

# Walworth School

Inspection report for residential special school

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC040510
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Leonard Hird
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

---

<b>Address</b>	Walworth School Bluebell Way NEWTON AYCLIFFE County Durham DL5 7LP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 300194
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Durham County Council
<b>Head of care</b>	Peter Wallbanks
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Peter Wallbanks
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	20 November 2006

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Cripins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

## 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 outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## 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**

Walworth School provides education and residential care for children of primary and junior school age who have a Statement Special Educational Needs. The school is located in a residential area on the outskirts of Newton Aycliffe and is easily accessed by road. Acorn House, the school's residential building is located behind the main school and comprises four residential units each having its own living and sleeping areas. The number of residential pupils residing at the school may vary during the school week with some children residing for up to four nights per week however the maximum number children that may reside at the school is 18.

### **Summary**

Walworth School is providing a very caring, listening and homely environment for the residential pupils living at the school. The physical environment of the residential unit is well maintained, decorated and furnished. All of the bedrooms and living rooms used by the residential and extended day pupils use are well looked after. Health and safety is considered to be very important at the school and all of the staff working there are striving to ensure that the health and safety of residential pupils is not put at risk. The school's management team is providing very positive and effective leadership for both the staff and pupils working and living in the residential unit. All of the recording documentation being used in the school is up-to-date, accurate in content, easily understood and readily available. Residential pupils speak positively of their life both at the school and in the residential unit. They also confirmed that there is a good working relationship with the staff and they felt that they could trust the staff.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

The recommendations made at the last inspection have been completed. Walworth has been awarded the Healthy Eating Award for schools.

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

The provision is good.

There are good arrangements in place at Walworth School to ensure that the health needs of the residential pupils are properly assessed, monitored and promoted. Walworth School is ensuring that all of its procedures and practices are robust for the safe administration and handling of medication. All of the staff who are involved in the dispensing of medication receive regular training as well as First Aid training. Each pupil has a comprehensive care plan relating to their health needs. Staff are very supportive when a pupil is unwell and keep parents informed as to what is happening. Pupils commented positively about the care and support they receive in respect of their health needs. Pupils receive a varied, healthy and balanced diet which is contributing towards their overall health and well-being. Menus are well planned and contain several choices including a vegetarian one. The school has recently been awarded 'Healthy Schools' status. The catering and residential staff seek the children's views on the choices that occur on the menus through both informal discussions and the School Council. Pupils commented that there is plenty to eat and that there is a choice of different foods available to them. The pupils also said that they knew why they had to eat healthily and some even said that they were now trying to eat healthily when they went home.

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

The provision is good.

All information relating to individual pupils is securely kept and staff are fully aware of the need to treat this information in a confidential manner at all times. The information about the Independent Visitor and other agencies such as Child Line are well displayed in the residential unit. Residential pupils confirmed that their privacy is respected. An example given by some of the residential pupils is that staff and other residential pupils knock and wait before entering their bedroom. The school has a good system in place for dealing with complaints and the systems for recording these are satisfactory. Residential pupils know how to make a complaint and who they can talk to if they have a problem or concern. One pupil said, 'if we had a complaint we could speak to staff, they would sort it out 'or 'my key worker or the Headmaster, would sort it out.' Residential staff have a good working knowledge of the schools complaints procedure which is displayed throughout the school. Policies and procedures for dealing with abuse, including allegations made against staff are good. Staff have a good level of understanding of the procedures and know what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare of a child. Copies of the Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) guidelines are available. Child protection training is given with an annual update being provided to all staff by a representative of the LSCB. These matters ensure that residential pupils' welfare is safeguarded and promoted. The school has an anti-bullying policy which is easily understood by staff and residential pupils. There are robust systems in place to record and monitor any incidents of bullying. Comments made by residential pupils about bullying included, 'yes there is bullying sometimes but staff sort it out' and 'staff stop it and deal with them'. Staff and residential pupils reported that levels of bullying are low, which was confirmed by a review of the school's monitoring and reporting systems. Residential pupils are positively encouraged to develop socially acceptable behaviour. Systems are in place to support and promote positive behaviour. Comprehensive records are maintained in respect of all sanctions given to residential pupils. Any incidents of physical intervention by staff is thoroughly recorded by staff and this recording is monitored by the deputy head. The school has appropriate systems in place for dealing with residential pupils when they go missing. There are good systems in place regarding risk assessments for Health and Fire safety. Regular recorded fire drills and tests take place in the school and the residential unit at the appropriate time intervals. This means pupils are kept safe in the event of an emergency.

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

The provision is outstanding.

All of this very experienced group of staff who work at the school and in the residential unit support each other well ensuring that residential pupils are given all the help and support they require to positively succeed in their school career. Residential staff when planning the different types of activities for the residential pupils take full account of the differing needs, ages and cultural backgrounds to ensure that activities are extremely successful, for example, pupils are taking part very successfully in community events.

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

The provision is good.

There are good systems in place to consult with children and their parents. The school tries to keep in weekly telephone contact with all of the parents and more often if necessary. The school supports parents in attending meetings in respect of their child's progress by providing

transport if necessary. Children are consulted on many aspects of the running of the school via the school council. Observation of residential care staff interactions and relationships with residential pupils showed these to be very friendly and extremely positive. Every child at the school has a detailed individual educational plan in place. Additionally, children in residence have a placement and care plan. Good systems are in place to review the residential pupil's care plans as well as the Statement of Special Educational Need. Children can and do make a full contribution to their review meetings about their care and educational progress. Residential pupils are encouraged to maintain contact with their friends and families through telephone calls and visits. Children spoke positively about the support they receive from staff who will transport them if needed to meet up with their family and friends. Family and friends are also welcome to visit children at the school.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Walworth School is providing good levels of washing, showering, bathing facilities and privacy for the current number of residential pupils residing in Acorn House. Residential pupils have their own individual bedrooms and there is lockable storage space provided for them to keep their valuables in. They are also provided with a bedroom door key for their own privacy and it was observed that staff and other pupils knocked before they entered somebody else's bedroom. The residential unit is generally well maintained and decorated, however, there are some living areas particularly in the lounge that require refurbishment and redecoration. Walworth School provides good levels of support and information for those residential pupils who are transferring to secondary education at the end of the school year.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Walworth School is pupil centred, well-managed and forward thinking in its approach to addressing the needs of its residential pupils. The management, training and administration systems used in both the school and residential units is ensuring that the safety and welfare of the pupils is paramount. The school's Statement of Purpose gives readers clear and comprehensive information about the school and how it operates. There are good levels of experienced, well trained and qualified staff to meet the emotional and social needs of children. The Head of Care, the deputy head teacher and the Headmaster are nearly always accessible through the schools 'open door policy'. Residential pupils confirmed that they can talk to these individuals if they have a problem. The senior management team is providing strong and effective leadership for the school and the residential unit.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
----------	--------	----------

## **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the decoration and refurbishment of the lounge area be completed.

## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for residential special school

#### Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

**Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

**Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)



- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

**Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children can 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 (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

**Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

**Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**