



Making Social Care  
Better for People

# inspection report

**BOARDING SCHOOL**

**Barnard Castle School**

**Barnard Castle School  
Barnard Castle  
Durham  
DL12 8UN**

*Lead Inspector*  
Mr Leonard Hird

*Announced Inspection*  
28th November 2005      10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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| <b>Reader Information</b> |   |
|---------------------------|---|
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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Boarding Schools*. They can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://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](http://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** Barnard Castle School

**Address** Barnard Castle School  
Barnard Castle  
Durham  
DL12 8UN

**Telephone number** 01833 690222

**Fax number** 01833 638985

**Email address**

**Provider Web address**

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

**Name of Head** Mr David Ewart

**Name of Head of Care**

**Age range of boarding  
pupils**

**Date of last welfare  
inspection**

## **Brief Description of the School:**

Barnard Castle School is an independent co-educational day/boarding school with charitable status and is located in the market town of Barnard Castle. The school provides education for both boys and girls between the ages of 4-18 years. The school is inter-denominational though whilst following the Christian tradition it fully acknowledges the many other different traditions in society. The school offers independent education to children from the North-East of England and further afield including Hong Kong and other countries.

The boarding provision at Barnard Castle School comprises the separate Preparatory School boarding facility known as Old Courts House with 26 boys and girls currently boarding there. The boys of secondary school age board in either York or Northumberland House and these are located within the main school building. They provide providing boarding facilities for 33 boys aged 11-14 years and 83 boys aged 14-18 years on the top and first floor of the building respectively. The girls of secondary school age board in Longfield House which is a separate purpose-built building providing boarding facilities for 50 girls aged 11-18 years.

# SUMMARY

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

This announced inspection of Barnard Castle School took place between 28<sup>th</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005. It found that of the standard areas inspected 8 standard areas were exceeded, 32 were met and 8 were almost met. The inspection process included talking to boarding children in both the preparatory and secondary boarding houses, talking to house staff, teaching staff, ancillary staff, the senior management team and looking at the boarding children's questionnaire responses as well as other records, documents and files held at the school.

There had been significant changes to the senior management team of the school since the last inspection with the appointment of a new Headmaster and a new Deputy Headmaster. It was found that this senior management team was providing both positive and effective management and leadership to the school as a whole but most especially to the boarding houses. The senior management team had ensured that any recommendations made from the previous inspection had been addressed.

The boarding children spoken with during the inspection spoke positively of their life at the school and that they had good working relationships with staff. Staff were found to be caring, thoughtful and very committed to the children they worked with. The documentation examined during the inspection was found to be generally accurate and well maintained. There had also had been significant improvements in the way that the schools child protection policy and procedures were being managed and operated.

This was a positive inspection of Barnard Castle School and it found that the commitment of the school and its staff to the welfare and development of the individual child was considered to be very important.

## **What the school does well:**

The physical environment of Barnard Castle School was found to be pleasant, well maintained and well looked after by both children and staff. The school provided a calm, caring, listening and encouraging environment for children to develop in and this was being done in a well-managed, safe and encouraging manner. The health and safety of the children was considered to be very important and staff were proactive in ensuring that the needs of the boarding children were being met. The school wherever possible tried to take account of the views of the boarders via: the house committees, the school council, monitors meetings and the food committee. The school provided for those children who were boarders from other countries information in their own language as well as offering the opportunity of learning English as a second language.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The school has developed and is continuing to develop its policies and procedures, training, guidance and information in regard to child protection. The school has developed an in depth induction training programme for all new staff and newly qualified staff.

## **What they could do better:**

The school needs to develop more fully the recording systems being used within the boarding houses as well as developing the boarders' welfare plans that are currently being used within the boarding houses to take account of the following areas: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Economic Well-Being. The school has regular in-service training programmes for all of its staff but it needs to develop the training programs for its house staff particularly in the areas of team development and supervision.

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](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.

# **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)

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

NMS 6, NMS 7 NMS 15, NMS 16, NMS 17, NMS 24, NMS 25, NMS 48, NMS 49

The children boarding at Barnard Castle School were found to be living in a residential and educational environment that provided them with guidance, advice and support in both health and personal care issues in a very positive and friendly manner.

Boarding children's health and medication needs were being generally monitored, administered, stored and disposed of appropriately.

Children took their meals in an ordered and friendly manner in the dining hall. There were a number of choices of meals on the menu including a vegetarian choice and the meals were well-prepared, nutritious and wholesome in content.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The school has its own small medical Centre, managed and run by a registered nurse, a daily surgery is held for the boarding pupils that is run by the local general practitioner and there are members of staff who are qualified first aiders available at all times on-site. Records were being maintained of medication prescribed, dispensed and disposed of as well as parental permission for the dispensation of medication. The school had a medication policy and procedure available for house staff to consult with and to use as and when required. However, it was indicated in discussions with the recently appointed school nurse that this documentation was going to be fully reviewed and revised where necessary. There were within the medical centre two beds

available for use of children requiring to be looked after when they were ill. It is recommended that the number of beds be increased to ensure that there are enough suitable beds available for children to be accommodated during times of illness.

Children took their meals in an ordered and friendly manner in the dining Hall. There were a number of choices of meals available on the menu for the children and this included a vegetarian choice. The meals were well-prepared, well cooked, nutritious and wholesome in content. Generally the children were complimentary of the meals served but some of them had indicated in their responses contained in the children's questionnaire as well as from discussions with the inspection team that they thought there was a need for some of the choices at teatime and at the weekend to be improved. Menus were regularly changed by the catering manager and these were influenced wherever possible by the children's choices but taking full account of the differing dietary needs of the children. The children did have the opportunity to influence the choices of food to be found on the menu by involvement with the schools food committee and catering manager.

# 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)

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

NMS2, NMS3, NMS4, NMS5, NMS13, NMS22, NMS26, NMS28, NMS29, NMS37  
NMS38, NMS39, NMS41, NMS47

Barnard Castle School is working to and within these standards. The school is positively trying to ensure that the children who go to and board at the school are safe.

## **EVIDENCE:**

All staff working within the school including the teaching staff, house staff and ancillary staff had received training in child protection procedures. The school has a designated Child Protection Procedure Coordinator and this is the Headmaster. All child protection referrals are made in the first instance to the designated Child Protection Procedure Coordinator. Records were being

maintained of when and at what level the child protection training had been undertaken by staff. There was a child protection policy, procedure and guidance documentation in place and these documents were available for staff for reference and were consistent with the local policies and procedures agreed by the Area Child Protection Committee. Any records referring to child protection referrals were being kept securely and were only available to those staff authorised to look at them. Staff confirmed in discussions on the days of inspection that they were aware of their responsibilities and the need for vigilance in this very important area.

Children confirmed in discussions that they were aware of the schools anti-bullying policy as well as to whom they could talk to about any bullying or child protection issues. They also confirmed that they knew about the rules about confidentiality when talking to staff about any of these issues. The children also confirmed that they knew how to access the Independent Listener or the Independent counsellor if they didn't want to speak to a member of the school staff about any issues.

All staff employed at the school since 2002 had undergone before their employment the appropriate reference checks and a Criminal Records Bureau Check. Records were being maintained of this information on staffs personnel files but some files examined were found to be incomplete. All of this personnel information was being kept securely and in line with Data protection guidance.

The school had an Independent Listener as well as an Independent Counsellor both of whom regularly visited the school. All of the children were able to access the Independent Listener and Counsellor either personally or by telephone contact if they needed to. Information about who the Independent Listener and Counsellor was made available throughout the boarding areas and children spoken with confirmed that they were aware of who these people were and how to make contact with them.

There were a number of boarding houses on different parts of the school site. some of which were in need of redecoration, carpeting and refurbishment. The school acknowledged that this work was required and that a review had been undertaken and a programme of work and timescales for completion had been developed. The children's rooms within the boarding houses were in good order, individual bedrooms and shared bedrooms had been personalised by the children, the buildings were well maintained and secure. Risk assessments, fire drills and maintenance had been undertaken on the boarding houses and these documents were being maintained and reviewed regularly. Staff were observed to be working in a friendly and supportive manner within the boarding areas and the children were responding to this positive approach.

# Enjoying and Achieving

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.(NMS 11)
- 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)

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

NMS 11, NMS 18, NMS 27, NMS 43, NMS 46.

House staff were working closely with the educational and support staff at the school ensuring that the children residing there were being given the support and help they needed. Boarding children's leisure time activities were being well supported by the staff and took account of the needs of both the individual child as well as the group for both planned and unplanned activities.

Boarding children were seen to be living and working in pleasant surroundings that were warm, well lit and well maintained. The furnishings and decorations in individual children's bedrooms and living areas were seen to be meeting the needs of the children but there were areas within some of the boarding houses that required redecoration and refurbishment.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Boarders had a wide range of different activities to take part in either at the school or sites away from the school. Those boarders who went on off-site activities said, that they enjoyed taking part in the many and varied different activities. Staff were observed to be assisting and helping the children when required during the activities. Boarders confirmed that they had influenced the choice of activities offered to them by having new activities added to their activities options e.g. fencing. They also confirmed that they went out to different types of activities and venues e.g. theatres, football fixtures and the cinema. Boarders said that they enjoyed taking part in the Combined Cadet Force activities at the school. Boarders also indicated that they had if they wanted the opportunity to take time out for themselves then they could. It was observed during the inspection process boarders of all cultures working together in a happy and friendly way.

# 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 receive personal support from staff.(NMS 14)
- 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)

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

NMS 12, NMS 14, NMS 19, NMS 21, NMS 30 NMS 36

Children boarding at the school were being treated fairly and without favouritism by the staff. Relationships between the staff and children were friendly and positive. Boarding children were aware of the boundaries that they could operate within but staff were also aware of the many differing needs of the children from a wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The school provided career guidance to the children and their parents on how they would develop their future careers on leaving school.

## EVIDENCE:

Boarding children were able to keep in touch with their parents by regular phone contact, e-mail, letters and family weekends. Boarders were being encouraged to influence decisions made in the school by their involvement with the school council, house committees, monitors meetings and food committee. The school also enabled boarders to have access to an Independent Listener as well as an Independent Counsellor if they needed to. Both the Independent Listener and the Independent Counsellor made regular visits to the school and children were made aware of these visits. Boarders spoken with during the inspection process confirmed that they had good working relationships with the house staff and that they could speak to any member staff for advice if they wanted to. This process was observed to be happening on a regular basis during the inspection process. Parents were actively being encouraged to take part in all aspects of the school life of their children by the school. This was being achieved by parents having regular dialogue with the house staff,

attending events taking place within the school involving their children e.g. sports matches, plays and music recitals and representation on the school governing body.

# 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)

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

NMS 20, NMS 40, NMS 42, NMS 44, NMS 45, NMS 50.

The children boarding at the school had and wore their own clothes, there were places to store their valuables securely to which they had a key and advice was given to them by staff on how to look after their money.

## EVIDENCE:

The boarding houses were found to be well maintained, generally well decorated and safe. Those bedrooms visited by invitation during the inspection were found to be pleasantly decorated, warm and personalised by the children. There were separate and distinct sleeping areas for boys and girls. There were appropriate levels of privacy for washing, toileting, showering and bathing. Though some boarders indicated that sometimes they felt privacy could be improved on particularly in the shower areas. The school indicated that they would look at ways of trying to improve privacy in this area. One senior boarder commented that there was a need for extra showers within the house and the school again indicated that they would act upon this suggestion. Staff were observed knocking and waiting before entering children's bedrooms. Boarding children could, if they needed to, purchase toiletries from the school shop for their personal use or go shopping at the weekend in Barnard Castle.

# 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 placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.(NMS 51)
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits (NMS 52)

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

NMS 1, NMS 9, NMS 10, NMS 23, NMS 31, NMS 32, NMS 33, NMS 34, NMS 35

There had been significant changes to the senior management team since the last inspection with the the appointment of a new Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster. The school was being managed in an effective, caring and efficient manner for the benefit of the children.

## **EVIDENCE:**

There was available at the school a statement of the school's Principles and Practices that outlined the principles of care and practice for those children who boarded at the school. Records examined confirmed that each child had an individual file showing when they had come into the school, where they lived and the progress they were making in the school. Staff personnel records examined contained the information required about, appropriate references, contracts, Criminal Record Bureau Checks and employment histories. There were regular monitoring checks undertaken of children's

welfare by the Housemasters, the Deputy Headmaster and this information was included in reports to the head teacher. Staff training was regularly undertaken by staff and records were maintained of this training e.g. child protection training. All staff were in receipt of documentation outlining the care practices and principles to be used at the school. The senior management team in conjunction with the house staff were providing strong and effective management organisation for the different houses to be found at Barnard Castle School.

# 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

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

| <b>STAYING SAFE</b> |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i>  | <i>Score</i> |
| <b>2</b>            | 3            |
| <b>3</b>            | 3            |
| <b>4</b>            | 2            |
| <b>5</b>            | 2            |
| <b>13</b>           | 3            |
| <b>22</b>           | N/A          |
| <b>26</b>           | 4            |
| <b>28</b>           | N/A          |
| <b>29</b>           | 4            |
| <b>37</b>           | 3            |
| <b>38</b>           | 2            |
| <b>39</b>           | 3            |
| <b>41</b>           | 3            |
| <b>47</b>           | 4            |

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

| <b>MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b> |              |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i>                    | <i>Score</i> |
| <b>12</b>                             | 3            |
| <b>14</b>                             | 3            |
| <b>19</b>                             | 3            |
| <b>21</b>                             | 3            |
| <b>30</b>                             | 4            |
| <b>36</b>                             | 4            |

| <b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b> |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i>                  | <i>Score</i> |
| <b>20</b>                           | 3            |
| <b>40</b>                           | 3            |
| <b>42</b>                           | 3            |
| <b>44</b>                           | 3            |
| <b>45</b>                           | 3            |
| <b>50</b>                           | 3            |

# SCORING OF OUTCOMES

## Continued

| MANAGEMENT         |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i> | <i>Score</i> |
| <b>1</b>           | 3            |
| <b>8</b>           | 4            |
| <b>9</b>           | 3            |
| <b>10</b>          | 3            |
| <b>23</b>          | 2            |
| <b>31</b>          | 3            |
| <b>32</b>          | 3            |
| <b>33</b>          | 3            |
| <b>34</b>          | 4            |
| <b>35</b>          | 3            |
| <b>51</b>          | N/A          |
| <b>52</b>          | N/A          |

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) |
|-----|----------|--|--|
| 1   | BS4141   | It is recommended that a review be undertaken of the security of the boarding areas and that this be undertaken in conjunction with the local fire department.   | 30/04/06   |
| 2   | BS1648   | It is recommended that a review be undertaken of the accommodation and number of beds within the medical centre for boarders when they are ill.  | 30/04/06   |
| 3   | BS5 5    | It is recommended that the system of recording and monitoring of complaints and sanctions used in the boarding houses be further developed to include the use of an external person.   | 30/04/06   |
| 4   | BS77     | It is recommended that the children's boarding welfare plans be developed to take account of the following areas: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Economic Well-Being. | 31/07/06   |
| 5   | BS1515   | It is recommended that a review be undertaken of the medication policies and procedures as well as the methods of medication dispensing within the boarding houses.  | 31/07/06   |
| 6   | BS3838   | It is recommended that all staff files be reviewed to ensure that any missing information is entered onto the documentation.   | 30/04/06   |

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

Darlington Area Office

No. 1 Hopetown Studios

Brinkburn Road

Darlington

DL3 6DS

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk)

Web: [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

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