

# Brymore School

Inspection report for boarding school

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<b>Inspection date</b>	20 March 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Debbi Flint / Barbara Davies
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Registered person</b>	Somerset County Council (Education)
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Malcolm Lloyd
<b>Nominated person</b>	
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	17 April 2005

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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 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**

Brymore School of Rural Technology is a land based single sex school for boys which was established in 1952. The school is a state boarding school and education is free. There is a modest charge for boarding provision.

The school offers a unique opportunity for boys from 13 - 17 years of age to develop their knowledge of farming, horticulture, engineering and sports. The school is broadly christian with an ethos based on resilience, responsibility and resourcefulness.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

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

The provision is good.

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

The provision is good.

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

The provision is outstanding.

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

The provision is good.

#### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The quality of boarding provision at Brymore School is good. Most of the National Minimum Standards are met and some are exceeded. Boarding supports and contributes to boys education and boarders derive considerable benefit from living in a unique community where they are able to develop their interests in agriculture, horticulture and farming. Boarders with additional learning needs benefit from the holistic relationship between education and care and the regular routines that form part of living in this community. There is strong and effective leadership and the different but complementary styles of the senior management team nurtures a culture which supports boarders wellbeing.

The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection in to raise the standard of care within boarding provision. Action taken includes: the building of two new boarding houses with outstanding facilities, robust safeguarding policies and procedures, improvements in the recruitment process and the introduction of more effective monitoring systems. The school's strategic plan also includes the renovation of a third boarding house in the future.

Boarding accommodation and facilities have been upgraded considerably. The two new boarding houses are decorated and furnished to a very high standard and have large and well facilitated common rooms and kitchen facilities where boys can prepare simple snacks. The sleeping accommodation in these houses is also of a high standard and all bedroom furniture is of high quality. However the school does still have some older accommodation in use and the standard of accommodation in a third boarding house and in some mews flats is significantly lower. Boys living in this accommodation generally state that the disparity is not an issue for them as they feel that they have other benefits such as close proximity to local facilities. All boys have equal access to the school's extensive grounds which include a farm, workshops and wall gardens.

Staff support boarders' physical and mental health well. There is a well equipped health centre which is open from early in the morning until after bedtime. Matrons assess and monitor health and administer all required medication. They provide good care for boys with any specific health needs and are also able to deal with most sporting injuries that may occur. They will refer elsewhere if necessary. The school's farming emphasis and its strong sporting tradition provides good opportunities for exercise and meals are healthy and well balanced. A significant number of boarders have recently stated that supper portions are too small which the school has addressed.

Boarder's safety is supported by a child protection policy and led by the deputy head who is also the person with overall responsibility for boarding. He is the designated person for child protection and is also responsible for leading on discipline. Boarders are courteous, self confident and well behaved. Some boarders carry out monitoring duties and are good role models for younger boys. They state that there is now very little bullying in the school and it has significantly decreased in recent years. All boarders can identify several members of staff whom they can approach with any concerns and the school also provides a counselling service. The school's employment and vetting procedures are generally robust; CRB checks are in place, although there are not yet any written agreements between the school and two adults not employed by the school. The school has good fire safety measures in place.

Boarders engage in an outstanding range of activities which have been thoroughly risk assessed. All buildings and grounds are also free from hazards to safety but written risk assessments for some areas are not yet in place. Boarders have developed competence in activities that range from rugby to blacksmithing. All boarders also participate in farming activities such as milking the cows. The school's strong links between education and care enable boys to participate in many enjoyable activities which are also educational and enable them to develop confidence and responsibility.

Boarders are articulate and sociable. They are clearly used to consultation and are able to express their views confidently. There is a school council. Boarders have also recently taken part in a food survey completing questionnaires as part of a quality assurance process. A handbook for new boys was devised by boys themselves as was an anti bullying leaflet. All new boarders receive an induction and are appropriately welcomed to the school.

The school has a clear statement of boarding principles and practice and there are monitoring procedures in place for sanctions, high risk activities and complaints. Boarders benefit from a well managed and well established staff team who deliver consistent care. Staff are supported with training and state that the informal supervision which they receive is excellent. However there are not yet formal processes in place for the supervision and appraisal of staff.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Evidence supports a strong commitment to equality and diversity in practice, underpinned by an equal opportunities policy. The school celebrates cultural and religious festivals such as St Patrick's day. There is a recognition that not all boys' needs are the same and individual needs are well met. The school's staff team is very effective at enabling boys with particular additional needs to achieve through the provision of good support, firm discipline and activities which promote personal development and responsibility. One boarder said, 'At my old school I got barely any help. Now I have come here I get lots of help.'

## **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
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### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure that areas which are assessed by staff as being from hazards also have written risk assessments in place (NMS 47.9)
- ensure that there are written agreements in place between the school and any adult not employed by the school but living in the same building as boarding accommodation (NMS 39.4)
- ensure that there is an appropriate process in place for the regular review of performance of each member of staff with boarding duties by a senior or experienced member of staff (NMS 34.5)