

# Sedbergh School

Inspection report for Boarding School

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<b>Inspection date</b>	01/02/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Leonard Hird
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sedbergh School Ltd
<b>Head/Principal</b>	Andrew Fleck
<b>Nominated person</b>	Andrew Fleck
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	21/11/2007

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

The school is a co educational independent boarding school for young people aged 13 to 18. The school and boarding houses are situated in the centre of the small town in a rural part of Cumbria. There are a range of facilities within the school and the town.

## **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an announced inspection assessing the school's performance against the Every Child Matters outcomes for boarding schools and pupils. The inspection included a review of the school's progress in addressing the recommendation made at the last inspection. The inspection covered all of the key national minimum standards.

The school is very well managed and there is a supportive governing body and staff team. There is very good communication between the academic and residential staff. The boarding pupils are provided with a first class health care service, particularly those boarding pupils with complex health needs. Child protection and safe guarding is well managed and some links have been developed with outside agencies. The ethos of respect in the school is reflected through the pupils' excellent behaviour and they are a credit to the school. The school is providing an outstanding service and really does celebrate the diversity of the boarding community.

No recommendations were made this inspection.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the school was asked to continue with the refurbishment of the bathroom areas in the boarding houses and the school has now addressed this recommendation. As a result boarders benefit from improved facilities.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

The promotion of boarding pupil's health and well-being is of paramount importance to the school. Boarding pupils are actively encouraged to eat healthily, take part in

regular physical activity and to sensibly manage their lifestyles. Excellent advice is available on matters such as substance misuse, health and relationships via the school's age-appropriate personal social and health education programme. Boarding pupils are well supported by the house, nursing and academic staff. The different staff teams are very experienced in working with young people who are living away from their home environment for long periods.

There are comprehensive policies and procedures in place for the management of all health-related matters such as the administration of medication and first aid. The school's doctor, nursing staff and house matrons offer excellent levels of health support to boarding pupils when they are unwell. Unwell boarders who require treatment are cared for by the school's nursing team in the medical centre and where appropriate by members of the boarding house staff. There is a well-resourced and well-staffed medical centre available for use by boarding pupils when they are unwell or require medical advice. Clear procedures are followed for the secure storage, administration, recording and management of medication by house matrons. Monitoring of medication is under the supervision of the school nurse and regular recorded audits are undertaken to ensure that medication is being properly managed and correctly recorded. All of the boarding house staff team are first aid trained and where appropriate, have been assessed by the school nurse to administer medication to the boarding pupils. Accidents and emergency medical treatment is fully documented and records are regularly monitored and reviewed by the school nurse. There are close working relationships with the local health centre to ensure boarding pupils can access local health services. There is a very experienced and well-qualified school doctor who specialises in dealing with sports injuries. Boarding pupils are able to access specialist sports health professionals in disciplines such as physiotherapy and sports dieticians, through the medical centre.

Boarding pupils have a healthy, balanced and nutritious diet which helps in the promotion of their health and physical well-being. Menus are well-planned in conjunction with the boarding pupils and there is a wide range of choice available from the daily menu in each house. This includes a vegetarian option alongside dishes that are reflective of the cultural diversity of boarding pupils. Any special dietary and cultural needs are well catered for. Boarding pupils in general spoke very positively about the quality and quantity of food served and the catering arrangements in general. Boarding pupils comments included: 'there is a very good choice of different meals', 'the meals are delicious and the food is nutritional,' 'we all have specialist diets books so that we can maintain our healthy eating programme'. Though a small number of boarders indicated that in their opinion there could be a better choice of meals made available.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

There are comprehensive policies and procedures relating to the countering of bullying, complaints and child protection. Clear information is available for parents and boarding pupils on how concerns and complaints will be dealt with by the school.

Records are maintained of any complaint made and how it was addressed by the school or boarding house. These records are monitored on a regular basis by senior member of staff to ensure that they have been dealt with in accordance with the school's policies and procedures.

Bullying in its many forms is considered to be unacceptable by both the school and the boarding community. Boarding pupils indicate in their boarding pupil survey that there are very low levels of bullying occurring but some reported that they had been subject to a form of bullying they identified as 'banter'. The school is aware of this and is rigorously ensuring that this practice no longer happens anywhere on the school's campus. Boarding pupils indicate that if bullying does occur then staff quickly address the issue. Records are maintained of incidents of bullying and how they are addressed with the various parties involved.

The school has a very experienced and well-qualified designated officer who deals with all matters relating to child protection and safeguarding. All of the staff, including the designated officer, regularly receive the appropriate training in safeguarding and child protection. All of the senior members of staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process of staff have received child protection and safer recruitment training. The school's policies and procedures are compatible with those of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and some links have been developed with the Local Authority Designated Officer. Any information relating to safeguarding or child protection matters is kept securely by the designated officer.

The school has comprehensive policies and procedures in place for the employment of staff. Robust checks are undertaken on all potential employees before they commence work at the school. All staff employed at the school are required to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check at enhanced level and to take part in a thorough recruitment process. All of the information relating to staff employed at the school is comprehensively maintained on the school's secure computerised single central record.

There are comprehensive health and safety systems in place to prevent risks to boarding pupils both on and off the school campus. There are regular fire drills and practices taking place and these are well documented by the school's health and safety team. Boarding pupils are aware of the need for fire drills and practices and confirm they are occurring on a regular basis throughout the school year. There are effective systems in place to ensure the boarding houses are secure. Visitors cannot access any house without permission or being escorted by a member of staff and signing in.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

There are close working relationships with the house and academic staff to ensure there are good levels of support available for the boarding pupils. The house matrons are an integral part of the support systems offered in the boarding community and

boarders commented that they would often choose to speak to matron in the first instance on any problems they may have. They did confirm, however, that they are fully aware they can speak to any member of staff, at any time, for support. The boarding pupils are confident that there is little or no discrimination occurring. There are independent listeners and counsellors available for boarding pupils to speak to if they have any concerns or issues. Boarding pupils can access the school nurse and chaplain for personal support if necessary. Information is displayed throughout the boarding houses and school on how to contact all support networks, including external help-lines.

The school practices a policy of equal opportunity for all. Full account is taken of the differing needs, abilities, culture and background of boarding pupils, so that no individual is disadvantaged. Boarding pupils are well supported by members of the various house staff teams who understand their often complex and diverse needs which enables them to enjoy their life at the school. Boarders confirm they live and work well together and are treated fairly by members of the committed and hard-working staff teams.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Boarding pupils can contribute their views to the operation of boarding in the school. All of the boarding pupils are actively encouraged by members of staff to take part in the day-to-day operation of their boarding house. Boarding pupils indicate they are able to influence the decisions made regarding the running of the boarding house through regular meetings, the school council as well as through informal discussions with house masters or matrons. Boarding pupils confirm that they are kept informed by staff of the important events happening either in school or the boarding house. They also confirm that they are confident that the boarding house staff would be very supportive, should they have a problem. Telephones are available in every boarding house; all pupils have access to the internet, their own personal mobile phones which enables them to keep in contact with their family and close friends. Boarding pupils are very well supported and cared for from their first day at the boarding school. On arrival boarding pupils are teamed up with an older boarding pupil to help them to adjust to boarding life. There is a well-established programme of boarding induction for new boarding pupils at whatever time in the year they arrive. Members of the boarding house staff team ensure that the new boarders receive a friendly welcome and are fully supported in settling in to their new lifestyle.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Boarding pupils' valuables and money are protected, by providing pupils with a lockable storage facility. If they have valuables, pupils can give them to the matron or house staff for safe storage and records are maintained of possessions being kept by the staff team.

Houses are clean, homely and comfortable. Overall they are well decorated and furnishings are good. The rooms are well lit, heated and ventilated. There are communal areas in where boarding pupils can relax, watch television and play games. There are kitchen facilities where snacks can be made. The boarding pupils' rooms are generally of a good size. There is space for wardrobes and drawers, and boarding pupils can personalise their rooms.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Boarders' cultural and needs are fully taken into account and inclusive practice underpins the care provided. This is supported by up-to-date and appropriate policies and procedures. The school operates an open door policy allowing boarding pupils access to a wide variety of staff, including an independent listener, the chaplain and the medical staff for support. The school ensures boarders receive as much individual support as they need to excel, whatever their circumstances. The large boarding community is multi-cultural and boarding pupils demonstrate high levels of understanding and respect for each other.

The school provides a very clear and informative statement about its boarding principles that is shared with boarders, parents and staff. These principles are detailed in the school's prospectus and reflect the current boarding practice of the school. There is a strong and clear leadership structure in place for the school, as well as the boarding houses. Any crises affecting boarders' welfare is well managed and the school is pro-active in securing boarders' welfare, for example in enabling boarding pupils to attend specialist sports injury clinics. The organisation of the school enhances the welfare of the boarding community and there are good levels of communication between the different tiers of management at the school. There are robust risk assessments for on-site and off-site activities ensuring the safety of the boarding community. Record-keeping systems are comprehensive and regularly monitored. Boarders benefit from excellent levels of supervision from staff and are both supported in the numbers and quality of care staff provide. There is good induction training and good opportunities for professional development for boarding staff.