



Making Social Care  
Better for People

# inspection report

Residential Special School (not registered as  
a Children's Home)

## **Barndale House Special School**

Howling Lane

Alnwick

Northumberland

NE66 1DQ

2nd February 2005

## 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.

<b>SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>
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**Name of School**

Barndale House Special School

**Address**

Howling Lane, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1DQ

**Tel No:**

01665 602541

**Fax No:**

01665 606370

**Email Address:**

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

Northumberland Local Education Authority

**Name of Head**

Mr John Chappells

**CSCI Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

28/02/04
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<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		2nd February 2005	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:30 am	
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Anne Urwin Brown	099440
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		John Chappell	

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. 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 Residential Special 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. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Barndale House Special School

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

The report will show the following:

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

## INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION**

Barndale House is a day/residential local authority special school catering for children who have a Statement of Special Needs. The school covers an age range of 4 - 19 years, while the age of residential pupils is 9 - 19 years. At the time of this inspection the age range of pupils accommodated was 12 - 18 years.

Barndale occupies two buildings on a site near the centre of Alwick, one of which is a classroom block and the other houses the residential accommodation, office, dining facilities and infant/reception class.

The residential accommodation is mainly sited on the first floor and work is ongoing to upgrade the bedrooms at the time of this inspection. There is a large sitting/play area on the ground floor regularly used by residential pupils as well as the dining room and kitchen.

## **PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE**

A range of activities is provided for the young people both in house and in the community. The programme of decorating and furnishing is now almost completed. The accommodation is comfortable and children confirmed their satisfaction with the changes. It was evident from parent questionnaires that as a result of the residential service they have seen their children become more confident and independent. Positive interaction was observed between the young people and staff during the inspection

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE**

The care planning process is in the process of change and these will mean more comprehensive information is maintained. This work should be completed to ensure that each child's care planning information is available in the new format. Criminal Records Bureau checks should be completed for all existing staff. It is apparent that the frequency of formal supervision has been affected by the absence of the Head of Care and this should be provided for all residential staff once every half term.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE**

It is evident that there are high staffing ratios provided and care is taken to ensure that children with specific needs receive individual support. The difficulties experienced due to the absence of the Manager during the year have been effectively managed and the Head of School and care staff team are to be commended for their commitment to providing a high quality of care during this difficult time. Once again in discussion with children and from parent questionnaires it was evident that there is a high level of satisfaction with the service provided at Barndale School. The children spoke positively about the range of activities available during the past year. It is apparent that the children are provided with regular opportunities to put forward their views about the school and residential service and that they feel confident about doing so. They were able to discuss issues raised within regular meetings and confirmed they felt confident about speaking to the Head of School or other staff about any concerns they may have.





<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION</b>
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**Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.**

<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b>			
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 Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS30	Formal supervision should be provided every half term for at least one and a half hours.	30/04/05
2	RS31	There is a need for 80% of all care staff to achieve NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.	31/03/06
3	RS24	A review of the current arrangements for three children to share a room needs to be carried out. In the event of a child expressing concern about sharing a room with two others alternative arrangements should be made without delay.	31/03/05
4	RS26	The recommendations from the Fire Officer's report following his visit on 19/01/05 must be addressed.	31/03/05
5	RS27	Criminal Records Bureau enhanced checks must be completed for all existing staff.	30/04/05
6	RS27	Records showing all elements of the recruitment process listed within Section 27.2 of the National Minimum Standards should be available for inspection in the School.	30/04/05
7	RS33	Records of all reports compiled following visits from the Governing Body should be available for inspection.	30/04/05

### 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

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

**PART B****INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were 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	
• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	NO
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO
Date of Inspection	01/02/05
Time of Inspection	09.15
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	9.30
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	1

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

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

**Age Range of Boarding Pupils**      **From**       **To**

**NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:**

**BOYS**

**GIRLS**

**TOTAL**

**Number of separate Boarding Houses**

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following 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 scale ranges from:

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

"0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

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

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

## STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

### Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
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The Statement of Purpose is currently being reviewed and is to be presented to the Governing Body for review in February. This covers all the areas identified within this Standard.

In addition to the Statement of Purpose a booklet providing Information for Parents is available, which has recently been updated. There is also the Residential Pupil handbook providing information about the day to day support offered by staff.

These three documents present clear detailed information and the School's management is to be commended for the work that has gone into compiling them.

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way that the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.
- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.

### Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

Children's opinions, and those of their families or significant others, are sought over key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. Feedback is given following consultations.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Evidence was available from discussion with pupils and parents questionnaires to confirm that children's opinions and those of their families are sought. Written records including review minutes and the minutes of the meetings of the Children's Forum provide evidence of how children and their families are consulted. Staff have regular contact with families and written information is available to confirm this, although there is a not a separate contact record. There was discussion about the benefit of having a contact record and it was agreed that this would be implemented.

### Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)

The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Written policies and procedures underpin practice with regard to privacy and confidentiality. It was possible to confirm in discussion with children that they felt satisfied that their privacy and confidentiality is respected. Staff were able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of these issues within discussion during the inspection. It was possible to confirm in discussion with children that they feel satisfied that they are able to make and receive telephone calls in private. The provision of intimate care is the subject of written guidance.

**Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3

During the inspection it was possible to confirm that children were well informed about the complaints procedure and felt confident about raising issues/making a complaint. During discussion they indicated that they felt able to speak with individual staff or the Head of School.

Children's Forum meetings are held regularly and children are encouraged to make their views known.

Written policies and procedures are in place and information about making a complaint is available within the Parent Handbook and the Children's Handbook.

Appropriate records are maintained of any complaint made, its investigation and outcome.

**Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:**

1

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

**Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:**

0

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

## CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

### Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Written guidance relating to Child Protection is available. The Northumberland Area Child Protection Committee guidance is available and underpins practice within the school. Staff were able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made. Staff training has been provided. No allegations have been made since the last inspection.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:

0



**Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)**

The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3

Written guidance is in place relating to bullying in an appropriate form.  
 Children were able to confirm that the Head of School and other staff regularly discuss bullying with them and they clearly understood what to do if they felt bullied.  
 One child raised concerns about feeling bullied and these were passed on to staff.  
 It was apparent from discussion with staff that the risks of bullying were taken seriously and that risk assessments are in place in an appropriate form.

**Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied**

92 %

**Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)**

All significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified by the Head of the school or designated person to the appropriate authorities.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

4

The Head of School and other staff were able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the need to report significant events to the appropriate authorities.

**NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:**

- **conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children**
- **serious harm to a child**
- **serious illness or accident of a child**
- **serious incident requiring police to be called**

0

0

0

0

<b>Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)</b>		
The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Written guidance is in place relating to the action to be taken in the event of a child going missing.</p> <p>No absences have occurred within the past year. Staff are aware of the need to maintain a record of any absences.</p>		
<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>		<b>0</b>

## CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

### Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

Relationships between staff and children are based on mutual respect and understanding and clear professional and personal boundaries which are effective for both the individuals and the group.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Appropriate references within Policies and Procedures are in place and these underpin practice with regard to these matters. Induction training is provided for all new staff and covers these areas.

It was evident from discussion and from observation that appropriate relationships exist between staff and children. A relaxed atmosphere was evident and appropriate interactions between staff and children were observed.

Children spoke positively about the staff and how they are supported at the school.

### Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures which are approved by the Head of Care.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Policies and procedures are in place and there is an emphasis on encouraging and rewarding good behaviour.

Staff training has been provided and there are regular updates on training days. Evidence was available from written records and discussion with staff that arrangements are in place to promote consistency of approach from care and school staff.

No sanctions have been applied since the last inspection.

## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.
- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within school and in the local community.
- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.
- Children wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

Admission and leaving processes are planned and agreed with the child – and as appropriate, with parents and carers and placing authorities – as far as possible and handled with sensitivity and care by those concerned.

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The Head of School was able to describe how admission and discharge of a child is arranged to suit individual needs. Evidence was available from records of the arrangements put in place to suit individuals and these included short stays, overnight stays and extending the nights as the child became more comfortable with the arrangements. Children were able to confirm that they felt satisfied with the support provided. Evidence was available that transition plans were in place and that appropriate assistance is provided for children planning to move on.

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**  
**Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
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It was possible to confirm from discussion with staff and from written records that arrangements are in place to ensure effective communication between school and care staff. Records relating to daily communications and regular joint reviews were available. Care and teaching staff were able to describe how regular communication and joint working makes an impact on the quality of care provided.

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**  
**Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
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Individual programmes of activities are available for each child. These show a wide range of activities are provided and children confirmed their satisfaction with the range provided. Arrangements are in place for a local outdoor activity provider to arrange sessions including abseiling, rock climbing and canoeing. It is evident from discussion with the children that these activities have proved very popular. Risk assessments and parental consent for activities are in place. There are books, games and supervised computer access within the residential unit.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)**  
**The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
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Each child's health care needs are identified within his/her written records. A full time registered nurse is available throughout the day to provide support. An on call system is operated at night. The nurse is involved in preparing health care assessments and offers support/advice to care staff. Arrangements for the storage of medication are satisfactory. Policies and procedures are in place for the administration, storage and disposal of medication. A full record is maintained of the administration of medication. Parental consent is in place for the administration of medication and for any permitted homely remedies. First aid training is provided for staff.

**Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)**

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

Menus provided reflect that a good range of food is provided with an alternative available at each meal time. Individual needs are catered for with specific diets for example gluten free, diabetic.

The cook has recently completed a short training course on nutrition and found this most helpful. A dietician has reviewed the menus.

The meals served during the inspection were well cooked and presented. Some children require assistance to feed and staff were observed to be sensitive to the child's needs.

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)**

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way which maximises their choice.

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

Children were able to confirm that they are able to make their preferences known and to choose what they wear.

All children have their own supply of bed linen and towels, which are individually labelled. Records relating to pocket money are maintained in an appropriate manner.

## CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.
- In accordance with their wishes, children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while living away from home at school.
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.
- Children receive individual support when they need it.

### Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

A written placement plan is in place for each child. A good level of recording is evident providing clear information about care, social and emotional needs. A new assessment system is being introduced in conjunction with school staff. It is anticipated that this will provide a more comprehensive record about the needs of each child.

It was possible to confirm that care staff provide comprehensive written reports for reviews. There is an annual review of the key worker system and children confirmed that they can ask for a change of key worker. Key workers meet formally each term with teachers. Each child has a Statement of Special Education Needs, which is reviewed annually.

### Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)

Each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress which can, in compliance with legal requirements for safeguards, be seen by the child.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

It was possible to confirm that individual records are maintained in an appropriate form. Children confirmed that they were aware that they could see their records. Arrangements for the storage of records are satisfactory.

**Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)**  
**The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>2</b>
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The School maintains appropriate records relating to the children.  
 Some information is maintained for staff, however personnel records holding application forms, evidence of reference and Criminal Records Bureau checks are maintained at Northumberland County Council's headquarters. A visit was not made to check these records.  
 The Head of School confirmed that Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out on all care staff, but have not yet been completed for teaching staff. These checks must be completed as a matter of urgency.  
 Accident records were available in an appropriate form.  
 Menus are available.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)**  
**Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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It was possible to confirm from discussion with children and staff that contact with parents/significant others is actively encouraged. Most children keep in touch by telephone. Some parents telephone the school each day and speak with staff and/or child.  
 Separate records are not maintained of staff/parent/significant others contact. There was discussion about the value of setting up a contact record for each child.



**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

9

Not applicable at the time of this inspection.

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)**

All children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular support needs, or particular problems, receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3

The senior care staff described how each child has in place a plan, which describes how his/her range of care needs will be met when they stay at residential unit.

There was evidence of individualised support provided to children; one parent described how their child's self help skills had improved and another stated that their child had become more independent. During discussions with staff it was evident that they were aware of the needs of the individual young people and their families.

Care staff work in the school with teaching staff to support young people at school. The teaching staff described how they find the care staff very supportive and they help with consistency when working with the young people as they have regular contact with parents.

One young person stated that they would tell the staff if they had any problems, as they would help them.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The School is situated within its own grounds a short distance from the centre of Alnwick. The residential accommodation is located within a stone built detached building that has been converted to suit its present purpose. The ground floor accommodation consists of a large sitting/play room, dining room, kitchen, office, library, nurse's room and some classroom accommodation. All the bedroom accommodation is located on the first floor of the main building.

Work has been undertaken to refurbish and redecorate the sitting areas and most of the bedroom accommodation. This has been a significant improvement and work is to be completed within the next year.

Access to the first floor is by the stairs and the residential unit cannot accommodate children who are unable to negotiate stairs. This is reflected in the Statement of Purpose.

### Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The residential unit provides comfortable and well-maintained accommodation.

The children have been actively involved in the choice of decor and furnishings.

No room has more than four beds, and in one room three children share. At the time of this inspection there were some issues about this arrangement and there was evidence that this arrangement was not working well. While this had previously been the choice of the children concerned to share it was apparent that one child was currently unhappy with the arrangement. There was discussion about the possibility of moving one of the children to a single room and staff agreed to give this matter urgent attention.

Children's rooms show evidence of their interests and taste.

**Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)**

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3

Bathroom, toilet and shower accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of the children currently catered for. Baths and showers are available.  
 Appropriate aids and adaptations are fitted.  
 All hot water outlets have thermostatic controls fitted.  
 Separate toilet and bathroom/shower facilities are available for staff.

**Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)**

Positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risk from fire and other hazards, in accordance with Health and Safety and Fire legislation and guidance.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

2

Health and Safety matters are the subject of written policies and procedures.  
 Written risk assessments relating to the premises and grounds are in place.  
 Fire alarm tests, equipment testing, fire drills and fire training are recorded appropriately.  
 Hot water temperatures are thermostatically controlled. All radiators are fitted with guards.  
 Arrangements are in place for regular servicing and maintenance of equipment and records are maintained.  
 The Fire Officer visited on 19/01/05 and recommendations of his report have not yet been carried out, however the Head of School confirmed that these matters are to be addressed shortly.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Written recruitment policies and procedures are in place.

The Head of School confirmed that appropriate reference and Criminal Records Bureau checks have been carried out for all new staff. Existing care and ancillary staff have had CRB checks carried out and records were available to confirm this. However teaching staff have not yet had CRB checks completed and these must be given priority.

Personnel records are maintained at Northumberland County Council's Headquarters at Morpeth and these were not checked at the time of this visit. Attention must be given to Section 2 of this Standard, which details the elements, which should be able to be verified from records held in the School. These elements could not all be verified and steps should be taken to address this issue.

**Total number of care staff:**

10

**Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:**

0

**Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)**

The school is staffed at all times of the day and night, at or above the minimum level specified under standard 28.2. Records of staff actually working in the school demonstrate achievement of this staffing level.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

There are between six and nine staff on duty each evening depending on the number and needs of the children accommodated. Staff work set hours from 3.30 - 9.00pm. There is one waking night care staff and two staff sleep in.

Evidence was available to confirm that this level of staffing is achieved and is adequate to fulfil the School's Statement of Purpose.

Continuity of staffing is achieved and additional staffing is provided to meet individual needs. Arrangements are in place to cover staff sickness and this generally involves the use of care staff already working in the school who are familiar with the children.

At the time of this inspection the Head of Care has been on sickness leave and her absence has been covered by two Deputy Head of Care staff.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)**

Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

Seven staff have completed NVQ Level 2, and seven staff are to commence NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People in March.

Two staff are currently undertaking NVQ Level 4 in Management.

It was possible to confirm that nine staff have completed first aid training.

Staff spoke positively about the provision of training and confirmed that there are regular training days provided at the School where all staff participate.

Staff development plans have been drawn up.

The Head of Care has not yet commenced NVQ Level 4 in Caring for Children and Young People.

**Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)**

All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

Staff were able to confirm in discussion and from written questionnaires that they felt well supported by the Assistant Heads of Care and the Head of School. As the Manager has been on sick leave the regularity of formal supervision has not been at the level prescribed with the National Minimum Standards of one and a half hours each half term.

Staff confirmed that they receive this level of supervision every term, however it is apparent that regular informal supervision is being provided in addition to formal supervision. There is a need to formalise the informal supervision currently being provided.

An appraisal system is in place for all staff.

## ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.
- Children enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.

### Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

From discussion with the Head of School and staff it is evident that there is a commitment to achieving qualifying training in NVQ at the appropriate levels. Seven staff are to commence NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People in March 2005. It was evident during this inspection that appropriate systems are in place to ensure the effective organisation and management of the School and the Head of School and Assistant Head of Care are to be commended for their commitment to providing a high quality service. Systems are in place to provide a good level of information to parent about their child. Records are maintained in good order.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:

30 %

### Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day to day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

It was evident from discussion that the Head of School is aware of the need to inform NCSC and other appropriate authorities of any significant issues. There is evidence that the Head of School and the Assistant Heads of Care work closely together to ensure the operation of the school conforms with the National Minimum Standards. The Head of Care has been on an extended period of sick leave, and in her absence the Assistant Head's of Care have assumed her responsibilities. They are also undertaking NVQ level 4 in Management.

**Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)**

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

2

It was possible to confirm that a representative of the Governing Body and the Head of School's line manager visit the school regularly.

At the time of this inspection there were no reports available to provide a record of the visits.

This will be a recommendation of this report.

In addition there are regular visits from a representative of National Youth Advocacy Service who meets with the children and is available to discuss issues on an individual basis.

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary content.

**Lay Assessor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## PART D

## HEAD'S RESPONSE

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 01 February 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

We are working on the best way to include provider responses in the published report. In the meantime responses received are available on request.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

NO

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report.

YES

**Note:**

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

**D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 22 March 2005, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

**D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT**

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

**D.3.1 I Mr John Chappells of Barndale House Special School confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with these.**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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.

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