

# inspection report

Residential Special School (not registered as  
a Children's Home)

## **Walton Hall**

Stafford Road

Eccleshall

Stafford

Staffs

ST21 6JR

11 and 12 February 2004

## Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

### The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

## Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

### The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

**SCHOOL INFORMATION****Name of School**

Walton Hall

**Address**

Stafford Road, Eccleshall, Stafford, Staffs, ST21 6JR

**Tel No:**

01785 850420

**Fax No:****Email Address:****Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

Staffordshire County Council

**Name of Head**

Mr R Goldthorpe

**NCSC Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

Residential special

School

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

25/03/03

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		11/12 February 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:30 am	
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Christopher Garrett	105812
<b>Name of NCSC Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	George Plant	
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>		Not applicable	
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>		Not applicable	

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Walton Hall. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Recommended action by the school
- Advisory recommendations on boarding welfare
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the lay assessor (where relevant)
- The Head's response and proposed action plan to address findings

## INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections are undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 as amended, with additional visits as required.

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Walton Hall is a special residential school situated in a rural part of Staffordshire. It provides day and residential education pupils with moderate learning difficulties aged between the ages of five and nineteen. The school offers both five day and flexi type boarding arrangements. It has 40 pupils who make use of the 33 available beds dependant on their boarding arrangements.

The residential units are situated in two buildings placed with in the schools extensive grounds. Goldsmith House is a purpose built unit offering accommodation for five younger boys and five senior girls. The Old Hall is a Victorian listed building and provides three residential units. Gainsborough offers 10 full time residential placements for senior boys, Broughton provides ten places for post 16 female students and Shugborough which accommodates 10 post 16 male students

The school is situated within its own extensive grounds which offers arrange of facilities which include recreation areas for football, tennis and basket ball, motorcycle riding and maintenance areas, adventure play area, a small animal farm and a conservation area. The school has a number of staff and their families who are resident on site.

## PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school provides and encourages

- Good liaison between parents and school
- Involvement of parents and children and young people in key decision making
- Good opportunities for the children and young people to be consulted about events and issues concerning their welfare at the school. These include a School Council and the participation in the employment of staff
- Involvement of children and young people in the choice of furniture and fittings
- Good relationships between staff and pupils based on honesty, respect and interest
- Good key working system
- A wide range of activities including a life skills programme
- Children and young people top express their own identity
- Good access to independent Visitor
- Good homely accommodation
- Safe and secure environment
- Good measured responses to National care Standard recommendations

## WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school is to be commended on its responses to the last reports recommendations. A substantial number of recommendations were either fully or partially addressed. The school needs to focus on the following points for the coming year

- The school needs to address any recommendation still outstanding from last years report
- Revisit a number of policies and guidance to accommodate observations made in this report. These Include guidance on the searching of processions, missing persons procedures (absconding), use of mobile phones, child protection access to the Internet and developing a system for notifying the commission about significant events and any complaints made against the school.
- Produce a plan for the renovation and refurbishment of the bath and shower faculties in the Old Hall
- Address the environmental and health and safety issues identified within this report.
- Complete individual risk assessments for activities
- Record all measures of control and support in hardbound books
- Finalise the draft recruitment policy

## CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This is the second Inspection that the school has received by the National Care Standards Commission. The school is to be commended for the spirit it has adopted in responding to the recommendations made in the last report. A comprehensive action plan was drawn up and as recommendations were completed senior managers retained evidence of the action taken in a portfolio that was made available to the Inspectors during the Inspection.

The general impression concerning the welfare of the children and young people is good and in a number of areas very good. The Inspectors were able to identify a number of good practices within the school. Both parents and children spoke positively about the care that they receive and their experience of boarding at the school. One of the schools greatest assets is the relationship it is able to build up with parents. The school operates an open door policy and encourages the parents to become involved in all aspects of their children's education and boarding. Relationships between staff and children and young people is very good. Senior management remain proactive in providing an ever-increasing amount of resources within the school, the residential areas and the campus. The Head Teacher leads a strong and committed team of care workers.

## NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

**Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the National Care Standards Commission to the Local Education Authority or Department for Education and Skills under section 87(4) of the Children Act 1989 arising from this inspection?**

NO

**Notification to be made to:**

**Local Education Authority  
Secretary of State**

NO

NO

<b>The grounds for any Notification to be made are:</b>



## IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Recommended Actions from the last Inspection visit fully implemented?

NO

**If No, the findings of this inspection on any Recommended Actions not implemented are listed below:**

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
4	RS3	The school produces guidance for staff and pupils on how searches to pupil's private possessions would be conducted and recorded.	01/07/04
10	RS5	Child protection policy should include advice to staff that the failure to report actual or suspicion of abuse would result in disciplinary action.	01/05/04
11	RS5	Provide guidance to staff who are subject to allegation.	01/05/04
12	RS5	Child protection Training should be given to all staff including ancillary staff.	01/05/04
14	RS6	School should undertake regular risk assessments of places and times that can become hot spots for bullying and take appropriate action.	01/05/04
35	RS24	Windows to Goldstone House are repaired or replaced.	01/09/04
40	RS25	Provision of another toilet to Shugborough landing.	01/01/05
42	RS26	All checks to fire fighting equipment should be recorded in the Fire Log Book.	01/05/04
44	RS26	Exposed central heating pipes should be covered or boxed.	01/07/04
47	RS27	CRB checks should be undertaken staff, governors, activity organisers and for members of staffs families over 18) living on site.	01/06/04
48	RS27	References should be provided on headed notepaper.	01/06/04
49	RS27	Recruitment Policy and Procedures reviewed.	01/06/04
50	RS30	Whole School supervision Policy.	01/06/04

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

**Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.**

RECOMMENDED ACTION			
Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.			
No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS3	It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the use of mobile phones and that this be included in the Parents Residential handbook and also in and Pupil Handbook.	01/07/04
2	RS3	It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the used of computers and the access to the internet. This information should be included in the Residential Parents handbook.	01/07/04
3	RS4	It is recommended that the complaints procedure for parents include specific information about being able to make complaint directly to the NCSC	01/06/04
4	RS4	It is recommended that the school develop a system by which the NCSC is notified of any serious complaints	01/06/04
5	RS4	It is recommended that the Child complaint procedure be reviewed to include the comments made in this report	01/07/04
6	RS5	It is recommended that the child protection policy and guidance be reviewed to address the issues raised in this report	01/06/04
7	RS5	It is recommended that staff receive guidance on the recording of injuries and signs of abuse on body maps.	01/06/04
8	RS6	It is recommended that the school produce a pupils and students version of the anti bullying policy	01/07/04
9	RS7	It is recommend that the school implement a system of informing the NCSC of all significant events occurring at the school.	01/06/04

10	RS8	It is recommended that the missing person policy included advise on debriefing a child or young person on return to the school.	01/07/04
11	RS8	It is recommended that individual risk assessment on absconding be completed for all boarders	01/07/04
12	RS8	It is recommended that the response to a missing child be covered as part of staff induction.	01/07/04
13	RS8	It is recommended that a separate record of unauthorised absences (absconding) is maintained and that senior staff regularly monitors this so that trend analysis can take place	01/07/04
14	RS10	It is recommended that all sanction are recorded appropriately	01/05/04
15	RS10	It is recommended that the information concerning sanctions entered in the Residential Behavioural Records Book be comprehensively recorded	01/05/04
16	RS10	It is recommended that the record of sanctions is recorded in a bound and numbered book, which contains a list of permitted sanction.	01/05/04
17	RS10	It is recommended that children and young people are encouraged to have their views about the physical intervention recorded on the Physical Support Record.	01/05/04
18	RS10	It is recommended that the records of physical support are recorded in a bound and numbered book	01/05/04
19	RS12	It is recommended that the school introduce a system of identifying joint education and care objectives and for recording the work undertaken to achieve these	01/09/04
20	RS13	It is recommended that individual risk assessments are completed for each boarder for each activity that they are participating in	01/06/04
21	RS17	It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the Implementation and monitoring of care plans	01/05/04
22	RS17	It is recommended the system for completing care plans is reviewed and consideration is given to points raised in this report.	01/06/04
23	RS23	It is recommended that the school respond to any recommendations made in the Fire officers Report.	01/05/04
24	RS24	It is recommended that the dining furniture in goldstone House and the old Hall is upgraded	01/09/04
25	RS24	It is recommended that the school review the dining room arrangements.	01/09/04

26	RS24	It is recommend that all windows in the Old Hall be repaired and have an appropriate device fitted to open and shut them.	01/06/04
27	RS24	It is recommended that the broken bed in Shugborough is replaced.	01/05/04
28	RS24	It is recommended that the radiator in the activity room (old Hall) and single bedroom (Broughton) is fitted with a cover and exposed lengths of hot water pipes are boxed in.	01/05/04
29	RS24	It is recommended that all windows are risk assessed and any that there is a significant risk of impact are either replaced with safety glass or safety film.	01/05/04
30	RS24	It is recommended that beds are at least 900m/m apart from each other	01/05/04
31	RS24	It is recommended that the power lead to the air hockey game is replaced	01/05/04
32	RS25	It is recommended that the school install another toilet in the Gainsborough unit.	01/01/05
33	RS25	It is recommended that the taps to baths are replaced	01/09/04
34	RS25	It is recommended that the school review all toilet and shower faculties in the Old Hall and produce a plan for their replacement and refurbishment	01/0105
35	RS14	It is recommended that the school ensures that all relevant information is reflected in the main school files and boarding school files	01/05/04
36	RS14	It is recommended that the menu should be reviewed by a dietician	01/05/04
37	RS14	It is strongly recommended that the services of nurse specialist input be retained with view to increasing where necessary	01/05/04
38	RS18	It is recommended that the school review the content of information held in files on the boarding side of the school compared to the main school files	01/05/04
39	RS27	It is recommend that the school ensure that all new staff and volunteers are CRB approved at the enhanced level before commencing employment at the school.	01/05/04
40	RS27	It is recommended that the school finalise the draft recruitment policy	01/05/04
41	RS27	It is recommended that the school ensure that telephone references are noted on the staff	01/05/04
42	RS27	It is recommended that a record of staff interviews according to the interview process and any specification for the post.	01/05/04
43	RS26	It is recommend that the school arrange a visit by the fire officer	01/04/04

44	RS26	It is recommend that the school review with staff their awareness of the site of asbestos in the school and make provision for staff to sign the schools statement relating to this as according to the schools own internal procedures.	01/04/04
45	RS26	It is recommend that the school ensure that systems for checking completion of work completed are in place	01/04/04
46	RS26	It is recommend that a risk assessment is completed in relation	01/04/04
47	RS28	It is recommend that the school review the staff rota with particular regard to future changes required to meet changing demands of children.	01/09/04
48	RS29	It is recommended that the school provide training for staff in the care of children with autism	01/09/04
49	RS30	It is recommend that the review the structure and content of supervision	01/05/04

#### ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

Identified below are advisory recommendations on welfare matters addressed in the main body of the report and based on the National Minimum Standards, made for consideration by the school.

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS3	It is advised that information concerning the searching of a children room or possessions is included in the Resident parents handbook.
2	RS4	It is advised that the information on complaints is in included either the School Prospectus and /or the residential Parents Handbook.
3	RS8	It is advised that information on the action that the school will take if a young person absents themselves from the school is included in the Residential Parents handbook
4	RS10	It is advised that when a child or young person declines to make a comment about a sanction or reward that this should be recorded by staff on the incident form.
5	RS10	It is advised that the school rephrases the word "jankers" from its pupil and student contracts

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

## PART B INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS

The following inspection methods were used in the production of this report

Direct Observation

YES

Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation  
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas

YES
YES

Checks with other Organisations

- Social Services
- Fire Service
- Environmental Health
- DfES
- School Doctor
- Independent Person
- Chair of Governors

YES
YES
YES
YES
YES
YES
YES

Tracking individual welfare arrangements  
Survey / individual discussions with boarders  
Group discussions with boarders  
Individual interviews with key staff  
Group interviews with House staff teams  
Staff Survey  
Meals taken with pupils  
Early morning and late evening visits  
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay  
Parent Survey  
Placing authority survey  
Inspection of policy/practice documents  
Inspection of records  
Individual interview with pupil(s)  
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments

YES
YES
YES
YES
YES
NO
YES
YES
YES
NA
YES
YES
NO
NA

Date of Inspection  
Time of Inspection  
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)  
Number of Inspector Days spent on site

11/02/04
0900
47
2

**Pre-inspection information and the Head's Self evaluation Form, provided by the school, have also been taken into account in preparing this report.**

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Age Range of Boarding Pupils**      **From**       **To**

### NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

**BOYS**

**GIRLS**

**TOTAL**

**Number of separate Boarding Houses**

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

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

"0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

## STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

### Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

### Key Findings and Evidence

### Standard met?

3

The school provides information about what it is setting out to do for the children and young people that it accommodates in a number of documents. These are the School Prospectus, the Residential Parents Handbook and the Statement of Purpose. When viewed together these provide all of the information required to meet this standard. During the last review of the Statement of Purpose Jan 2004 the school responded to a previous recommendation made in the last report to insert the name of the designated persons for Child protection in the school. It is the Inspectors understanding that the Statement of Purpose has routinely been circulated to parents along with the schools Annual Report, but will now be included in the Residential Parents handbook.

A number of parents returned completed questionnaires (14) and all of them stated that they had been provided with information about the school. A number of parents and guardians also attended a meeting with the Inspectors during which they confirmed that they had received information about the school and are regularly provided with updates.

The school has produced a student handbook which provides a description of each of residential units, names of staff, formation concerning the daily routines and a list of helpful contact numbers. The handbook has been designed with the help of staff and pupils. The handbook is illustrated with and the use of text and a number of photographs taken in and around the units provide a format that makes it readily accessible to the range of children, young people and students attending the school.



## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way that the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.
- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.

### Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

Children's opinions, and those of their families or significant others, are sought over key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. Feedback is given following consultations.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The Inspectors were able to find evidence of, and were advised about a numbers of features that the school has to promote the involvement of pupils, their families and significant others in key decision-making. These included the following:

- The Head teacher is keen that the children and young people attend and contribute to their annual and statutory reviews. All parents and guardians who completed questionnaires and attended a meeting with the Inspectors stated that they were encouraged to attend reviews during which they felt that their opinions and views were listened too.
- The school has a school council called the Walton Hall Youth Council (WHY), which meets on a half termly basis. An examination of the minutes of these meeting showed that the represented members elected from the pupils of the school are advised of issues that relate to the school such as building projects, informed about planned events and are given the opportunity to raise issues with the senior management. A member of the council advised the Inspectors that the council had recently influenced the organisation of meals at lunchtime and had responded to the counties consultancy papers on inclusion with the findings of their own survey.
- The post 16 students regularly hold a combined unit meeting where they routinely discuss items on food, activities and rules. The minutes showed that these meetings were instrumental in increasing the number of water coolers within the Old Hall.
- The senior boys unit and three-mixed unit have declined to have regular unit meetings but are encouraged to meet informally.
- Each of the residential units have been provided with a "Groans and Grumbles" Book where they can make any comments if the need arises.
- Each of the children and young people have a key worker with whom they meet regularly to agree their half termly targets that form a part of their care plan.
- All of the children and young people who completed questionnaires indicated that staff seeks their opinions on arrange of matters. These had resulted in a change to birthday meals and activities.
- A number of the children and young people advised the Inspectors that they were allowed to comment on the furniture and fittings in the units and spoke enthusiastically about a recent trip to Ikea to make a variety of purchases

- A food committee meets for a number of sessions during the year to, make observations on the quantities and qualities of the food and to discuss any requested for changes to the menus
- The Chair of Governors explained to the Inspectors how that last member of staff to be appointed to the Care Team had been interviewed by a panel of children and young as part of the interview and selection process
- Parents and children and young people are able to make any formal complaints through the School complaints procedures
- Children and young people can have informal chats with the schools Independent person
- Parents found the use of the weekly Diaries a good system for keeping them informed about education and care issues that had occurred during the week. Parents and guardians are encouraged to read the diaries and make comments on the contents and return these to the school
- The majority of parents and guardians who returned questionnaires stated that they were routinely asked about how their child should be cared for and their opinion were sought before any major decisions were made about their children

### **Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)**

**The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.**

#### **Key Findings and Evidence**

#### **Standard met?**

**2**

The school provides information and procedural guidance on privacy and confidentiality that covers all of the requirements that are relevant to the school as detailed in standard 3.2. This information can be found in various sections of the Residential Staff Handbook dated 2003 These include documents titled Policy – Confidentiality, Child Protection and Confidentiality, Policy on Case Recording and Access to Records Following recommendations from the last report the school has made space available in the children's and young persons care plan, for staff to comment and record on issues of privacy including how they will approach a bedroom and on showering bathing and toileting .

The Children and Young People have two files an education and care file that are kept in secure areas. The children and young people have signed a form to indicate that they have been told how they can access their file if they wish to do so. The Principal Child Care officer advise the Inspectors that one young person had taken up this option.

The school has not yet produce advice to parents about any occasion that staff may not need to search their children processions nor does it currently offer off guidance to staff or pupils on how searches should be conducted or recorded. It is recommended that the school produce guidelines on Searching children's Possessions in line standard 3.11. It is advised that this information is included in the resident Parents Handbook.

All of the parents who returned questionnaires, advised this Inspectors that they are able to meet their Children or young people in a private meeting room.

The school provides two pay phones, one in the anteroom to the family meeting room situated on the bottom corridor in the Old Hall and another situated in a hallway in the Gainsborough unit. Following recommendations made in the last report the school has reviewed the site of the telephone situated in the Old Hall but as yet are unable to find an alternative location which would make it easier to access in coming calls in private. The

payphone on Gainsborough has been relocated and provided with an acoustic hood to help provide privacy. The school is to be commended on its provision of a free phone number, which enable all children, and young people to make free contact with the schools independent visitor. All the children and young people are shown how to use this service. The name photograph and telephone of the Independent Visitor is clearly displayed by the pupil's phones. A photograph of the National Care Standards Commissions Inspector has been added to this display along with a contact number of the regional office. Childline numbers are also on display at both locations.

The PCCO advised the inspector that a number of the children and young people have their own mobiles. The school currently does not have a policy or guidance on their usage and had not considered the possible invasion into privacy resulting from the inappropriate use of mobile phones with photo transmission features. It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the use of mobile phones and that this be included in the Parent's Residential handbook and also in and Pupil Handbook.

The Inspectors are aware that the children and young people have access to computers in the school and in computer suite situated in the Old hall. The Inspectors were not provided with any guidance that its provides to parents or children on the use of computers and access to the Internet. The school needs to consider how the Children and young people can make use of theses facilities in a safe and protected manner whilst allowing them to use the facilities with some degree of privacy. It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the used of computers and the access to the internet. This information should be included in the Residential Parents handbook.

#### **Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

**Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.**

#### **Key Findings and Evidence**

#### **Standard met?**

**2**

Following recommendations made in last year report. The school has produced a new complaints policy. Information concerning the complaints procedure can be found in a document titled "Complaints Procedures at Walton Hall", the "Pupils Complaints Procedures" and "Guidelines for Senior Staff on Duty When Handling Complaints", dated 16/01/04. This information can also be in the Residential Staff Handbook. The Inspectors were advised that the whole school had received training on the new complaints procedure at the beginning of this year. The school has designed a new complaints form that can be used by children and young people. These were seen on display and freely available from numerous locations around the units.

The majority of parents who complete questionnaires indicated that they had been made aware of the complaints procedures. However 20% of these stated that they were not aware that they could make a complaint directly to the NCSC. An examination of the new guidance showed that the advise to parents did not specifically advise them about being able to make direct contact with the NCSC. It is recommended that the complaints procedure for parents include specific information about being able to make complaint directly to the NCSC. It is advised that the information on complaints is in included either the School Prospectus and /or the residential Parents Handbook.

The information to produce for staff did include a requirement by the Head or another

designated member of staff to regularly review any formal complaints in order to identify any trends. There was also no advise that the National Care Standards Commission needs to be advised of any serious complaints made against staff at the school. It is recommended that a senior member of staff regularly review the records of complaints. It is recommended that the school develop a system by which the NCSC is notified of any serious complaints. All of the children and young people who complete questionnaire indicated that they were aware of how they could make a complaint. The minutes of the senior meeting showed that the Post 16 students had been informed about the new procedures and the Inspectors were told by some of the children and young people that this had been topic in a recent school assembly. The children and young people identified a number of people that they could approach with any concerns. These included members of staff and also the Inspector and the independent person. The Inspectors found that the Children version of the Complaints Policy is currently in a format that does not make it accessible to all children and young people at the school. The inspectors felt that the format should be reviewed and at the same time the procedure should provide more information on the process and time that a complaint would take. It is recommended that the Child complaint procedure be reviewed to include the comments made in this report.

An examination of the schools induction programme for Care staff showed the subject of complaints is covered during the first four weeks.

**Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:**

0

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

**Number of complaints received by NCSC about the school over last 12 months:**

0

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

0

# CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

## Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

### Key Findings and Evidence

### Standard met?

2

The school provides guidance to staff on child protection and other related topics in a number of policies and procedures contained within the Residential Staff Handbook. An examination of the principal guidance titled Child protection was thought by the Inspectors to be an adequate but requires reviewing to include some omissions to fully comply with the standards. The policy does not currently offer advice to staff on what steps to take if there is an allegation made against a senior member of staff or a designated person for child protection. The policy does not advise staff that the failure by them to report to actual or reasonably suspected abuse of a child is a disciplinary offence. A document titled Physical contact with Children and Spending 1:1 time alone with Children explains the potential difficulties this poses for staff and how they might find themselves the subject of allegation of inappropriate contact. However there is no advise to staff what to do or they might expect to happen if they are that are subject of an allegation or any indication of what support might be available. It is recommended that the child protection policy and guidance be reviewed to address the issues raised in this report.

The advice given to Care staff in the Residential Care Staff Handbook included copies of blank body maps. There is currently no guidance how the recording of observed injuries to children and young people should be undertaken. If these are to be used then they must be completed with sensitivity, respect privacy and not undertaken in an intrusive manner. It is recommended that staff receive guidance on the recording of injuries and signs of abuse on body maps.

The Head Teacher and the Principal Child Care officer are the designated people for child protection at the school. The Head Teacher advised the Inspectors that they had both received appropriate training last year. The Inspectors wee advised that there would be a whole school training day on child protection in March 2004. This will be made available to all education and care staff, ancillary and support workers and members of the Board of governors.

The Inspectors spoke with both the Care Staff and the support workers. Both groups indicated an awareness of what steps they should take and avoid if they were to receive a disclosure or become concerned about potential or actual abuse.

The Head teacher advised the Inspectors that he was not aware of any on going child protection concerns for any of the boarders at the school.

**Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:**

0

**Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)**

**The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

2

The school has an anti bullying policy that provides a definition of bullying and outlines the different forms that bullying can take. The current policy is not provided in a format that would it accessible to all of the children and young people It is recommended that the school produce a pupils and students version of the anti bullying policy. Two of the questionnaire completed by the children and young people stated that incidents of bullying had been the worst things that had happened to them at the school. The Inspectors felt that the school had not responded appropriately to a previous recommendation that the school regularly carries out risk assessments of the time place and circumstances that bullying takes place and the resultant action that has followed.

An examination of a sample of minutes for the Walton Hall Youth School council meetings showed that the issue of bullying had been raised on several occasions. There were indications that the school had been very proactive in responding to any reported incidents The Inspectors were advised of a buddy support scheme that the school had in place to offer support and guidance to those pupils who might have been a victim of bullying. It is the Inspectors understanding that all of the pupils in this scheme had received training from a peer support trainer and that the programme is in the process of being fully implemented within the school.

<b>Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied</b>	20	%
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#### Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

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.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

1

The Head teacher and the Principal Child Care Officer acknowledged that the school does not currently have systems in place to ensure that all significant events relating to the protection of children are notified to the appropriate authorities. Following a discussion with Head teacher it has been agreed that the school will include contacting the NCSC of any occasion a child or young person absconds to the list of notifiable incidents as detailed in Std 7.2 It is recommend that the school implement a system of informing the NCSC of all significant events occurring at the school.

#### NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

- **conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children**
- **serious harm to a child**
- **serious illness or accident of a child**
- **serious incident requiring police to be called**

0

0

0

0

#### Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)

The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

2

The school provides information to staff on how to manage unauthorised absences (absconding) in the residential staff handbook in a document titled "Missing Children" Currently there is no guidance in how to respond to a missing person included as part of the Staff Induction programme. This document contains procedures to follow if a child or young person is suspected or has actually run away from the school. Currently the procedure does not advise that a child or young person should receive a debrief after he/her has been returned to school to try and identify the antecedents that had led to his or her absconding The Inspectors were concerned that given the isolated location of the school the age range of the boarders, the differing needs and levels of vulnerability of the young people that a individual risk assessments about absconding were not in place. The Inspectors were advised that only one child had gone missing in the past year. It is recommended that the missing person policy included advise on debriefing a child or young person on return to the school. It is recommended that individual risk assessment on absconding be completed for all boarders. It is recommended that a separate record of unauthorised absences (absconding) is maintained and that senior staff regularly monitors this so that trend analysis can take place. It is recommended that the response to a missing child is covered as part of staff induction. The school has agreed to notify the Inspector of any occasions that a young person is reported to the Police as having absented themselves from the school. The school is advised to include information on the action it will take if a young person absents themselves from the school in the Residential Parents Handbook.

<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>	<b>1</b>



## CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

### Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

Relationships between staff and children are based on mutual respect and understanding and clear professional and personal boundaries which are effective for both the individuals and the group.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The Inspectors felt that the relationship that between staff, children and young people continues to be one of the schools strongest points. Staff spoke about children and young people with respect, warmth. Interest and concern. Their inspectors felt one example of the commitment and enthusiasm that staff showed for their children and young people they had key working responsibilities for was demonstrated by the good standard of record keeping and the manner in which files and care plans were maintained. Interaction between children and young people was observed and it was good with appropriate boundaries being maintained. The Inspectors were aware of occasions when some of children and young people had to be advised to do something that they were either not keen on or felt reluctant to do. This was achieved by negotiation and sensitively. Parents spoke positively to the inspectors about the relationships between their children and carer staff. One parent recorded in a questionnaire that "children are cared for with utmost kindness and staff are friendly and helpful". Another parent commented in the meeting with the Inspectors that "Children are dealt with as individuals, They [staff] take an in interest in them".</p>		

### Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures which are approved by the Head of Care.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Parents are advised in the Residential Parents Handbook that the school has "adopted a holistic behavioural approach" details of which can be found in the school Behavioural Policy. This policy states that the school aims to "develop self discipline, a sense of social responsibility together with worthwhile values and attitudes". An examination of the documentation shows that the school places an emphasis and focuses on rewarding and celebrating good behaviour.</p> <p>The school provides the care team with policies and guidance on measures of control, and disciplinary and physical interventions in a number of documents located in the Residential Staff Handbook. These documents are titled the School Behaviour Policy Behavioural Management, Policy - Rewards and Sanctions and Policy - Use of Physical Force (support). Staff are given advice on the range of rewards and sanctions that can be given and guidance the consequential action arising from different behaviours. The Inspectors noted that a number of the rewards had been suggested by the children and young people in a</p>		

survey undertaken by the school.

The school has recently reviewed its process for recording sanctions and a new system had been introduced last term. The Principal Child Care Officer advised the Inspectors that incidents that result in a sanction or reward being applied are first recorded on an information sheet that records the incident or behaviour and the sanction or reward given. There is a space for the pupil to record their views of the incident and the sanctions or rewards given. Copies of these are then placed in the Care File and on the main School file. The Incident is also recorded in young persons daily diary, details are then transferred to the Residential Behavioural Record Book.

The Inspectors examined the recording of sanctions and made the following observations:

- The Inspectors identified an incident that had received a sanction that had not been recorded in the Residential Behavioural Record. It is recommended that all sanction are recorded appropriately
- Children and young people were routinely being asked and some had recorded their views about the sanctions. It is advised that when a child or young person declines to make a comment about a sanction or reward that this should be recorded by staff on the incident form.
- The Inspectors identified several incidents that had been recorded on an incident sheet and in the record book that did not provide all of the details about the incident referring the reader to the main files. An examination of these showed that in one case the full details could only be found on the school file and in another on the care file. It is recommended that the information concerning sanctions entered in the Residential Behavioural Records Book be comprehensively recorded.
- The Sanctions Book currently does not meet the requirements of this standard, as it is possible to remove or add pages to it. It is recommended that the record of sanctions is recorded in a bound and numbered book, which contains a list of permitted sanction.

The Inspectors noted each of the Units had its own Behavioural records book and that the greater number of sanctions (18) and rewards (five) had been recorded in the Gainsborough Unit.

The children and young people who had complete questionnaires stated that the school did not use any punishments that they felt should not be used and that staff were generally quite fair or very fair in the use of their punishments. The majority of children and young people stated that staff discussed why their behaviour had resulted in receiving a sanction.

The majority of parents who completed questionnaires stated that they had been told about the punishments that the school used and indicated that they were happy or satisfied with them. Information concerning the range of sanctions, rewards and physical support is included in the Residential Parents handbook.

On admission to the school pupils sign a contract in which details of possible sanctions are given. There is reference to the use of "jankers" which the staff, pupils and students describe as being evening detention. The Head teacher has acknowledged that this term could be misconstrued and it is advised that the school rephrases its pupil and student contracts.

The school has recently reviewed its process for recording physical support and a new

system had been introduced last term. The Policy titled Use of Physical Force (support) provides some guidance on the use of physical interventions and restraint. The school aims to have its entire staff trained in SCIP (strategies of Crisis intervention and Prevention) and then they receive regular refresher courses. The Principal Child Care Officer is the co-ordinator for SCIP Training and is qualified to deliver the refresher training. Staff demonstrated awareness that restraint should be used as a last resort and that it should not be used as a means of controlling inappropriate behaviour that did not represent a danger to either the young person or others. The Inspectors were advised that the next refresher is due later this year and that the support staff are going to observe the training. The Inspectors feel that the inclusion of support staff is good practice.

Incidents of Physical Support (Restraint) are reported in Physical Support Books, which are situated in each unit. The Inspectors noted that only one incident had been recorded and this referred to an incident concerning one young person in the Old Hall. An examination of the Physical support records showed that they do not have the provision for children and young people to record their views on the incident. It is recommended that children and young people are encouraged to have their views about the physical intervention recorded on the Physical Support Record. The Physical Support Record Book does not currently meet the requirements of this standard, as it is possible to remove or add pages to it. It is recommended that the records of physical support are recorded in a bound and numbered book.

The majority of children and young people who completed questionnaire advised the Inspectors that they had never had to receive physical support. Currently both of the record books are being monitored by the Principal Child Care Officer.

## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.
- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within school and in the local community.
- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.
- Children 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.

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

Admission and leaving processes are planned and agreed with the child – and as appropriate, with parents and carers and placing authorities – as far as possible and handled with sensitivity and care by those concerned.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

Currently the school is able admit children of an infant age and are offering courses that can mean the young person can stay at the school until the age of 19. The Inspectors were advised that the school and boarding provision is currently the subject to a county review and the age range of the children could be changed to cater for only secondary and post 16 students.

The Principal Child Care Officer advised the Inspector that the majority of children and young people referred to the boarding provision are already attending the school. Post 16 student applications can be received from the School, Parents and the Connexions Service. All placements at the school have to be first agreed through the County council Placement panel. The Principal Child Care Officer advised the Inspector that wherever possible the children or young person are invited to spend sometime on the identified unit.

The Parents advised the Inspector during their meeting with them that the school requests information concerning previous education personal and health matters prior to admission. Parents are provided with a copy of the Residential Parents handbook that provides details on subjects such as staffing, facilities, daily routines and visits and contacts.

The children and young people are provided with their own copy of the Students Handbook, which includes pictures of the staff attached to each of the units and details the daily routines and the activities offered.

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**

**Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

The school's Statement of Purpose states that "Walton Hall provides residential care to children with a wide range of Special educational Needs where an extended 24 hour curriculum has been identified as appropriate". The Care team contribute to this aim in the following ways. The children and young people are encouraged to extend and acquire a range of life and social skills through regular Life skills sessions, which are a regular feature of the weekly activities. The care staff are made aware of each of the boarders Individual Education Plans and Individual Behavioural Plans. Copies of these are kept on the main care file and care staff is requested by the education team to help work on any identified strategies or targets in the care period. For example, one care worker explained to the Inspectors that he had been asked to help one young person with his reading. The care worker had arranged for suitable reading material to be available and attempted to find time each night to hear the child read. Currently the system for identifying these areas of work is undertaken on an informal basis and there is little recording concerning any work undertaken. It is recommended that the school introduce a system of identifying joint education and care objectives and for recording the work undertaken to achieve these. A number of the children and young people commented favourably on the help and support that staff gave them with any homework.

Care Staff routinely contribute reports and attend annual reviews.

Each of the units have been provided with age appropriate books and arrangements are in place for the units to receive a daily newspaper appropriate magazines and comics to be available during the week.

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**

**Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

The school provides a full and varied activity programme for all of its boarders. Activities are organised and supervised by the care staff on a weekly basis. The children and young people are required to sign up to their choice of activities a week in advance. On the evening of the Inspection a number of the young people were going off site to a local activity centre to go swimming and to attend a local youth club. Other children and young people were engaged in creative cookery (gingerbread men which were later sold to help raise funds to pay for disabled access to the school farm) All of the children and young people commented favourable about the range of activities that the school offers and all of them felt that these represented one of the best things about the school. This was a view shared by many of the parents.

An examination of the activity list showed that some activities were being based on life skills programmes and the children and young people spoke enthusiastically about trip to Ikea to buy furniture and fittings, trips to Asda to buy food and drinks and to local restaurants where the were able to order their own meals.

The school is situated in its own large grounds, which provide the children and young people with a large space for leisure and recreational activities. The grounds include a tennis court, football pitch, a small activity area and a conservation area. The school has a farm with a range of small animals and fowls and the children and young people help look after them. A number of the children and young people are very keen on a motorcycle activity that is run by a local motorcycle enthusiast.

The work being undertaken to create an activity room in Goldstone House has now been completed. This has been equipped with nice furniture, board games, and computers and toys a number of the children and young people spoken to by the Inspector, felt that the new activity room was a great success.

Facilities within the Old Hall include access to a games room, a music room and computers. Young people are able to bring their own equipment toys and books to their residential units. The school has completed a number of generic risk assessments covering activities but the Inspectors did not feel that they adequately reflected the he differing needs, abilities and any behavioural issues pertaining to any individual children and young people. It is recommended that individual risk assessments are completed for each boarder for each activity that they are participating in.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)**

**The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

The above finding is based upon discussion with a 'learning disability' specialist nurse, discussion with management of the home, discussion with parents and children, and inspection of children care records. There were no children requiring specialist aids in the school.

A nurse had been provided under contract with the health authority. She had been in post for around the past two months and the contract was due to end in May 2004. The nurse worked one day per week. Currently an assessment of children's needs was being prepared. A range of health care needs was noted as including epilepsy, mental health, bowel disorder, diet, hearing dental and eyesight. The assessment to date was showing the need for maintaining routine input of a nurse following May 2004. Although the assessment was yet incomplete the level of need may indicate the need for an increase of input from a learning disability nurse specialist. The nurse had prepared a health plan format for introduction for use in the school. The school provides speech and Language services. The cook had approached the nurse for advice about some children with the intent of best providing for their dietary needs. This is good practice by the cook. This should be done as part of a systematic approach to the children's dietary needs. The inspector is unqualified in this area. However their impression of the menu was of excellent arrangements in providing meals for children. The menu is varied providing a variety of meats, fish, fresh vegetables and fresh fruit.

Consent for treatment plans had been provided by parents and medical information was sought on admission. Children retained the right to retain their own GP. Medical appointments were usually organised by parents. A system was in place for sharing of information between the school and parents about the health care needs of children.

A need had been identified for nurse input relating to sex education. A review of care records showed that account was not taken of known mental health states of children from the boarding side of the school in preparation for annual reviews. However the Head Teacher assured inspectors that the annual review would ensure that this was addressed although records were held in the main school. The inspector acknowledged this but still believed that the input from the boarding side of the school should routinely be expected to comment on such needs and that relevant information from the main records should be reflected in those held in the boarding side of the school. Annual reviews held in boarding files were not dated.

It is recommended that the school ensure that all relevant information is reflected in the main school files and boarding school files. Annual reviews as part of this system should be reviewed to ensure they take a full account of children needs.

It is recommended that the menu should be reviewed by a dietician with a view to the overall nutritional needs of children and specific dietary needs of individual children where required.

It is strongly recommended that the services of nurse specialist input be retained with view to increasing where necessary.

The services of the learning disability nurse specialist should be considered in relation to the provision of sex education at the school.

**Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)**

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3

The above finding is based upon inspection of the menu, kitchen area, EHO findings and discussion with catering staff children and management of the school. Meals were taken with the children.

The overall impression was that children were provided with a healthy and nutritious diet. The meals were cooked on site and were served in good quantities. The menu provided for variety of meals throughout the week and changed over a six-week period. There was provision for meat fish fresh vegetables and fruit. There was a good stock of food maintained in the school. Food stock was stored appropriately. There were no outstanding requirements from the EHO inspection. It was pleasing to note the attention paid by the cook to the nutritional needs of children when she had consulted the school nurse on her own initiative for advice regarding the dietary needs relating to specific children. A choice of meals as on the menu was provided following consultation with the children. A choice of meals was provide daily. The inspector's opinion is that the practice of the cook in considering children's needs and the system put in place by management of the school to ensure choice and variety is excellent. The following reflects areas in which the school could improve.

The dining room is equipped with servable furnishings but could be enhanced through décor to provide a more welcoming area for children to take meals. The dining arrangements are that two groups of children have their meals at different sittings due to the need for additional dining space. This means that one group have limited time to finish their meals before the next group arrive for their meal. Discussion took place regarding identifying further space in the building to create another dining area.

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)**

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way that maximises their choice.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

3



All of the children and young people of primary and secondary age are expected to wear a school uniform during the school day. Boarders are able to change into their choice of clothing in the evening. Post 16 students are allowed to wear their own choice of clothing during the day and evening. The Inspectors formed that view that children and young people are able to express their own individuality through their hairstyles, choice of clothing, personalisation of bed spaces and by the wearing of certain types of jewellery. The Inspector observed one young person being helped to style his hair by one of the care staff before he left to go to school. Advice on what jewellery and make up that the children and young people are allowed, can be found in the Residential staff Handbook.

As the children and young people are at the school for a maximum of 4 nights a week they have ample opportunities to purchase toiletries and other personal requisites whilst at home. Those children young people who bring money into school are encouraged to give it to care staff for safekeeping. Care staff keep and record of income and outgoings. Following recommendations made in last years reports the children and young people are now being asked to countersign any transaction through their savings account.

## CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.
- Children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.
- 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.
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.
- Children receive individual support when they need it.

### Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

2

The Inspectors examined a number of the children and young persons care files which included their individual Care Plans.

The Principal Child Care officer advised the Inspectors that the school in line with other residential schools in Staffordshire has recently introduced a new system for recording care plans. The residential care plans are kept in a separate individual file and currently consists of separate sections on general personal information, placement information, and health plan generic risk assessments targets for development, behaviour, general routines, leisure time and staff guides and information. Each young person has been provided with a key worker who, in consultation with the child or young person, is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the care plans. The care plan identifies a number of different areas, for which targets for the development of life skills are set. These areas are Leisure, Behaviour Relationships with peers, eating and drinking Personal Hygiene, Independent living skills and Communication. It is the Inspectors understanding that that targets are set for two of these areas each term and are reviewed each half. The Principal Child Care officer advised the Inspectors that targets for the following year will be discussed and agreed as part of the annual review. The Inspectors noted that for each area the school has developed a syllabus comprising of a number of different life skills. Each life skill is broken down into a number of tasks. The level at which a young person can manage these tasks is recorded on a graph which indicates whether a young person can operate independently or requires a level of assistance. The new system has been running for several terms. The Inspectors found evidence within the care files the key working sessions are taking place and that the targets are being regularly reviewed. A number of the children and young people advised the inspectors that they were aware of their placement plans and confirmed that they helped to set targets. The Care staff informed the Inspectors that they were getting used to the new system and felt that it was a useful tool. The Inspectors are aware that alongside each care plan there is also an Individual Education Plan and in some cases an Individual Behavioural Plan, which the care staff are contributing to. The Principal Child Care officer has submitted several reports to the Board of Governors of progress being

recorded in the reports.

The Inspectors made the following observations about the care plans:

- It was unclear to the Inspectors how flexible to the individual needs of the children and young people the new system is. For example from the care plans examined it appears that targets set for communication, which will include telephone skills, will not be set until the summer term of 2004.
- The Inspectors noted from reading risk assessments and from incident reports a number of different behavioural issues concerning different children and young people. Although these had been identified it was not clear whether objectives were being identified targets being set to challenge or correct these behaviours
- The Inspectors were concerned about the level of consistency being taken in following strategies identified with in care plans. For example the inspectors noted that for one young person a strategy had been put in place to manage a particular behaviour in the mini bus .An incident report showed that despite this strategy the young person had indulged in the behaviour and had to be sanctioned for it .the Inspectors are aware that care staff are assigned to specific units but can have supervisory roles for any of the children and young people during activity periods. It is unclear how other staff are made aware of specific targets and strategies that might be in place for children that they do not have key working responsibilities for
- Records are not routinely being set and kept for targets identified in Individual Education Plans and individual Behavioural Plans.

The school did not provide the Inspectors with any guidance on the implementation and monitoring of care plans nor was there any in the Residential Staff Handbook

The inspector fully acknowledges that the new system has not yet had time to become fully bedded in and, as the process is reviewed. There are likely to be further changes and developments. It is advised that any further review of the Care Plans included a consideration to the above observations. The Inspectors will review the care plans at the next inspection. It is recommended that the school produce guidance on the Implementation and monitoring of care plans .It is recommended the system for completing care plans is reviewed and consideration is given to points raised in this report.

The Inspectors found evidence that the school is routinely statutory reviews and transition planning meetings. Care Staff and the children and young people are routinely invited to contribute and attend these meetings.

**Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)**

**Each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress which can, in compliance with legal requirements for safeguards, be seen by the child.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

The above finding is based upon inspection of children files.

The care records/ files took account of health, social and emotional needs of children. Basic information was included e.g. contact arrangements with parent's religion and any special needs. They were stored securely in individual units and accessible to staff working with children.

Discussion took place about the lack of dating of annual review reports submitted by care staff as part of the annual review process. This report also did not take account some children's needs as previously mentioned in the report, and should be reviewed. However information relating to such needs was held on the main files in the main school. There was a need to ensure that any relevant information about the child was held on both files.

It is recommended that the school review the content of information held in files on the boarding side of the school compared to the main school files to ensure that any relevant information relating to the care of children is taken account of by care staff.

**Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)**

**The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The above finding is based upon inspection of children files, staff files, and record relating to the operational the school.

The records were found to be in place as required in National Minimum Standards. Mention has already been made of the need to provide for personnel records relating to the recruitment of staff under standard 27.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)**

**Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school**

**to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The Inspectors were advised by the Principal Child Care Officer that there are currently no legal restrictions on any of the children or young people having contact with their parents, guardians or significant others. All of the parents who completed their questionnaires (14) and those who attended the meeting with the inspectors stated that they were encouraged to visit the school. Parents spoke enthusiastically about how welcomed they are made to feel when they do visit. One parent commented that there is always “a warm welcome” and that parents are “treated with respect” Others commented on how they were always offered a drink and invited to join the children and young people for a meal including birthday teas. Both Goldstone House and the Old hall have their own payphones that will receive incoming calls. Parents are able to contact each of the units by phone and these numbers are included in the Residential Parents Handbook Parents advised that inspectors that the care staff routinely contacted them if there had been any incidents or welfare concerns. The school arranges a number of social events and celebrations including school discos and a living nativity plays which all parents are invited to attend.

The school has a number of ways that it uses to keep parents regularly informed notably the use of Home School Diaries, newsletters, Governors Annual Report, Annual Reviews and Parents Meetings. The school has a group called the Friends of Walton Park that meet monthly and provides an opportunity for parents and carers to meet together. The group arranges a number of visiting speakers to address them on a variety of subjects, which have included talks on improving behaviour, sex education and dyslexia.

**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

There were no children subject to a care order at the school.

Account was taken of arrangements for independent living. There was evidence in care plans, design of accommodation providing for developing skills required for independent living. This approach was evident in the daily routine of the school. There was evidence from discussion with parents as to how the preparation provided by the school enabled children to develop independent living skills and in some cases, which led to employment.

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)**

All children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular support needs, or particular problems, receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The Principal Child Care Officer advised the Inspectors of a number of children and young people for whom the school had either been the instigator or helped to facilitate access to a number of external agencies that were providing individualised support. These included counselling sessions and support sessions with the community nurse. The Care staff were able to advise the Inspectors of a number of health problems that individual children and young people had and whether this involved meeting with any medical agencies. A few of the children and young people are being accommodated by social services and have a social worker designated to them.

The school has access to two speech therapists who attend the school on a regular basis and also the services of a School Nurse.

An examination of the pupils and students main files showed that the school has made referrals and consulted with a number of social and health agencies when a need had been identified. The Inspectors are aware that the school has an independent visitor who is a volunteer with the NSPCC and visits once every three weeks. The children and young people are provided with a free phone number which enables them to make contact with the independent Visitor at any time. All resident pupils and students are shown how to access this service. The inspectors were advised during their last inspection that the independent Visitor has been correctly vetted and has received child protection training with regular updates from the NSPCC. Unfortunately the Independent Visitor was unable to meet with the Inspectors on this occasion. However she wrote to them and explained that she felt that there are many positive aspects about the care being provided and that the school always responded quickly and appropriately to any concerns or suggestions. The Independent Visitor added that she thought that the young people are exceptionally well care for and that there were no negative comments to make about the school. All of the young people who

completed questionnaire and who were spoken to by the Inspectors were able to identify a number of staff or the Independent Person or the Inspector as someone they could speak to or contact if they had any concerns.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well-designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Walton Hall is in a rural location grounds several miles from the town of Eccleshall. It stands within its own extensive grounds and is accessed by one main entrance.</p> <p>The educational facilities are situated in a purpose built educational block. Residential accommodation is provided in two buildings. Goldstone House a purpose-designed unit accommodates up to five younger boys and five senior girls. The Old Hall, which is a listed Victorian Country house, provides accommodation for 11 senior boys in Gainsborough unit and up to 19 post 16 students accommodated in Shugborough and Broughton on two gender-separated landings. The extensive grounds provide ample opportunities for leisure and recreational activities, which include areas for football, tennis, basketball motorcycle riding; an adventure plays area, a small farm and a conservation area. The grounds, play areas and fixed play equipment were well maintained and safe.</p> <p>The school has recently started the conversion of one of the old staff houses into a facility that the day pupils will be able to access during their free time during the school day. The School has also acquired back the lease on some old stables that form part of the Old Hall. Plans for this area included the provision of new art facilities and the possible relocation of the music room. The school provides accommodation for a number of staff who live on site. The Environmental Health Officer advised the Inspectors that there are no outstanding requirements for their department. The Inspectors noted that the Fire Officer had recently visited the school and had not made any recommendations on that occasion. However the Inspectors became aware that the Fire Officer may not have inspected all of the school's residential areas and facilities and having identified a number of possible omissions to the current system will be arranging for the Fire officer to visit the school. It is recommended that the school respond to any recommendations made in the Fire officers Report.</p> <p>The school management and governors are to be commended about action that they have taken to meet with a number of environmental recommendations made about the accommodation in last year's report. This has included the installation of a new intercom system in Goldstone House to replace a baby alarm, which was being used as a means for the senior girls sleeping in one end of the building to attract the attention of sleeping staff who were situated in the other end.</p>		



The school has recently created a new car park, which has significantly reduced the safety concerns that arose when transport arrived at the start and end of each day.

The Inspectors were made aware that the school is currently improving its wheel chair access to a number of locations including the school farm and the Post 16 tutor rooms situated in the ground floor of the Old Hall. The Inspectors formed the view that the general internal layout of the boarding areas would not be suitable accommodation for a boarder with physical disabilities.

The Inspectors are aware that the school is currently in the process of reviewing the range of special needs that it will cater for. It is recommended that the school management and local authority give consideration to any physical alterations and adaptations needed to accommodate any new client group.

#### **Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)**

**The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.**

#### **Key Findings and Evidence**

#### **Standard met?**

**2**

The residential accommodation in the school is located on two sites and provides four different units.

#### Goldstone House.

This purpose build unit provides accommodation for five younger boys and five senior girls. The unit is adequate, well-maintained and homely accommodation. The furniture in the living area is comfortable and practicable. Members of the unit have recently purchased new pieces of furniture pictures and other small items and during shopping trips to Ikea and Asda.

The male and female bedroom areas are separated and are primarily designed as an open plan layout with each bed having their own area defined by built in cupboards and furniture. There is a single bedroom situated in the female sleeping quarters. The layout of the open plan rooms provide some degree of privacy. Wardrobes have been provided with locks. Pupils are encouraged to personalise their own space. Several of the children who are on flexible boarding arrangements share a bed space with another child who stays on a different night. Staff confirmed that the young people had the opportunity under supervision to wash and iron their clothes if they wished to.

Meals are cooked in the unit's kitchen and are eaten in the dining area. The Inspectors noted that the current dining furniture is designed to accommodate two groups of 6 people. There is limited space for visitors to join the groups for meals. The dining furniture is showing signs of wear and tear. It is recommended that the dining furniture is upgraded. The young people are able to make use of the living and dining room and bed areas to play games and pursue personal interests. The recent provision of a games room to the rear of the building has been met with great enthusiasm by a number of the children and young people. This space provided a valuable and much used resource. It has been colourfully decorated and is equipped with games, toys and computer games consoles. The Inspectors noted that some temporary repairs had been made to the window frames on that first floor and were advised that these are due to be replaced in April 2005.

The unit was well lit and warm.

### Old Hall

The Old Hall provides three residential units

- Gainsborough provides accommodation for up to 10 senior boys
- Broughton is a post 16 unit up to seven female students
- Shugborough a post 16 unit for up to nine male students.

The Old Hall is a listed Victorian building, which means that the school is faced with a number of building constraints and on going repairs and maintenance. The school is to be commended on its imaginative approach to provide homely comfortable and practicable accommodation within in a physical environment, which initially appears unsuitable for this purpose. All of the units were well lit and warm

Dining and activity areas used by all of the units are situated on the ground floor with living and sleeping accommodation situated on the first and second floors. Currently the dining room is not large enough to accommodate all of the children and young people at one sitting. The dining furniture is showing signs of wear and tear. It is recommended that the school upgrade the dining furniture. The Inspectors noted that as a consequence of the size of the room that meals have to be provided in two sittings. It is possible for some young people to be eating their tea only several hours after having eaten their main midday meal. Although mealtimes were observed as being orderly and sociable affirms the Inspectors recognised that the current system imposed a time limit on the first sitting. It is recommended that the school review the dining room arrangements. There is evidence in and around the units that staff and the children and young people have put a great deal of effort into making them attractive and practicable places to live in. There was little evidence of any wilful damage. The young people appeared proud of their accommodation as they showed the Inspectors around the units. Communal rooms have been nicely decorated and comfortably furnished. A number of new items of furniture and fittings have been chosen and purchased by the young people during shopping trips to Ikea.

Bedrooms have been individually decorated and the children and young people confirmed that they were able to personalise their rooms and bed spaces. A number of young people had brought in their own quilt covers. Wardrobes had been fitted with locks The Principal Child Care Officer had discussed with staff the possible problems that could arise from an odd number of children or young people sharing a room and had requested that they monitor bedroom groups.

All of the units are provided with kitchens or areas for its residents to prepare snacks and to eat their breakfast and supper. These have been equipped with small white goods. A member of staff on Gainsborough explained that the unit has recently requested a cooker and this should be fitted in the near future.

Staff confirmed that all pupils and students could have supervised access to laundry facilities.

The Inspectors identified the following issues concerning the accommodation in the Old Hall:

- A number of the sash windows are currently opened by using a rope. These windows were very heavy and were very difficult to close or open. Several windows were either stuck or jammed. The young people in one bedroom (Gainsborough) said that the window had not opened for sometime. There is evidence that children and young are standing on high window calls or radiator covers to reach the windows. It is recommend that all windows are repaired and have an appropriate device fitted to

open and shut them.

- A bed in the Shugborough Unit was damaged and needs replacing
- Although a number of radiators have been covered there still remains long runs of hot water pipes and a radiator in the activity room and in a single bedroom on the Broughton unit that requires covering .it is recommended that the radiator in the activity room and single bedroom (Broughton) is fitted with a cover and exposed lengths of hot water pipes are boxed in
- A trailing lead is used to provide power to the air Hockey game in the activity room .It is recommended that the lead is replaced with an appropriate power source
- It is unclear whether windows have been fitted with safety glass .It is recommended that all windows are risk assessed and any that there is a significant risk of impact are either replaced with safety glass or safety film.
- The Inspectors noticed that in two multiple occupied rooms (Shugborough & Gainsborough) that some beds were very close together. It is recommended that beds are at least 900mm apart from each other.

#### **Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)**

**The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.**

#### **Key Findings and Evidence**

#### **Standard met?**

**2**

The school management team, board of governors and maintenance staff are to be commended for their efforts in improving the bathroom and toilet facilities and the responses to many of the recommendations made in the last report. The Inspectors were pleased to note that all toilets bathrooms had been provided with suitable locks. The floor in the Broughton unit has been repaired, the shower redecorated, privacy to the showers improved and light switch changed.

The Inspectors made the following observations:

#### Goldstone House

There are sufficient numbers of showers and toilets provided with in the unit. The partitions surrounding the downstairs toilet do not provide an adequate level of privacy.

#### Gainsborough Old Hall

The young people on this unit have access to one toilet situated within the unit and another partway on the stairs to the Shugborough unit. At nighttimes access to the stairway is closed. There are sufficient showers toilets and bathrooms during the day and early evening. There are insufficient toilets available during the night time. The showers did provide privacy for pupils changing before and after showering but the partitions were not high enough to prevent other pupils from looking over them. It is recommended that the school install another toilet in the Gainsborough unit.

#### Broughton Old Hall

There are sufficient toilets showers and baths. The shower area has been improved to provide privacy for students changing before and after showering. The partitions are not high enough to prevent other pupils from looking over them.

#### Shugborough Old Hall

There were sufficient showers and bathrooms The shower areas did not provide for enough

privacy for students getting changed. The height of the bath partitions meant that other students could look over them if they wished.

The taps to all baths were difficult to turn on and off and to ensure that the right of temperature mix is achieved. It is recommended that the taps to baths are replaced.

The Inspectors recognised that the school has possibly reached the limit to what changes and improvements it can do to the current facilities in the Old Hall. The problems of privacy created by the use of partitions and the lack of the required numbers of toilets in Gainsborough unit remain. The Inspectors feel that the school needs to consider the removal of existing facilities and the planned replacements and refurbishment of all toilet and shower facilities in the Old Hall. It is recommended that the school review all toilet and shower facilities in the Old Hall and produce a plan for their replacement and refurbishment.

**Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)**

**Positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risk from fire and other hazards, in accordance with Health and Safety and Fire legislation and guidance.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****1**

The standard of health and safety at the school was not adequate. There were suitable arrangements in place to ensure standards of health and safety were met e.g. policy/procedures, designated persons for audit of health and safety matters by an outside health and safety representative. However the systems, which were in place, were not operating properly. Discussion took place about the reasons for this. The designated person i.e. Head Teacher took their responsibilities seriously and any matter brought to his attention was immediately addressed. Another person who was employed in a maintenance capacity assisted the Head Teacher in their responsibilities. It is for the school to review its procedures and practices with a view to health and safety and ensure that the outcome is in future adequate. The inspector did question whether given the demands upon the Head Teacher in their role as overseeing boarding / care arrangements and education at the school they had sufficient time to follow up on any identified Health and Safety matters. The following matters were identified under this standard.

A number of positive practices were noted related to health and safety. An audit was conducted by an outside H & S representative, all portable electrical appliances were inspected, and servicing arrangements were in place for all equipment on site. New water tanks had been fitted. Contract arrangements were in place for testing of water provision. The Head Teacher delegated Health and Safety tasks to a member of the site maintenance team and both reported back to the Board of Governors.

There was a lack of fire detectors noted in the 'mixed unit' e.g. boiler/electrical room, girls side of the unit, and games room. There were no fire detectors in the main building in the staff 'smoking room' and the room accessed at the back of this room, the laundry area, and the first floor landing area, and the ironing room on this floor. The fire officer was contacted following the inspection and asked to complete an inspection of the 'mixed unit'. The fire officer had previously visited the older building and identified the need for fire detectors in the staff smoking room and laundry area. The Head Teacher had felt at this time that due to the budget he was unable to complete this work.

Fire drills were not conducted as per the fire officer's guidance. The school should discuss with the fire officers recommended fire practices. Care staff with night duties should according to guidance undertake three monthly fire drill training. These were not recorded in the fire book. Discussion took place about a recording system to enable management to oversee compliance in this area.

Fire bell tests should be conducted weekly. There was evidence of compliance in this area however there was no system to ensure that each fire point had been checked. It is advised that the fire officers advice be sought surrounding testing fire points from different points in rotation and a record maintained. The records showed gaps in testing of some weeks in the following weeks 10/2/03-21/3/03; 6/11/03-15/12/03.

Emergency lighting was not tested monthly as per guidance. Advice should be sought from the fire officer regarding this matter. Examples of sequential testing were as follows 11/02; 1/03; 4/03; 9/03.

No fire risk assessment had been completed. The school had in place risk assessment policy / procedures and risk assessments which took account of activities with children. There was no risk assessment relating to horse riding and swimming. However account should be taken of an established protocol, which outlines arrangements for safe practice in swimming e.g. staff ratios. Discussion took place regarding the need to establish risk assessment practices relating to known risks for individual children. The children files did not reflect this practice e.g. one child known to be at risk of climbing to high places and in relation to water in a context of self harm, should have been addressed via an individual risk assessment. The school should review known risk for children and put in place risk assessment practices where necessary. Discussion included models of risk assessments, which may be available in care settings operated by social services.

Discussion took place about the need for designated staff to sign as being aware of the existence of asbestos in the building. This had not been done although brought to the attention of the school in a health and safety audit. The head of maintenance was aware of the sites where asbestos was to advise on any work being conducted. The reason given for not signing was that there was a disagreement with the terminology of the statement, which needed to be signed.

Servicing documentation for thermostatic valves showed work needing doing. There was a lack of clarity by both the Head and site supervisor as to whether the work had been done. The systems did not provide for a check to be made on site of work completed without reference to the LEA.

It is recommend that the school arranges for an inspection by the fire officer regarding the provision of fire detectors in the boarding side of the school and advice regarding fire drill practices and testing of equipment. Any recommended action by the fire officer must be complied with.

It is recommend that the school review with staff their awareness of the site of asbestos in the school and make provision for staff to sign the schools statement relating to this as according to the schools own internal procedures.

It is recommend that the school ensure that systems for checking completion of work completed are in place.

It is recommend that a risk assessment is completed in relation to fire and the building.

It is recommend that risk assessments take account for all activities and the needs of individual children.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

2

A list of staff CRB cleared was obtained. A copy of the LEA guidance of CRB clearance on appointment was provided to inspectors.

An inspection two staff files appointed in the last 12 months showed no CRB clearance. References were received although after a starting date of new staff. The Head Teacher had taken telephone references and the reference that followed showed suitability for employment. There was no record of file of the interview process or of the telephone reference taken. Discussion took place about CRB clearance for a volunteer. This was thought to have been sent for by the Head Teacher. On further inspection this was found not to be the case. The school followed guidance of the LEA that new staff may start without a CRB. Discussion took place about the higher level of vulnerability of boarding pupils. Consideration should be given by the LEA for affording the same priority for boarding pupils as in other residential settings. A draft recruitment procedure was in place, which needs to be finalised and ratified where necessary.

It is recommended that the school ensure that all new staff and volunteers are CRB approved at the enhanced level before commencing employment at the school.

It is recommended that the school finalise the draft recruitment policy

It is recommended that the school ensure that telephone references are noted on the staff files.

It is recommended that a record of staff interviews according to the interview process and any specification for the post.

Total number of care staff:

7

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

X

### Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

The school is staffed at all times of the day and night, at or above the minimum level

**specified under standard 28.2. Records of staff actually working in the school demonstrate achievement of this staffing level.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The above finding is based upon the following:

- An inspection of the staff rota.
- Account of the numbers of children their needs and patterns of life at the school.
- An inspection of staff training records.
- Discussion with management and staff of the school.

The overall impression was of care being provided by a competent team of staff.

The care staff team is led by a care manager who has been in post for some 15 years. The care manager shows a good knowledge of child care arrangements for the children at the school knowing each of the children individual needs. The care manager has NVQ level 4 in care management and has completed the NVQ assessor training enabling continuing training of the staff team in NVQ. There was 50% of the staff team NVQ level 3 trained. The remainder were to commence NVQ level 2 training. All staff had received training in child protection and further refresher training was planned.

The staff team comprised of 6-37hr staff members and 1-24hrs staff member. The rota provided for 36 children who were boarding at the school. All children had been assessed as having a moderate learning disability. The children were relatively independent needing general support and guidance. There were no examples of challenging behaviour noted during the inspection which constituted a serious risk to self or others or which significantly prohibited the use of community services / facilities. There were examples of risks of self-harm however which were not noted as apparent on a daily basis e.g. risk of self harm to a child in climbing to high places related to their mental health.

The staff rota showed deployment of a senior staff member on at all times and on call arrangements for out of hours support. Discussion took place regarding time in the rota to allow for planned supervision, handovers. Staff working hours were consistent with the working time directive and there was no excessive hours worked noted during the course of the inspection.

A parents handbook was provided which outlined the schools responses to welfare matters e.g. child protection and bullying.

It is recommend that the school review the staff rota with particular regard to future changes required to meet changing demands of children.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)**

**Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills**



<b>required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>The overall finding is based upon inspection of staff training records, discussion with management and staff of the school.</p> <p>Basic training was being provided. The care manager was National Vocational Qualification level 4 qualified and approved as an NVQ assessor. Three of the team of six staff had completed NVQ level 3 a further staff member had NVQ level 2. The remaining two staff were due to start NVQ training. All staff had received training child protection, first aid, counselling and in the use of physical intervention. Training for staff in the care of people with epilepsy, fire safety and refresher child protection training had been arranged. There was a need for training in relation to the care of children falling within the autistic disorder spectrum. Given the stability of the staff team further attention could have been given to other identified needs of children e.g. mental health. Discussion took place regarding future changes to the needs of children accommodated at the school. There will need to be consideration as to the impact upon demands for additional skills and training of the staff team.</p> <p>It is recommended that the school provide training for staff in the care of children with autism. Account should be taken of any additional needs of children in relation to future changes of need of children accommodated at the school.</p>		

<b>Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)</b> <b>All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>The above finding is based upon discussion with staff and management of the school.</p> <p>Staff receive formal supervision once half termly from the care manager. In discussion with staff they also referred to the continuing support and availability of senior staff throughout as part of their normal duties. Supervision as described by staff is taking around 20 minutes for one to one supervision to occur. Should this be the case in all instances then the weight of importance attached to one to one supervision should be reviewed along with its structure and content. On this occasion the individual supervision records of staff were not reviewed. A performance appraisal system was in place and staff met regularly for staff meetings, which addressed childcare practice. It is recommended that the school review the structure and content of supervision.</p>		

## ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.
- Children enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.

### Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The overall impression was of organisational and management arrangements which accounted for the welfare needs of children. Management of the school were very responsive to any area which detracted from the welfare arrangements for children. Care services are provided by a caring and competent staff team. Mistakes had been made in relation to the organisation of Health and Safety matters which are reflected elsewhere in this report. Given the proactive response of the management, the Inspectors were confident that this matter would be addressed.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:

X %

**Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)**

The National Care Standards Commission is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day-to-day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The above finding is based upon inspection of systems of management in the school, and a variety of care related records.

The overall impression was of good management leadership by the Head teacher and care manager. There were systems in place for staff support, liaison with other professional and a management approach, which promoted the welfare of children. There are requirements / recommendations made from the inspection. However these are not felt to be attributable to any significant failures of management. The inspectors were impressed by the proactive approach by the Head Teacher to addressing any matters leading to improvement to the quality of care at the school. The most significant factor relating to management of the school was the need to review the arrangements for health and safety.

**Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)**

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The School along with other special schools within the authority have developed a system, which involves Heads of Care from other establishments visiting and completing a report on the school. These reports cover all of the areas identified in this standard. Copies are routinely sent to the school, the LEA and to the Board Of Governors.

During general discussion with Chair of Governors the Inspectors raised the idea that there would be some benefit in identifying a member of the Governing Body who would take a special interest in the care provision and its staff at the school. It was recommended that this governor should routinely be provided with copies on the std 33 Report and that this governor routinely report back to the governing body on all matters relating to care within the school.

## PART C

## HEAD'S RESPONSE

### **C.1 Head's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.**

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 11/12 February 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

A copy of the Providers comments and action plan are available at the Area Office, where these have been submitted.

**Action taken by the NCSC in response to Head's comments:**

Amendments to the report were necessary

☐ NO

Comments were received from the provider

☐ YES

Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

☐

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

☐

**Note:**

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

**C.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 28 April 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

**Status of the Head's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:**

Action plan was required

☐ YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

☐ YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

☐ YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

☐

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

☐

Other: <enter details here>

☐

### C.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

**Head's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.**

**C.3.1 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_**  
**confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation**  
**of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that**  
**I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with**  
**these.**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

### Designation

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**C.3.2 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_**  
**am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:**

--

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

### Designation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.