviour would be picked up and the right people informed.

Boarders are respected which means they enjoy school and respect and support each other. They accept rules and behave appropriately. Smoking and alcohol are not allowed in the school and this is adhered to by boarders with the occasional exception.

The boarders' survey had more negative than positive comments on meals and nutrition; there were many positive comments but others were strongly negative:

“food had lots of nutrition but not tasty”

“food quality is poor but varied”

A new catering manager has been appointed and is looking to reappoint the kitchen, serving and dining areas with a view to improving the quality of the catering and dining experience.

The inspectors observed that there is sufficient food and choice of food at main meal times. Boarders have access to food and drink in boarding houses at all times; but this could be improved by having more cooking facilities, especially for the girls. This would give practical experience of feeding oneself before moving out into self-catering accommodation when they leave school.

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):

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**

Boarders are respected, protected and safe.

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

EVIDENCE:

The boarders survey was very positive – they feel safe and cared for and not bullied

“all of the staff care for you”

“staff are always ready to ‘go beyond the call of duty’”

“more a friend than a teacher”

“this is because our headmaster is caring”

Boarders name a variety of people to whom they can turn from the head teacher down and one child said it is always possible to talk or to communicate with a number of adults in a number of ways – notes, e-mail, texts – if talking face to face is uncomfortable.

Several boarders referred to the coded door entry system in the houses as making them safe, but some also mentioned that the same codes had been in use for some time and therefore need changing.

Security codes are used on doors in boarding houses and boarders sign in and out.

Risk assessments are in place for all activities in school and off site overseen by the deputy head responsible for child protection; risk assessments are in place for the premises overseen by the estates manager. Both types of risk assessment were seen and are comprehensive. This was confirmed by one child’s comment on “the endless bureaucracy and forms to make sure no one gets hurt in school”.

Staff respect the boarders and at all times are protective towards them. Sound policies are in place for bullying, child protection and the procedures are followed when the need arises. Staff are trained at all levels – from governors to domestic staff. Matrons and cleaners have had child protection training, some on courses and all in-house at staff meetings. The individual boarders are well known to staff who work closely together, and they trust staff. This is the most important element of the care that makes boarders safe. The approach was described by a member of staff as “openness, awareness and caring”. This was described by everyone inspectors spoke to and was observed throughout the school.

The prefect system is that all in the sixth form are prefects and they have some duties of responsibility such as signing boarders in and out to breakfast. They are not in a position of power and cannot exact sanctions. This fits in with the school ethos that everyone is responsible for each other.

Safe recruitment practices are followed.

The school does not itself make arrangements for educational guardians.

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):

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**

Boarders receive close personal support from staff without inappropriate discrimination.

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

EVIDENCE:

The boarders' surveys refer to numerous activities and support available to them. They enjoy the boarding experience. Activities involving the main school building are not available after 6.30 pm when the school is locked up. There is a sports hall including a swimming pool. The school has discrete use of this facility during the day and is then shared with the public during the evening. Girls have equal access to sports, for example girls play cricket.

Rooms are available for prep and computers are provided. There is universal agreement that there is insufficient access to the computers and the school is looking to improve this.

Children name a variety of people to whom they can turn from the head teacher down and one child said it is always possible to talk or to

communicate with a number of adults in a number of ways – notes, e-mail, texts – if talking face to face is uncomfortable.

One child surveyed objected to being made to go to chapel but the school asks that all boarders observe at least, if they do not participate in, a spiritual gathering. Boarders of a different religion practice at their own places of worship. The school is Methodist and puts pastoral care at the centre of school life. The chaplain teaches half her time and is chaplain the other half. She makes herself available for boarders at breakfast and she visits the boarding house on a weekly rota.

The school has a number of boarders from Africa, Asia and Europe. Additional English language teaching is provided in the school for those who need it. The school also has teaching assistants from Europe and they are also provided with additional English teaching but from outside the school. This makes the school cosmopolitan with an awareness of cultures. For example the Chinese New Year will be celebrated.

No-one reported any form of discrimination and the inspectors observed how well boarders of different sex, race, culture all got on with each other.

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):

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

Boarders contribute to the operation of boarding and have a sound relationship with all staff, who value them.

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

EVIDENCE:

A parent says house staff are friendly and approachable and since September 2006 communication and information flow between parents and house staff has been outstanding.

Boarders have access to pay 'phones in the different houses. Although not all offer total privacy boarders can also use mobile 'phones. Access to parents was not raised as a problem.

Children survey indicates number of means – formal and informal - by which boarders' views are sought. There are twice weekly house meetings.

All staff respect boarders and they in turn show respect to each other and the staff. The relationship between boarders and staff is outstandingly good; boarders are continually cared for and monitored and controlled constantly in a way that is understood and acceptable to them. This is not institutional, it is like a family which nurtures and protects its members.

The boarders have the advantage that the school has predominantly day pupils and is based in a town to which they have access. This keeps them in contact with everyday life outside the boarding experience.

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):

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

Boarders have satisfactory accommodation but this could be made more homely.

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

EVIDENCE:

The majority of boarders are satisfied with boarding houses but some comments were made about the need for redecoration and delays in having things repaired. One child surveyed commented that girls' accommodation is less homely than the boys. The girls would like to have baths and would like more spacious and comfortable showers; also a cooking facility in all the house kitchens would allow boarders of all ages to prepare food for themselves (according to their abilities). Although there is a facility for storing valuables if desired and pupils report that property is respected and things are not stolen, there is a need for each boarder to have somewhere that they can keep securely private/personal belongings. Some of the accommodation does need updating.

There is a refurbishment and redecoration plan. The estates manager knows what work needs to be carried out and has a workforce to maintain the buildings and grounds. At the time of the inspection the estates team were involved in major works to improve the water supply system, which had not been foreseen. Another major area of work that is known about and now scheduled for the summer break is repair to the roof of a boarding house. This leaks and caused some discomfort for some boarders during the inspection.

Standards are met in respect of bathing facilities but as outlined above but they do not provide much privacy for the girls – there is no private space to change before and after showering - although this lack of privacy is not in fact experienced as such by the girls who did not comment on it even when asked. Overall the boarding houses could be improved to provide a better experience. This also includes the provision of computers as outlined above.

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):

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

Boarders are supervised by capable and caring staff at all times.

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

EVIDENCE:

The school has sound policies and practice, which is given to parents, boarders and staff. These are updated when necessary.

The school is led by the governing body which monitors all aspects of the care of boarders through the accountability of the head to the governing body at meetings; also every two years the governors visit the boarding facilities and talk to boarders.

Inspectors think this could be improved by having a designated governor (s) to take specific responsibility for the welfare of boarders and to personally check boarding facilities each term. This would add another facet to the quality assurance systems within the school.

The school invests in much training and for all staff groups; examples were given of governors, matrons and cleaners, estates staff – being able to attend external courses or be trained in-house.

There is a head of boarding who is a house master who co-ordinates inter-house meetings and practice; a deputy head who is responsible for child protection and another deputy head responsible for staff development. There is a system of management meetings, inter-house meetings, house meetings and matrons meetings – for teachers, care staff, nurses and estates staff to come together formally. Inspectors saw several examples of informal contact taking place. This was backed up by records such as risk assessments and welfare and health plans where they were required.

The house system provides close supervision of boarders throughout the day and night; the house parent and two other members of care staff sleep-in in each house. There are signing in and out arrangements for boarders leaving the school site. The school has an “escalation process” to respond to a report of a boarder going missing.

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	4
7	4
15	4
16	4
17	4
24	3
25	3
48	4
49	3

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

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
11	3
14	4
18	4
27	3
43	3
46	3

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	4
19	3
21	3
30	3
36	4

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

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
8	3
9	3
10	4
23	3
31	4
32	3
33	4
34	4
35	4
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)

Commission for Social Care Inspection

York Area Office

Unit 4

Triune Court

Monk's Cross

York

YO32 9GZ

National Enquiry Line:

Telephone: 0845 015 0120 or 0191 233 3323

Textphone: 0845 015 2255 or 0191 233 3588

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

© This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI