



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Valence School

**Westerham Road
Westerham
Kent
TN16 1QN**

Lead Inspector
Sophie Wood

Announced Inspection
21st March 2006 9:30

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

Reader Information	
Document Purpose	Inspection Report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General Public
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Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Residential Special Schools*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Valence School
Address	Westerham Road Westerham Kent TN16 1QN
Telephone number	01959 562156
Fax number	01959 565046
Email address	swilkins@valence.kent.sch.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Mr Roland Gooding
Name of Head	Mr Roland Gooding
Name of Head of Care	Ms Sue Wilkins
Age range of residential pupils	8 - 19
Date of last welfare inspection	09/02/05

Brief Description of the School:

Valence school is situated off the A25 Westerham Road and is set within 40 acres of park and woodland in the Darenth Valley.

The school caters for children aged between 5 and 19 years as day and boarding pupils, (boarding can commence at the age of 8), who have physical disabilities and/or complex medical needs. Many of the pupils have additional special needs in relation to learning, communication and social and emotional development.

Boarding accommodation comprises of four separate areas, Turrets and Chevening are situated on the first floor of the main building and accommodate younger boarders. Jubilee, which is on the second floor, offers accommodation and support to those who are working specifically to increase their independence skills, which may also include attending external educational and work placements. Lawn House, a single storey unit, is set to the side of the main school building, accommodating boarders aged 16 and over. Access to the three boarding areas within the main building is gained by the majority of boarders via two lifts; the second of which was having its installation completed at last year's inspection.

Since this visit, ongoing refurbishment and maintenance works have continued; however, the physical environment for boarders remains inadequate, with Lawn House, the 16+ unit, being totally inappropriate and unable to meet even the basic care needs of boarders. Inadequate staffing levels further exacerbate these problems. Pupils with greater and additional care needs are joining the school but staffing levels have not been increased accordingly.

Despite all of the above, a committed staff team continues to strive to do their very best within the restrictions of an inadequate environment and an insufficient number of care staff. Led by a Headmaster and Head of Care, who provide clear leadership and commitment, the school offers support to pupils through teachers, education support staff, carers, nurses and therapists.

SUMMARY

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

This announced inspection was the fourth to be conducted under the auspices of the Care Standards Act 2000 and was carried out by CSCI regulatory inspectors Sophie Wood and Ann Block, commencing on Thursday 23rd March 2006 and concluding on Friday 24th March 2006.

The Inspectors worked separately in order to fully cover all of the required areas, including interviews with the Headmaster, Head of Care, Deputy Head of Care, all disciplines of care staff, boarders, the catering manager, administrative personnel, the staff training manager, the Bursar, Head of Nursing and a School Governor. A full tour of the school was conducted, the inspectors joined in with pupils for meals and evening activities. Staff and young people were interviewed both individually and in groups.

Daily records, policies, procedures and other pertinent documents were read and a number of staff personnel files were randomly selected for inspection. Additional material was gained through the receipt of the Head's self assessment, pre-inspection questionnaire and questionnaires received from boarders, parents, care staff and placing authorities.

Once again, boarders and parents reported very positive relationships with their care givers. Staff again demonstrated their continued commitment to providing the best care possible in difficult circumstances.

Boarders and their parents continue to praise the efforts of the school, however, they understandably remain very frustrated with the inadequate physical environment and staffing levels. Such factors are compromising the quality of care being delivered and is having a negative on the fulfilment of potential, including provision of activities and personal development skills for boarders.

Staff try hard to remain positive and are to be commended for their continued efforts to work in the best interests of the pupils. Unfortunately, for some staff who have worked at the school for a number of years, the situation has become untenable, with the environment and staffing levels being cited as their reasons for giving notice over the last year.

Following a Kent County Council review of 'Special School' provision, the school has recently been advised of plans to provide a significant budgetary increase for the financial year 2006 – 7, together with greater in house responsibility for budget management. This will enable some building works and an increase in staff numbers. The senior management team and governors are currently reviewing the school's staffing structure in an effort to recruit additional staff in the most positive and beneficial way.

Such news is clearly welcomed and positively received; however, such dramatic changes will inevitably take some time to implement. Therefore, although the future is keenly anticipated by all concerned, the immediate problems and difficulties currently being experienced require focus and attention now, in order for the wellbeing of pupils and staff to be protected.

What the school does well:

The evidence obtained confirmed previous inspection findings that the school engages in much commendable practice.

Pupils are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way in which the school is run.

Valence School complaints procedure and practice is seen as being commendable and pupils are well protected from bullying by others.

The pupils enjoy excellent relationships with staff, based on honesty and mutual respect.

The school has developed a good range of training opportunities for all staff, which further enhances their skills and ability to provide excellent standards of care.

The school continues to be very well led and managed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

From last year's inspection, only two areas were identified as needing significant improvement. These were 'physical environment' and 'staffing levels'.

Despite the continued efforts of the senior management team and Board of Governors to give these elements a high profile with the Local Education Authority, limited improvements have been achieved. Whilst some refurbishment has been completed, for example, redecoration and replacement baths and showers in some areas, the actual type and amount of refurbishment needed to fully meet the needs of boarders requires complete re-provision. The ability to do this is beyond the school's control.

What they could do better:

In order for boarders to receive the standard of personal care they deserve and require, the inadequate physical environment and staffing levels must be

addressed. This will ensure that staff avoid unnecessary lifting and moving and also increase boarders' opportunities for increased independence.

Recreational activities are compromised due to a lack of staff availability, in terms of 'drivers' and the safe number of staff members needed to leave the school site.

Many areas, particularly toilets within Lawn House, cannot be accessed by wheelchair users; this compromises privacy and independence and in some cases, boarders have to wait to use the toilet. This is not acceptable.

For the first time, written documentation within the boarding areas held omissions and a number of documents, such as care plans, had not been updated / amended. Rightly, care staff focus what time they have on meeting direct care needs of the young people, they recognised that due to limited staff time and numbers, records have had to take second place.

Greater attention towards communication and improved liaison between key health personnel, care and catering staff would further enhance the health care provision for boarders, many of whom have complex medical needs.

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

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

CONTENTS

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Recommended Actions identified during the inspection

Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

14, 15.

Whilst the health needs of boarders are swiftly identified and planned for, improvements to information sharing and liaison between all involved personnel would further enhance both of the above standards.

EVIDENCE:

The senior nurse was interviewed and a number of pertinent records were inspected. Although new to her post, the senior nurse spoke positively about her role, was student focussed and demonstrated a clear and insightful view as to the issues and challenges currently involved. She is keen to progress with improved communication systems between all of those involved not only with care delivery, but also with assessments and ongoing reviews of boarders' needs, such as speech & language therapy. A further area that she recognises as requiring review is the dietician input, which currently equates to 12 hours per month. Given the complex needs of many of the boarders, clear and sound dietary advice and guidance is imperative, particularly for the care team and catering manager.

All of the eight nurses hold current registered nurse status and provide nursing cover from 7am to 10pm on weekdays. Nursing staff are currently employed by the local Primary Care Trust (PCT); however, discussion is taking place with regard to nurses being directly employed by the school.

A female doctor visits the school once a week and more frequently if required. Boarders may choose to see a male doctor from the local practice and to see a doctor on their own. The school dentist spends a whole day at the school every two weeks and the optician visits the school fortnightly. In addition, there are visits from a chiropodist, and the community paediatrician from the PCT sees all school pupils. An Orthopaedic Surgeon and a Paediatric Neurologist from Guys Hospital also visits the School. Staff consider that they are fortunate to have in house visits which causes less disruption for the young people and their carers and unhesitatingly praised this system.

All unqualified staff administering medicine have received training through the PCT. During the week all medication is administered by nurses, yet when the school remains open over some weekends, there is no nursing cover therefore care staff administer all required medication. Given limitations in time and numbers, staff were aware that young peoples needs may be better met by reviewing delegated responsibilities.

Mealtimes were joined and observed, and the catering manager was interviewed. Boarders were generally positive about the school's meal provision and they described clear and ongoing consultation processes about the menu. From the menus inspected, it was evident that the evening meals being supplied to Lawn House frequently consist of processed foods, including hamburgers, pizzas and pasta dishes. It was also noted that for boarders requiring additional nourishment due to their specific medical needs, there is reliance upon the use of high calorie snacks such as creamy yogurts. In reading care files, in many cases there was no clear reference to the specific dietary requirements of individuals and how these would be met. An increase in the dietician's contracted hours or the acquisition of a dietetic assistant has potential to improve this aspect of the school's provision.

Although the dining hall is not ideal in terms of its size and furnishing, mealtimes are another area whereby the staff team are commended for their efforts to ensure that students receive the help they need to eat and drink in a social setting that promotes dignity and where possible, independence. The dining hall is another area that needs to be aesthetically improved but more pressing factors, such as improvements to bathrooms, toilets and staffing levels, somewhat supersede and overshadow this area.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 26, 27.

Clear policies and procedural guidance protects confidentiality and students' welfare. The school operates transparently with other professional organisations and in particular, its recruitment processes are sound and robust. Physical aspects of the environment need to improve to further protect students and staff.

EVIDENCE:

Staff remain explicitly clear as to the school's policies and procedures pertaining to confidentiality and information sharing. This is particularly relevant with regard to care and nursing staff. Records are held securely, with access granted only on a need to know basis. This standard would be recorded as being met if measured only through staff practice; however, the significant

shortfalls resulting from inadequate accommodation compromise basic privacy for boarders and this is unacceptable.

Complaints records were inspected and it was again very positive to find that, even minor concerns and issues from students are dealt with using the formal, written process, whereby responses are received in writing within the policy's agreed timescales. A school governor regularly reviews complaints, their content and management.

Two disclosures which fall within the remit of child protection concerns, have been made since the last inspection. Both were sensitively handled and reported to the appropriate external bodies without delay, further demonstrating the school's continued emphasis upon fulfilling its role to protect vulnerable young people. Every member of staff interviewed, including the ancillary team, was conversant with the school's child protection policy and procedure, with each knowing how and to whom to report any concerns. Training records reinforced that this subject is revisited regularly.

Boarders spoken with reiterated the school's view that instances of bullying will not be tolerated and this is reinforced through a clear and descriptive policy and procedure. The few instances that were described involved low level instances such as 'name calling', with individuals reporting that they were expediently and positively dealt with. Staff understood many of the triggers for unsocial acts and shared consistent action to take where necessary.

Clear procedural guidance is in place with regards the reporting and management of unauthorised absences and missing pupils. There have been no such instances since the previous inspection.

Records pertaining to sanctions and behaviour management strategies were scrutinised. These were found to follow the written prescribed guidance, in terms of punishments appropriately fitting the negative behaviour displayed and, in extreme cases of the power to wheelchairs being disengaged, such occurrences are, quite rightly, recorded as a means of 'physical intervention'. Written records are made using a designated pro forma. Comments from the Deputy or Head of Care are required, to ensure that the use of such interventions continue to be closely monitored.

Risk assessments pertaining to the safety of the school premises continue to be regularly reviewed and updated. Fire evacuation records and the ongoing maintenance of fire fighting equipment were in good order and boarders routinely practise evacuation drills. Hot water temperatures are suitably restricted and equipment such as the lifts and hoists are routinely serviced. Since the last inspection, additional overhead hoists and some specialist showers and baths have been installed. Whilst this is positive, a number of areas remain where such equipment is not in place. This poses potential risks for boarders and staff, who are therefore required to make a number of

additional manoeuvres and 'lifts' which, given the right physical environment, they would not have to do. This places both staff and the boarders involved, at unnecessary risk to their own health & safety.

Policies and procedures relating to staff recruitment are sound and promote the safety of pupils. Personnel files were scrutinised and the member of staff responsible for recruitment was interviewed. Whilst sound and robust recruitment practises were evidenced, the school is reminded of the need to ensure that the return of clear POCA and CRB checks are clearly evidenced within personnel files before an individual takes up their post.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

12, 13, 22.

Boarders do not always receive the support they need to complete homework or to access the local community, and despite the very best efforts of staff, they are often waiting to receive individual support.

EVIDENCE:

Perusal of care files found that these held copies of school reports and educational targets. Observations made during the evening showed boarders receiving help and support with homework wherever possible. In Lawn House, efforts have been made to place boarders who are completing vocational courses in particular living groups so they have access to the study areas and computers in the building after the school day. Computers are available for students' use in all living areas. During the first day of this inspection the computers were all being 'networked'. Access to the school library is facilitated. Two after school clubs, Art and Computers were observed. After school clubs are run by teachers with care staff assistance and are open to both boarders and day pupils. The swimming pool was also in use, as was the sports hall, again being run by a mix of teaching and care staff. Volunteers, with evidence of proper recruitment, are used as support to enable more young people to enjoy activities. Young people spoken to commented that opportunities were often restricted by staff/volunteer availability.

Whilst all of the above findings were very positive and demonstrated the school's continued commitment to making the very best of the resources available, a number of 'gaps' remain and these are directly attributed to insufficient staffing levels. Examples include:

- Care plans were not streamlined, in terms of holding all of the information about an individual's needs and targets together. More could

be achieved by using a format that looks at a child holistically; however, such a format and process requires staff from all disciplines to spend time together, and although reviews are happening, they are not always attended by all relevant personnel due to time constraints and other commitments.

- Written evidence was seen to demonstrate that during evenings and weekends, those Care staff on duty are providing personal care, preparing all meals, giving medication and performing all domestic tasks. Few of them are 'nominated drivers' of the school's minibuses and all of these factors restrict the time and resources available to actually 'go out' and experience life outside of Valence School.
- Whilst clear written evidence is in place to describe the various individual support mechanisms needed by each boarder, the most negative factor here is time and carer availability. Care staff were acutely aware of individual needs, for example, how and under what circumstances to support individual physiotherapy programmes, derived from the teaching and guidance of the therapy team. Difficulties arise in terms of coordinating all of the individual needs of boarders and staff are extremely frustrated that at present, they feel are performing 'functional tasks' one after another, as opposed to spending any 'quality time' with an individual.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.(NMS 2)
- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.(NMS 9)
- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.(NMS 11)
- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.(NMS 17)
- In accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while living away from home at school.(NMS 20)

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

2, 9, 11, 17, 20.

Boarders enjoy positive, respectful relationships with their care givers and are encouraged to be as independent and autonomous as their disabilities allow.

EVIDENCE:

The most overwhelming, positive aspect of Valence School is rooted within its own ethos and culture that is to value every pupil and afford dignity and respect at all times. This was clearly evidenced by observing interactions between staff and boarders. Forums, such as the Student Council, were observed and individuals stated "We bring ideas from our Year groups and get things changed", "The staff really do listen to us".

Pupils do not join the school until a full and thorough assessment of need is completed, and this is conducted by a range of relevant professionals. Whilst this aspect is extremely positive, examples were found whereby continuing assessments, for example, speech therapy, had been conducted without any form of consultation with the care staff or parents, resulting in a written programme being devised for staff to follow, which they may not fully understand. Such practice erodes positive working partnerships and has the potential to make care staff feel uninvolved and ultimately, undervalued.

A high proportion of students possess communication difficulties and this factor is extensively explored through induction and ongoing training for the staff team. Observations of practice saw staff providing time and patience needed for individuals to communicate their needs, by adjusting pacing of speech or using electronic equipment. No individual was seen to be rushed or hurried and no member of staff attempted to finish a child's sentence for them.

Boarders spoke very positively about their own introduction to the school. They felt the process had been well planned and supported, commenting very positively about the staff and their peers. It was noticeable when simply being around groups of pupils, to see how much attention older pupils paid to younger ones if they appeared to need help.

Groups of older boarders talked of their plans for when they will be leaving the school in the summer. A high proportion are planning to attend residential colleges and they spoke of the support they have received from staff to get ready for this transition. A high number said that whilst they remain excited and well prepared, they would be sorry to leave. Comments included:

"I'll come back and visit. Lots of previous students do and you know everyone will be pleased to see you".

"I've been here since I was a little kid. It's like home and I'll really miss it, but I'm ready to move on".

Contact with parents and relatives is effectively supported through a number of means. Telephones are readily available and calls can be made in private. With greater computer access for boarders, email use will undoubtedly increase. Staff use a home/school communication book which goes between home and school with the student. In the main, parents reported good communication systems and said they are always made to feel welcome when visiting the school. There were a small number of negative comments about late or non-communication and this was frequently attributed to 'the staff are so busy, they don't always have the time'.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

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

16, 21, 23, 24, 25.

The physical environment does not meet boarders' needs in terms of safety and independent access and further, it compromises their privacy and dignity.

EVIDENCE:

An inspection of records showed clear evidence of boarders' own money and personal requisites being safely held. Care staff provide support wherever possible in order for boarders to make necessary purchases, but there are numerous occasions whereby they cannot go into town, for example to make own purchases, because of low staffing levels.

Whilst individuals are clearly permitted to wear their own clothes outside of school time, a number choose to remain in school uniform because of the time it takes to get changed.

The physical accommodation continues to receive maintenance works and ongoing refurbishment; recent examples include the additional showers and baths that are more accessible. The most welcomed aspect reported by boarders is the new second lift where they are now able to operate the lift and some main doors independently, through the placing of sensor pads or systems on their communicators. The young people demonstrated how such an improvement made a huge difference to their quality of life both in reducing

time spent waiting around and providing independence. Staff at all levels are aware that the provision of suitable equipment and facilities makes an almost disproportionate benefit to quality of life and continue to plea for funding to be allocated.

Examples of 'inadequate' provision includes:

- Lawn House – a number of toilets are completely inaccessible for the boarders. Individuals cannot exercise choice in terms of bedrooms, because a number can only be accessed by ambulant students. Although the sitting rooms have been decorated and furnished with televisions, play stations, etc, the remainder of the building has no homely feel with a kitchen which is too small to accommodate the number of boarders wishing to use it. Much equipment is being stored in a shed outside. The main communal area, where meals are taken, is likened to a functional, institutional dining hall that may be found within a conventional school or college. This is meant to be a homely environment and the absence of good décor and quality furnishings makes it an unappealing place to be.
- Main Building – Jubilee and Chevening are situated on long corridors, with bedrooms on one side and bathrooms/toilets opposite. In order for boarders to access bathing/toilet facilities, care staff have to manoeuvre the young person across the corridor, often in a state of partial undress. As the Chevening corridor is regularly used as a through route to the sports hall and swimming pool, this has potential to compromise dignity and privacy. Staff are commended for their efforts, in that they use screens across corridors and boarders confirmed they always do this. However, staff are placing themselves at risk by continually moving and handling equipment, access through corridors at the time is restricted to everyone else and the bathrooms are not all big enough to accommodate hoists and other required equipment, which would protect staff and boarders. The whole manoeuvre does nothing to promote independence or the dignity of the boarder.
- All four units have limited storage space for the copious amounts of equipment needed by the students. Again, the school does what it can with the resources in place, but this often results in equipment being stored inappropriately and a long way from where it is actually needed.
- Access to Jubilee unit, where some of the older boarders live, requires access down a short flight of steps or use of a platform lift. A recent accident involving the platform lift now means that all wheelchair users have to be accompanied by a staff member when using it, once again restricting their ability to exercise independence.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

1, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

Although the school provides clear written guidance describing its services, it is not currently able to meet all of the needs of those it looks after. This includes boarders and staff.

EVIDENCE:

Through reading files and interviewing staff members, evidence was presented to demonstrate that often only the basic care needs of boarders are being met and this occurs by staff members working tirelessly. Staff commented:

"It's like a conveyer belt. Finish bathing someone, then straight onto the next. No time for quality or simply spending time with them".

Another stated, "We just about find the time to write up the daily records, no time to update care plans, so we often stay on to try to catch up".

Instances of staff sickness have increased over the last year and a number of long-standing team members have left since the last inspection.

Staff induction and supervision records are not of the quality as was found last year, although NVQ and INSET training is still occurring.

Remarkably, staff are continuing to work to the best of their ability and a real sense of loyalty to the school, especially the Senior Management Team, remains.

External management training has recently been commissioned and much work is currently being completed in terms of revising the staffing structure of the whole school. This is a very timely exercise that should be used to increase liaison across all disciplines, as at present, tensions remain and this is attributed to the unacceptable physical environment and working conditions.

The school benefits from the input received by a hugely supportive Governing Body, the Chairperson of which was interviewed. The governors are an active group and the Chair demonstrated a keen understanding of the difficulties currently being faced. Both this group and the Local Authority's Standard 33 Visitor regularly report the inadequacies of the environment and staffing levels, yet these still remain.

Although the very recent news concerning funding is welcomed, the required changes will take time to implement and focus must be placed immediately on the short-term measures needed to enable the school see its longer term plans come to fruition whilst being asked to care for an increasingly dependent group of young people with associated complex needs.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	2
15	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	1
4	4
5	4
6	4
7	3
8	3
10	4
26	2
27	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	2
13	1
22	2

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

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	2
21	3
23	1
24	1
25	1

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
18	2
19	3
28	1
29	2
30	2
31	2
32	3
33	3

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection? YES

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
1	RS3	It is recommended that appropriate measures be implemented to further protect the privacy of boarders in meeting their personal care needs.	02/05/06
2	RS12	It is recommended that care plan formats be reviewed to incorporate both educational and social targets and that personnel from both teams be given greater opportunities for direct consultation and liaison.	02/05/06
3	RS13	It is strongly recommended that the inadequate staffing levels be addressed as a matter of priority, so as to enable increased leisure opportunities.	02/05/06
4	RS14	It is recommended that more opportunities be made to enable the care and nursing teams to liaise and share information. Similarly, such methods should be explored with visiting therapists.	02/05/06
5	RS15	It is strongly recommended that dietetic input be significantly increased.	02/05/06
6	RS16	It is recommended that boarders be given increased opportunities to make their own personal purchases, including having staff available to assist in accessing the local community.	02/05/06
7	RS17	It is recommended that a format for care plans be devised, whereby the 'holistic' needs and	02/05/06

		targets of the individual can be readily presented and accessed.	
8	RS18	It is recommended that staff be provided with the time and resources so as to keep case files accurate and up to date.	02/05/06
9	RS22	It is strongly recommended that the staffing review looks swiftly to addressing the shortfalls in students having to wait to receive the individual support they need.	02/05/06
10	RS23	It is strongly recommended that plans for re-provision be implemented without further delay.	02/05/06
11	RS24	As above.	02/05/06
12	RS25	As above.	02/05/06
13	RS26	It is strongly recommended that a risk assessment be conducted with regards the very real current risks to staff and student safety, due to the substandard environment and staffing levels. The findings of this may result in the school reviewing admissions for next term until such deficits are rectified.	02/05/06
14	RS28	It is strongly recommended that all possibilities in terms of increasing staffing levels be explored; this may include the use of agency and short-term contracts.	02/05/06
15	RS29	It is strongly recommended that the induction, training and supervision needs of those staff who are in post be reinstated as soon as is practicably possible.	02/05/06
16	RS30	As above.	02/05/06
17	RS31	It is strongly recommended that staff be provided with adequate means so as to conduct full handovers, attend reviews and maintain necessary records.	02/05/06

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Maidstone Local Office

The Oast

Hermitage Court

Hermitage Lane

Maidstone

ME16 9NT

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

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