



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Walworth School

**Walworth School
Bluebell Way
Newton Aycliffe
County Durham
DL5 7LP**

Lead Inspector
Mr Leonard Hird

Announced Inspection
20th November 2006 09:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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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 *Residential Special Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life.

Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Walworth School
Address	Walworth School Bluebell Way Newton Aycliffe County Durham DL5 7LP
Telephone number	01325 300194
Fax number	01325 312735
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Durham County Council
Name of Head	Peter Wallbank
Name of Head of Care	Mrs P. Coglan
Age range of residential pupils	4-11
Date of last welfare inspection	14 November 2005

Brief Description of the School:

Walworth School provides education and residential care for children of Primary and Junior school age who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

The school is located in a pleasant residential area on the outskirts of the of Newton Aycliffe.

It is easily accessed by road and is near to the town's shops and amenities.

Acorn House, the school's residential building is located behind the main school and comprised four residential units, each having its own living and sleeping areas

The number of residential pupils residing at the School varies during the school week with some children residing for up to four nights per week. The maximum number of children that may reside at the school is 18.

The school provides as an alternative to its residential services an extended school day service for children residing in either County Durham or other nearby local education authorities areas.

SUMMARY

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

This announced inspection of Walworth School took place during November 20 – 23rd 2006.

It found that of the 33 standard areas inspected 23 were met and 10 standard areas were exceeded.

The inspection process included talking to residential pupils, residential care and teaching staff, ancillary staff and members of the management team.

A residential pupils pre-inspection survey sent by the Commission for Social Care Inspection was looked at along with records, documents and information supplied by the school, parents and significant others.

The school had ensured that any recommendations made at the last inspection had been addressed.

Policies and procedures had been revised and updated in line with current regulatory and social developments.

The documentation examined during the inspection was accurate, well maintained, and readily available.

Residential pupils spoke positively of their life at the school and of their good working relationships with the residential care staff.

The schools management team provided positive and effective leadership to the residential unit.

This was a positive inspection of Walworth School, finding that the commitment of both the school and its staff to the development and welfare of the residential pupils was of a good standard.

What the school does well:

Walworth School provided a caring, listening and encouraging environment for residential pupils to develop in.

The Health and Safety of the residential pupils was considered to be very important and staff ensured that the needs of the residential pupils were being met.

The physical environment of Walworth School was found to be pleasant, generally well maintained and well looked after by residential pupils and staff.

The school took account of the differing views of the residential pupils via the school council, as well as the informal contacts made on a day-to-day basis, between staff and residential pupils.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Walworth School had developed and was continuing to develop all of its policies and procedures, training, guidance and information available to its staff, particularly in the area of care plan recording.

Walworth School had introduced a healthy eating program for all pupils.

The fire safety systems to be found both in the school and Acorn House, had significantly improved since the last inspection.

What they could do better:

Walworth School should continue to develop their care plan recording systems particularly in the area of major incident reporting.

The school should fully implement the formal staff supervision and appraisal system

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

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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)

The Commission considers Standard 14 the key standard to be inspected.

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

NMS 14 and NMS 15

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

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

Residential pupils were given advice, guidance, and support in health and personal care issues in a positive and constructive manner by all staff.

The health and medication needs of residential pupils were well-monitored, administered, and recorded by staff.

There were healthy eating choices of meals on the menu and meals were well-prepared, nutritious, and wholesome in content.

EVIDENCE:

There were clear written policies and procedures available for staff to promote the health and welfare of residential pupils.

Residential care staff were observed to be providing, advice and support to the residential pupils in a friendly and positive way.

Records were being maintained of medication prescribed, given, and disposed of, as well as the parental permission for the dispensation of medication by staff.

'Homely' medications were checked out and administered in accordance with the school's medication policy and procedures.

Staff who administer medication had undergone appropriate training.

Walworth School had sought the assistance of GPs to provide split scripts for residential pupils enabling staff to monitor and administer medication more effectively.

Staff supported residential pupils, when they had appointments with health professionals.

Medication was stored securely in the school.

Staff had received training in first aid, food hygiene and child protection.

Records were being maintained of this training on individual members of staff personnel files.

Food was prepared by a well managed, and trained staff in a modern kitchen that met environmental health standards.

Residential pupils, along with day pupils and staff took their main meals in a large and pleasant dining room.

A number of different healthy eating choices including a vegetarian choice were available.

Menus showing different choices available were easy to read and well displayed in the dining hall.

Walworth School maintained up-to-date records of the pupils' specialist diets as well as of the menus used in the school.

Pupils residing in the residential houses had easy access to drinking water as well as having hot drinks, fresh fruit, and snacks readily available.

A residential pupil commented that, 'the food was nice', another commented 'we eat healthily' whilst another commented, 'they would like more fish and chips and crisps on the menu'.

All of the residential pupils spoken with confirmed that they knew why they had to eat healthily and that on the whole the food was good.

There was a school council for residential pupils, where they could raise issues about the different types of food and menus that were available to them.

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 by others.(NMS 6)
- 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.(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, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers.(NMS 27)

The Commission considers Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

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

NMS 3, NMS 4, NMS 5, NMS 6, NMS 8, NMS 10, NMS 26 and NMS 27

Quality in this outcome area is **good**,

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

Walworth School, were working to and within the standards. The school were positively trying to ensure that residential pupils who go to the school were safe.

EVIDENCE:

Residential care staff were working in a friendly, caring and supportive way with residential pupils.

The relaxed family atmosphere observed in Acorn House created an appropriate sense of care and supervision to maintain residential pupils' personal privacy.

Staff before entering bedrooms were observed to knock and wait.

Staff in discussion confirmed they were fully aware of the school's policy and procedures relating to the confidentiality of information relating to the residential pupils.

All information and records relating to residential pupils were being kept securely in the house units or where appropriate in the school office.

Residential pupils who filled in CSCI's 'Have your say about Walworth School Questionnaire', indicated that they knew who to go to if they had a problem.

One residential pupil commented, 'they would go to the house staff if they had a problem' another commented, 'they would go to their key worker'.

Information was available in the houses on how pupils could contact the Independent Listener and external agencies such as Childline.

The schools, Independent Listener, regularly visited Acorn House.

Residential pupils could also access the Independent Listener by telephone, e-mail or by asking staff to make an appointment.

The school had appropriate policies and procedures in place for dealing with bullying and an Anti-Bullying message was reinforced by the schools 'Seals' initiative.

The school's child protection policy, procedure, and guidance documents were available for staff reference.

The documents were consistent with both national guidance and local policies and procedures.

The Deputy Head Teacher and Head of Care were the designated Child Protection Procedure Coordinators, through which child protection referrals were made.

Records, referring to child protection issues were kept securely and were only available to authorised staff.

Regular monitoring checks were undertaken of this documentation by the local authority's officer, and reported on to the governing body each term.

Records were maintained of when and at what level staff had undertaken child protection training.

Similar records were maintained of training undertaken by staff in 'Team Teach'.

All staff employed at the school since 2002 had undergone before their employment the appropriate reference checks as well as the appropriate Criminal Records Bureau Check.

Checks had been undertaken on students, workmen and taxi drivers prior to their involvement with the school.

The school were continuing the good practice of re-checking all staffs' Criminal Records Bureau record every three years.

Records of this information were being kept securely and maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Regular fire, security, and safety checks were being undertaken in the house units.

Durham County Council's Contracts Department, in conjunction with The Department of Transport and local Police Authority regularly undertook unannounced inspections of taxi and transport companies, who were contracted to the school.

These checks were being recorded and acted upon in accordance with the health and safety policy procedures of the school.

A new 'state-of-the-art' fire alarm system had recently been installed into the house units, along with new fire doors on all of the corridors and bedrooms.

A placing officer commented in their 'Placing Officers Questionnaire' that, 'the school was meeting the safety needs of their client'

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 both within the school and in the local community.(NMS 13)
- Children receive individual support when they need it.(NMS 22)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

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

NMS 12, NMS 13 and NMS 22.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**

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

Residential House staff worked closely with teaching and support staff to ensure that residential pupils were given the help and support they required.

Both planned and unplanned activities were well supported by staff and took account of the differing needs of the age and cultural backgrounds of the pupils.

EVIDENCE:

Residential and educational staff worked closely together to ensure that there were regular exchanges and handovers of information during the day.

Following the development of the school's new homework policy, residential staff were observed supporting residential pupils in this undertaking.

Residential staff attended regular internal and external reviews and meetings that took place regarding residential pupils.

Records were maintained of the progress residential pupils were making in the school and residential unit.

A placing officer commented that, 'the school was meeting the complex needs of their client'

The Head of Care was a member of the senior management team at the school and was actively involved in the development of the residential service.

During the week and after the school day, there were wide ranges of activities to take part in e.g. visits to Rough-and-Tumble , going to the Cubs or visiting the Forest School project during the summer term.

There were a number of different indoor activities available to the residential pupils on Acorn House e.g. playing on the computer, board games, cards, playing with toys, video games or just sitting and watching television.

These activities were available for both residential pupils and extended day pupils.

Residential pupils commented, 'they enjoyed going to the Cubs, because it was different' another commented, 'they enjoyed going to Rough-And-Tumble because, they could run around there'.

It was observed that staff were supporting individual residential pupils when they had problems.

Staff dealt with these problems in a sympathetic and caring way.

One pupil commented, if I'm unhappy. 'I just tell, a member of staff, then, I feel happy'

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 living away from home at school.(NMS 20)

The Commission considers Standards 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

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

NMS 2, NMS 9, NMS 11, NMS 17, and NMS 20.

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

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

Walworth School encouraged and supported residential pupils to voice their opinions on how the school was run.

Residential pupils at the school were being treated fairly and without favouritism by the staff and in line with their Statement of Educational Need.

Residential care staff were aware of the differing needs of the children, particularly those from differing backgrounds.

Relationships between residential pupils, their families, and staff were friendly and positive.

Guidance was given to residential pupils and their parents on how they transferred to secondary education.

EVIDENCE:

Residential pupils were encouraged via their involvement with the Schools Council to influence how the school was managed.

The school had an 'open door' policy to enable any residential pupil to speak to any member of staff or if they wished they could speak to the Independent listener.

It was observed during the inspection that residential pupils and staff were working closely together to deal with the day-to-day living problems occurring on Acorn House.

One residential pupil commented that, 'they had spoken to staff about the temperature in Acorn House being too hot at night, following the fitting of the new fire doors and that they could not sleep properly'.

It was confirmed by the school's manager that they were looking at different ways of controlling the heating system in Acorn house so that it was not too hot at night.

All pupils at Walworth School had a statement of Special Educational Needs before their admission. Records were maintained at the school of this process.

All of the residential pupils had an individual care plan.

The school had recently introduced a new user-friendly style of care planning documentation.

Care plan records were maintained in an up-to-date and accurate manner.

All of this documentation was kept securely.

Walworth School, actively encouraged parents to take part in all areas of the school life, eg parental representation on the Governing Body.

Regular meetings and the reviews were held between the school and parents, social workers and significant others.

Staff, also confirmed that for those residential pupils who would be going to secondary school there were a regular planning meetings with parents and staff of the new school wherever possible.

Residential pupils were able to speak in private to their parents by phone, by e-mail or by using their own mobile phone.

It was observed that residential pupils were able to talk to their parents by phone, and in private during the inspection, where appropriate.

Records of communications between parents and staff were kept.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

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, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- 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)

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

NMS 16, NMS 21 , NMS 23, NMS 24 and NMS 25

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

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

Residential pupils at Walworth School wore their own clothes.

Walworth School provided information to residential pupils and their parents on the transfer process to secondary school.

There were places for residential pupils to store their valuables securely in their room. Residential pupils had their own key to this facility and advice was given to them by staff on how to look after their possessions.

There were appropriate levels of washing, toileting, showering and bathing facilities available in Acorn House.

EVIDENCE:

Residential pupils had a lockable draw for storing small personal items and house staff could provide a larger lockable facility for other valuables.

The accommodation provided for residential pupils was clean and generally well maintained. They were, however a few areas, in Acorn House that needed decorative and refurbishment attention following the installation of the new fire doors and fire alarm system.

One residential pupil commented that 'their room was okay and that they could put up their own posters'.

Another commented that 'they thought the new bedroom doors were very heavy, and not easy to open and close'.

It was confirmed by staff that this issue had been raised with the schools senior management team and that they were looking at ways of addressing the problem.

The communal areas in Acorn House were suitably furnished and comfortable.

There were televisions, music systems and computers provided, to which the residential pupils had easy access.

An adequate number of toilets, showers, baths, and hand basins were available in Acorn House.

There were suitable levels of privacy in the bathing, toilet and shower areas for residential pupils.

There were no residential girl pupils at school during the inspection but the school could accommodate girl pupils in a separate unit with similar facilities if necessary.

Management

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 is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.(NMS 18)
- There are adequate records of both 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)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

NMS 1, NMS 18, NMS 19, NMS 28, NMS 29, NMS 30, NMS 31 and NMS 33.

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

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

Walworth School is well-led, pupil centred and forward thinking in its approach to meeting the needs of residential pupils.

The management, training and administration systems used in the school ensured the safety and welfare of the pupils.

EVIDENCE:

Walworth School provided an easily read Statement of Principles and Practices for parents, residential pupils, significant others, and staff.

Residential pupils had received an easily read pamphlet about living at Acorn House.

Parents and social workers confirmed that they had received this information.

Every residential pupil had information maintained in their file that clearly indicated the placing authority, the progress they were making at the school and where they lived.

The school's organisation of Acorn House had created a safe and supportive atmosphere, in which residential pupils were cared for by a trained, experienced and dedicated house staff team.

Staffs' personnel records examined contained information about different types of training, contracts of employment, references and employment histories.

Records were also maintained of Team Teach training and enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks.

It was confirmed by the school that in the Spring Term of 2007, and as recommended in the previous report, a new system of formal staff supervision and appraisal was to be introduced.

The Local Education Authority's monitoring officer visited on a regular basis.

The monitoring officer looked at all of the documentation relating to the residential pupils, particularly in the areas of major incidents and complaints.

The outcomes of these visits were reported on both verbally and in writing to the Head Teacher and governing body for comment and action.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

“X” in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

“N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	3
15	4

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	3
7	3
8	3
10	3
26	4
27	4

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	4
13	4
22	4

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	4
9	4
11	3
17	3
20	4

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	3
21	4
23	3
24	3
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	3
30	3
31	4
32	3
33	3

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

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.	RS29	The schools senior management team should develop its in-service training programme to take account of the needs of the residential care staff team particularly in team development and supervision.	

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