



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

St Francis

Wickenby Crescent

Ermine Estate

Lincoln

Lincs

LN1 3TJ

15th March 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

St Francis

Address

Wickenby Crescent, Ermine Estate, Lincoln, Lincs, LN1 3TJ

Tel No:

01522 526498

Fax No:

Email Address:

Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school

Lincolnshire County Council

Name of Head

Mrs Ann Hoffmann

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

PD

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

6/11/02

Date of Inspection Visit		15th March 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Mr Mark Ryder	124974
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Ms Patricia Pollock	
Name of NCSC Inspector	3		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mrs Anne Hoffmann	

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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 St Francis. 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

St Francis Special Residential School is a day school that also provides planned residential care within a 24-hour curriculum for boys and girls up to the age of 19 years with medical and/or physical disabilities.

The school provides a full curriculum from Nursery, Primary and Secondary through to the age of nineteen.

All pupils attending the school have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and are placed by the Special Needs Panel of Lincolnshire County Council Educational Directorate.

Up to 24 pupils were recorded as using the residential places at the school either on a full time or part time basis. Boarding is available from Monday to Friday during school term time.

All accommodation is on one level and there are 3 separate living areas. Each of these has a lounge with adjoining bedrooms and bathrooms. There is one main dining area and a number of facilities within the school that are utilised by the pupils during the evenings for a variety of activities/hobbies. Kitchenettes are also available for the young people to prepare their own snacks and hot drinks in the evenings should they wish to do so. The residential area is equipped with a wide range of moving and handling equipment to meet the assessed needs of the young people. The school has its own swimming pool, which is available up to 5pm.

Since the last inspection the school has opened a Post 16 wing that is equipped with classrooms, computer terminals, games area and projection facilities for films, CDs and computer screens. It also has specially adapted kitchens and laundry facilities to allow for the development of independence training programmes.

The school is situated on a residential estate in Lincoln. It has its own transport available for pupils and these are used to access the community facilities and for other outings.

The staffing of the residential area of the school consists of a team of Residential Care Officers who are led by the Principal Residential Care Officer. There is also a nursing member of staff on duty at all times. The staffing ratio is no less than 6 staff to the 24 pupils, although it is normally 8/9 staff to 24 pupils.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

Statement of School's Purpose

The school was seen to be performing well in this area with a clear and accessible document in both written and CD format.

Children's Rights

Of the 3 standards inspected, the school was seen to meet 2 of the standards.

The school provided, thorough consultation processes with the boarders, privacy and confidentiality of the children.

Child Protection

Of the 4 standards inspected the school met 2 of the standards.

The school has a clear anti bullying policy and a clear and robust system for monitoring and notifying areas of concern.

Care and Control.

Of the 2 standards inspected 1 was seen to meet the required standard.

The school shows ample evidence of mutual respect and professionalism and this was evidenced in all submissions to the Commission.

Quality of Care

Of the 6 standards inspected the school was seen to meet all 6 standards.

The school has child centred practices in relation to admitting young people and moving them on into further care. Education in its widest sense is at the forefront of activities and support and health care is well planned and professionally delivered. Similarly, personal appearance is given a high priority and young people are given encouragement in grooming and self esteem which includes emphasis on nutritious meals.

Planning for care

Of the 6 standards inspected the school was seen to meet 5 standards.

Placement plans are full and accessible to all. Staff are disciplined in recording information in a variety of formats and ensuring that this information is available to support the planning processes.

Premises

Of the 4 standards inspected the school was seen to meet all 4 standards.

The building is well maintained and safe and regular checks are conducted to ensure all requirements are met. The area use is well planned within the limitations of an older building.

Staffing

Of the 4 standards inspected the school was seen to meet 1 standard.

The school is adequately staffed for the task in hand and often operates above the minimum level.

Organisation and Management

Of the 3 standards inspected the school was seen to meet 2 of the standards.

The school is well organised and managed with an open, accessible and supportive style. Parents, young people and staff have confidence in the Head of Care and she provides consistent and thoughtful oversight of all activities of the care service.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Children's Rights

The school did not meet one standard in this section.

The school need to ensure that all staff are trained in the use of the complaints process.

Child Protection

The school did not meet one standard in this section.

The school need to ensure there is a written policy to clarify procedures to follow should a child go missing from the boarding house.

Care and Control

The school did not meet one standard in this section.

Prohibited sanctions need recording for staff guidance. Also, training in appropriate physical interventions needs to be completed by care staff.

Planning for care

The school did not meet one standard in this section.

Although the school has developed a checklist to ensure that future staff appointments meet the regulations, current files are in need of review. Gaps in information need to be remedied and if this is not possible then dated explanations should be inserted.

Staffing

The school did not meet three standards in this section

As above, staff records need to be reviewed against the checklists in NMS 19 and 27. Also, the school need to ensure that staff are trained in all the areas identified in Appendix 2 of the Standards and that they are all offered regular, individual supervision.

Organisation and Staffing

The school did not meet one standard in this section.

Although the Independent Visitor is attending the school as required, he has not been advised as to the areas on which he is required to report to the Head of Care.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This inspection was delayed from October 2003 due to the departure of the previous inspector from his post with the NCSC.

The school have responded well to their first inspection of care in April 2002 and have developed a number of policies and practices that were not in place at that time. There remains a need to rationalise some of the paperwork now in place to facilitate access for new staff and visitors to the school and to ensure that all areas of policy are covered. In addition the school need to ensure that their recruitment processes are robust and that old files are reviewed against the standards.

The standard of care for young people at St Francis was considered high.

Young people, staff and parents continue to express a high level of confidence and enthusiasm for the school in their written responses and in discussions. The young people particularly report that they value the opportunities offered by the school for social contact, development of skills and for fun.

The school places a high level of importance on the issues of physical safety and security. Visitors are signed in and out of the building, gates are locked after school hours and most areas of activity and all outings are subject of written risk assessments.

There is a wide range of social and sporting activities available to the young people and a relaxed and homely atmosphere on the boarding wings.

There were no complaints or notifiable incidents made to the Department for Education and Skills.

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

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

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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	
1	NMS 8	The school to ensure that the procedure for the absence of a child without authority is in the form of written policy and guidance.	01.06.04
2	NMS 10	The school is required to provide training for staff in appropriate physical intervention techniques.	01.06.04
3	NMS 14	That the guidance to staff be reviewed against Appendix 3 to ensure that all matters are included	01.06.04
4	NMS 19	That the school carry out a review of all records for children and staff against standard 19.2 to ensure that all information is in place and that gaps are filled where possible or explanations logged where this is not possible.	01.06.04

5	NMS 29	That the school review the staff training programme to ensure that all matters listed in Appendix 2 are included	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	NMS 4	That the school include complaints training for all staff in their induction programme.	01.08.04
2	NMS 5	That the school include all ancillary staff in their child protection training.	01.08.04
3	NMS 7	That the school change the heading for the list of notifiable incidents (included within their Statement of Purpose) from "Personal and Confidential" to Reporting of Significant Incidents, or similar.	01.08.04
4	NMS 10	That the school record a list of prohibited sanctions within their sanctions policy.	01.08.04
5	NMS 17	That the school include a question on spiritual needs within their care plan questionnaire.	01.08.04
6	NMS 27	That the school ensure that staff files comply with requirements of 27.2 and that where gaps exist they are rectified where possible and dated explanations given where this is not possible.	01.08.04
7	NMS 28	That the school compile a policy on staffing that includes issues outlined in 28.2.	01.08.04
8	NMS 30	That the school establish supervision timetables for all staff employed in the boarding wings.	01.08.04
9	NMS 33	That the school develop a proforma for their Independent Visitor to complete on each visit which covers the issues noted in 33.3	01.08.04

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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	NMS 14	That the school consider how opportunities can be increased for young people to be out of their chairs in the evenings, should they wish to be.
2	NMS 18	That the school review their recording systems to ensure that clear audit trails exist in relation to young people and their care.
3	NMS 31	That the school consider their programme of NVQ training in order to comply with NMS 31.2 and 31.4

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	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• Does	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NA
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	NO
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	15/03/04
Time of Inspection	9.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	53
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	6

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
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The school has a well presented and accessible Statement of Purpose. The resources of the school are well able to meet the requirements contained within the Statement. The boarding and day school policies are well interlinked and overseen by the head teacher and are reviewed annually.

The Statement of Purpose is available on CD for young people to view with their parents if requested.

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
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15 pre-inspection questionnaires were received from pupils. A number of these responses acknowledged that consultation takes place on a frequent basis.

There is evidence in Care Plans, responses to questionnaires, meeting minutes and in discussions with young people that they are consulted fully on issues of importance to themselves. Many of the children have limited or no verbal ability, but staff employ a range of other means of communication to gauge their wishes and feelings. An example of this includes the use of computer systems that significantly aid young people at the school.

There is a school council that has representatives from the boarders, that meets on a regular basis. Minutes from these meetings were recorded and accessible to boarders, parents and staff.

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?**

3

The school have clear written guidelines on privacy and confidentiality covering storage of records, provision of personal care, entering rooms etc. All staff are trained in Child Protection issues and are aware of their responsibilities in relation to sharing information.

The children have access to private telephone use and boards display childline numbers and NCSC numbers.

The children report that they are asked whether they are happy to receive personal care from adults of the opposite gender and that their wishes are listened to. There are 2 male care staff in a group of 22

The children report that they are happy with the levels of privacy and confidentiality in the boarding wings.

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

The school has a clear complaints policy that is issued to parents with the prospectus and is available to children and parents through the CD Rom and the Statement of Purpose.

Boarders told inspectors that they understood how to make a complaint when asked.

The inspectors were unable to find evidence that staff are trained in the use of the complaints process as per NMS 4.4

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 has clear written Child Protection policies and guidance for staff. Staff spoken to demonstrated an understanding of the procedures and a commitment to their practice. The Head Teacher is the designated person, has undergone training in her role and is a member of the local ACPC forum.

The school has written guidance for staff on managing allegations, supporting staff who are subject to allegations and pupils who are making those allegations. Professional staff are all trained in Child Protection regularly, the last full training day being 1/9/03.

The inspectors were unable to find evidence that ancillary staff were trained in the recognition of, or response to Child Abuse.

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?	3
<p>There is a clear anti bullying policy recorded in the Statement of Purpose and posters around the school advise children how to respond. Pupils report that they are reasonably confident that staff would respond appropriately should they report a bullying incident to staff.</p> <p>Questionnaires from the pupils indicated that bullying is not a significant concern at the school. The one boarder who indicated that they are sometimes bullied referred to name calling. The school are aware of the potential for this and expressed that they would be vigilant.</p>		
Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied	98	%

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?	2
<p>The school has a clear and simple system for monitoring all significant events on a termly and half termly basis and this ensures that any relevant issues are referred to NCSC. In addition, the Statement of Purpose lists all notifiable incidents. Staff all sign to say that they have read the Statement of Purpose.</p> <p>The list of notifiable incidents is wrongly titled as Privacy and Confidentiality in the Statement of Purpose and is therefore hard to find.</p>		
NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:		
• conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children		0
• serious harm to a child		0
• serious illness or accident of a child		0
• serious incident requiring police to be called		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 has a form for staff to complete should a child go missing from school. However there is no written procedure to guide staff in managing such an event. There were no recorded or known incidences in which children have gone missing since the last inspection.

Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:

0

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?	4
<p>Staff, parents and pupils report that relationships are positive and based on clear boundaries of behaviour. Mutual respect and concern is apparent between pupils and staff and pupils with each other.</p>		
<p>Written policies reflect these attitudes and behaviour.</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>The school has a clear written policy on behaviour management and appropriate forms of discipline and sanctions.</p>		
<p>The children generally report that sanctions are fair and given for clear reasons.</p>		
<p>Systems exist for recording and monitoring the use of physical interventions. However, there is no system for recording sanctions and no written record of prohibited sanctions for staff to refer to. There is also no training programme established in appropriate forms of physical intervention.</p>		

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?	4
<p>The children report that their introductions to the school boarding wing were positive and informative. Each young person was invited to complete a booklet detailing his or her personal care needs and likes and dislikes. This was used to compile an accessible care plan for each child. All children hold a copy of their personnel Care Plan.</p> <p>Those young people leaving report that preparations and visits began in their final years and that they have been involved and consulted at each stage.</p> <p>The school has a 5-year development plan which includes the expansion of policies and procedures for a "preparation for leaving" programme. Work has begun in the new Post 16 area in preparing staff and students for a more extensive programme of independence training following the ASDAN regime.</p>		

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?	4
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Optional homework clubs operate in the library from 4-5pm daily to support pupils in managing their academic programmes. Pupils also have access to computers in the evenings and to an extensive range of social and sporting activities that encourage personal development e.g. swimming, cooking, art.

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?	3
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The school provides a range of structured clubs in the evenings as well as television, computers, music and games for those who do not wish to take part in formal activities (see standard 12).

A typical week of evenings would be; sports club (Monday), outing (Tuesday), drama or art club (Wednesday), youth club (Thursday). Books are available on the wings although the inspectors saw no magazines or newspapers.

Access to the internet is restricted through the use of the County Council's secure and regulated server.

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
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All children at the school have disabilities and many have health needs as well. None of the young people currently resident on the wings have profound health needs (e.g. requiring tube feeding). The Care Plans clearly identify health care plans and 1 nurse is on duty at all times to administer medication and to give advice and guidance to staff and students on request.

Nurses are appropriately trained and offer a child focussed and sensitive service to pupils that is well documented and subject to safe and efficient procedural control.

The inspectors noted that most of the children tended to spend the evenings in their wheelchairs.

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

Children have the opportunity to choose their meals at the beginning of each week. They are generally satisfied with the quality and quantity of the food provided.

The children have some opportunities to provide light snacks for themselves in the evenings although time, staff and space restrict this. This is an area of identified development for the Post 16 group.

Environmental health inspectors advise that there are no outstanding matters of concern under the Food Safety Act 1990. An environmental health inspection took place within the last 6 months.

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 which maximises their choice.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

Children bring their own clothing into school and it is safely stored in their own rooms. The children can choose to have their clothes washed at school or to take them home for washing.

Personal effects are stored in their own rooms and the older children have locking drawers to keep personal items safe and secure. Younger children or those with less manual skill are enabled to keep items safe in staff areas.

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 is 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
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Each child has a Placement Plan as well as a Statement of Special Educational Need and a Health Care Plan. There is ample evidence of the young people's contribution to their individual plans and to the annual reviewing process.

No key worker system exists, as a matter of policy. The rationale for this policy is that young people are less likely to become dependent on care staff and their safety is more assured. The inspectors agree with this reasoning given the weekly nature of the care offered.

Not all Care Plans show evidence of attention to the spiritual needs of the young people.

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?	3
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Information on the children is held in several documents, namely the medical file, academic file, Care Plan, daily diary sheets, handover sheets, the Blue Books and Area Information sheets. Information is extensive but often hard to track and may provide difficulties for new staff in terms of knowing what information to record where.

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?**

1

Information on children is available in school records (see standard 18).

A staff register is kept up to date and accessible by the Head of Care. Staff personnel files are in need of updating and review. The inspectors were unable to find evidence of references, up to date CRB checks, evidence of selection processes and checks in gaps in employment history on some files. The inspectors are aware that the school has instituted a full review of their selection processes and have checklists for future applications.

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?**

4

All children go home to their carers at weekends and carers and family and friends are encouraged to telephone or visit the school should they wish to. The boarders were very pleased with the contact arrangements.

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?**

4

Pathway plans exist for young people in their final years at the school (See standard 11). This was considered excellent preparation for young people to prepare to move out of the school.

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?

4

Care Plans, Statement of Purpose and Policy and Procedure guidance stress the need to provide individual support to meet each child's specific needs.

Discussions with pupils and questionnaire responses confirm that this is a live issue in the school. Pupils state that they feel confident in raising issues with a number of individuals involved in their care (care officers, nurses, auxiliary staff etc.)

Nursing staff confirm that they provide advice on sexuality and gender issues in line with the school's stated policy and Gillick competence.

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?	3
<p>The school is located on the edge of a large council estate. It is built on one level with wide doors and corridors and appropriate height of eating and work surfaces.</p> <p>Safe storage of wheelchairs requiring recharging is available and equipment is of good quality and well maintained.</p> <p>There are no outstanding issues from the last fire safety inspection of 18/11/03. Work is in progress to improve the school's entrance area.</p>		

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?	3
<p>The school works hard to make the residential areas colourful and homely. There are a limited number of single rooms available and the 3/4 bedrooms are separated by dividers for privacy. The children's rooms are personalised with posters and have lockable cabinets for personal possessions.</p> <p>There is a programme of redecoration and development for the living spaces.</p>		

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?**

3

There are sufficient bathrooms and toilets for each child and they are well equipped with hoists. Improved locks were still awaited on some of the doors.

Separate facilities are available for adults.

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?**

3

There is a full risk assessment programme carried out, recorded and reviewed regularly. This programme meets the requirements of this standard but it is unclear whether any areas of illicit activity have been risk assessed.

The last Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) testing was carried out in December 2003.

The fire risk assessment was completed in September 2003 and the last full check by the fire officer was completed on 18/11/03, although the report is not filed within the Fire Risk Assessment folder.

The staff induction programme includes familiarisation of fire procedures.

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

The inspectors were unable to confirm that all staff selected (care, ancillary, students, agency etc) was recruited against the requirements of 27.3-9.

See National Minimum Standard 19

Total number of care staff:

21

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

0

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?

2

The Head of Care advises that staffing levels are never allowed to fall below 2 on each wing during the evening. Staffing levels currently allow for 3 on each wing with a floating nurse between wings. Staff who run the schools social clubs are also available to assist boarding staff during the evenings.

Nighttime cover is provided by 2 waking night staff for the three wings and a sleeping in staff member for emergency support.

This level of staffing is appropriate to meet the needs of the young people and in the opinion of the inspectors achieves the right balance between meeting individual needs and intrusive adult oversight.

There is no written staffing policy.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There is a written induction programme for care staff that clarifies levels of accountability, emergency procedures, Health and Safety Policy and Child Protection procedures.

Staff have personal development sessions annually, where training needs are identified and recorded onto a central matrix. This central matrix does not record all the areas of training identified in Appendix 2.

No staff are currently working towards their NVQ 3 in Care.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Domestic and support staff are managed by the Senior Administrative Officer who provides them with annual appraisal interviews.

The Head of Care is available on a daily basis to provide support and guidance to all staff. She also provides annual appraisals for her senior care staff that then provide appraisals for the other care staff. The care tasks are monitored and supervised against a checklist.

Regular meetings occur between and within the staff groups and policies are available and regularly updated. However, staff are not offered 1:1 supervision on a ½ termly basis to consider their personal responsibilities and ensure personal support and accountability.

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 current designated Head of Care is seeking opportunities to achieve NVQ 4 Registered Managers Award. This will be necessary by 2005.

The care staff are experienced and trained internally and are seeking opportunities to register for the NVQ 3 in Child Care Award which will be necessary by 2005. Of 21 staff 1 staff member has an NVQ 3 in Child Care.

Staff rotas are well organised and allow time for regular staff meetings, planning and review meetings. Most staff work split shifts, 7am-9.30am and 3.15-9.30pm Tuesday to Thursday and morning or evening only on Monday and Friday.

The school has a planned response to fire outbreak but no written guidelines in the event of a major illness or accident.

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

4.41 %

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 school has established a clear system of half termly and termly monitoring of the appropriate records and this is clearly recorded.

An annual review of this process is not yet in evidence.

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?

2

The school has appointed an independent visitor to make regular visits under Regulation 33. His last visit took place on 6/11/03 and a written report is on file.

The Independent Visitor's report does not address all the issues identified under Standard 33.3

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

[Empty box for Lay Assessor's Summary]

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

PART D

HEAD'S RESPONSE

D.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 15th March 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

YES

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.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 24th June 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>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I, Ms Hoffman of St Francis School 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

D.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.