

inspection report

Boarding School

Pipers Corner School

Great Kingshill

High Wycombe

Bucks

HP15 6LP

22, 23, 24th 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

Pipers Corner School

Address

Great Kingshill, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP15 6LP

Tel No:

01474 719800

Fax No:

01494 719806

Email Address

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

Mrs Valerie Stattersfield

Name of Head

Mrs Valerie Stattersfield

NCSC Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Independent boarding school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

31/01/00

Date of Inspection Visit		22nd March 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Sue Smith	098651
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Gill Gentles	101541
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	Maureen Richards	096226
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.			
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?			NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mrs V Stattersfield – Headmistress	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding 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 Boarding 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.

Inspections are carried out by the NCSC, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by NCSC may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Pipers Corner School.

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 SERVICES PROVIDED.

Pipers Corner School is situated in Great Kingshill, Buckinghamshire, approximately 30 miles from London. The school is an independent day and boarding school for girls; the school roll at the time of the inspection was 481 with 32 fulltime boarders and 13 weekday boarders.

Boarding facilities at the school are situated in the upstairs of the 17TH century farmhouse and in purpose-built accommodation above school facilities.

The school's grounds are beautiful and plentiful, with well-maintained gardens as well as playing fields for outdoor sports. The school has excellent sporting facilities with a new swimming pool complex now operational.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school has received two commendable rating scores within the main body of the report. **Standard 9 (met with commendable practice):** Excellent initiatives are in place for crisis management planning which senior management and the governing body support. The Bursar's previous experience and expertise has been fully utilised to ensure risks and risk assessing for the school is maintained to a high standard.

Standard 38 (met with commendable practice): Recruitment procedures in place are of an extremely high standard with all relevant security checks, references and interview notes held on file. All overseas staff and Gap students produce local police authority clearance. Start dates are not given until all relevant checks and information are in place.

Information sharing: The Senior Management team of the school ensure communication is open and transparent. The Headmistress meets regularly with her Head of Boarding and is fully aware of the needs of the boarding facility. All staff interviewed believed the school to be progressive and open to change.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Improvements in medication procedures are necessary for the school to fully meet Standard 15. A pharmacy inspection is advised to assist the school to improve the present systems in place.

A number of recommendations were made for improvements to aspects of the physical environment to ensure the school fully met the relevant National Minimum Standards and related health and safety expectations.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This was the first welfare inspection of the school conducted by NCSC under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools. Previous welfare inspections had been carried out under the auspices of the local authority inspection unit. The school had worked hard to meet the standards, reflected in the high numbers that were fully met, although some further development was required as indicated in the range of recommendations and welfare advice made as a result of this inspection.

Five letters were received from parents, in response to the Commission's request for views of boarding. All believed the school was adequately meeting the needs of boarders; with complimentary remarks aimed at the supportive regime whilst maintaining a fair discipline. Facilities were thought to be in most areas of a high standard. Generally all five parents believed the school to have strong school ethics and provided a positive atmosphere, which helped the girls develop their potential.

Welfare Policies and Procedures (standards 1-7)

All 7 standards were assessed and met.

The school provides a statement of boarding principles and practice. The school has worked extremely hard to produce a variety of documents to ensure standard 1 is met, these include:

- Boarding Handbook
- Parents introduction to the school
- School magazine
- Student Planner
- Staff Handbook
- School Prospectus

All are readily available to parents of potential boarders.

The school has a comprehensive policy document in place for the prevention of bullying, which was reviewed in 2003. The policy has a clear definition of bullying and the sanctions currently in place. In addition the school has implemented a prevention procedure, which is available to all new pupils during their induction to the school.

The school has a proactive approach towards the protection of children and the policy is of a good standard, staff training is of a high standard and includes all ancillary staff.

The school has a policy in place regarding behaviour and discipline. The policy clearly identifies the sanctions used and how to record them appropriately.

Complaints are thoroughly investigated and evidence of correspondence within stated time frames is held on file. The complaint as well as the follow up correspondence to all parties involved is held with the original complaint documentation. There have been three complaints in the past twelve months, which have all been actioned within required time frames.

Individual welfare/care plans are in place. These are well written and were reflective of the needs of individuals. The addition of a dated and signed review/comments sheets was advised to further develop these plans.

Consideration should be given to inclusion in the welfare plan of relevant information held in the nurse's surgery for such things as allergies.

Organisation and Management (standards 8-14)

All 7 standards were assessed and met with standard 9 rating commendable practice.

A clear management structure was evident throughout the inspection. The Head of Boarding has dual responsibilities, as she is also one of two school nurses. The Head of Boarding is BSA trained and has been in post for several years. There is an adequate level of experienced staff within the boarding team with additional support from Gap students.

Excellent initiatives are in place to crisis management planning, which are fully supported by the senior management team and governing body. The school has utilised the previous experience and expertise of the Bursar, in identifying possible major risks to the school with appropriate procedures implemented with training made available to ensure all staff are aware of the new strategies. The written and the practical approach shown to meeting this standard is evidence of commendable practice.

A variety of activities are available which are appropriately staffed with due safeguards in place.

The boarders have formal opportunities to express views in the operation of the boarding facilities; there is a boarding council, which is utilised as a place for pupils to express views on Boarding provision. The Head of Boarding reports the findings of the meetings to the Headmistress for action. During discussion with the Headmistress it was identified that pupils did receive feedback information, however timescales for work was not always given as an action plan.

The school operates a prefect system, all prefects have a role description and an induction process takes place.

In addition to the boarding staff, pupils are able to access a variety of people they could talk to, during group discussion the pupils identified that they turn to Sister Hamilton (Head of Boarding/Nurse) as the person they felt most confident with. They also identified that the Deputy Headmistress would also be a preferred choice of person to approach and during school hours she would be the most appropriate person they would contact. The school makes available a counsellor and ensures easy access to this person.

Records held by the catering team were found to be of a high standard and all relevant temperature recordings were up to date. Recommendations from the last Environmental Health Inspection, which took place on The 25th February 2004, have been actioned. All catering staff hold a current and valid food handling and hygiene certificate. The inspectors joined the pupils for meals throughout the inspection and found the food to be tasty, nutritious and adequate in portion.

Welfare Support to Boarders (1standards 15-30)

All 16 standards were assessed with 3 not met and 1 not applicable.

Five recommendations for improvements of practice were made in standard 15; these were mainly in the areas of record keeping and medication administration procedures.

The school is fortunate that it is able to utilise the experience and expertise of two Registered Nurses, however there are improvements that need to be made to ensure all procedures meet the requirements of this standard. An advisory recommendation was also made for a pharmacy inspection to take place to further support the school in the implementation of these changes; this visit will be negotiated with the school subsequent to the finalisation of the inspection report.

There were no reports of homesickness amongst the pupils, pupils identify the boarding environment as supportive and are able to identify staff and peers they would approach in times of emotional crisis.

An appropriate system is in place for the recording of monies held on behalf of all boarders, a safe is provided for the safe storage of monies. A recommendation was made for the implementing of a system to formally record the keeping of personal possessions, such as mobile phones, and the school was advised of the need to record any sanctions or practical limitations around the usage of mobile phones for individual pupils.

An induction pack is given to all new boarding pupils; this includes an individual girls' school handbook and more specific boarders' handbook.

Inspectors judged that a clearer recognition was needed on the part of boarding staff of their initial responsibility to take preventative action in relation to any emerging risks to pupil welfare. A recommendation was also made for more formalised risk assessments to be undertaken for those boarders identified at risk of using certain equipment.

As stated in standard 9, the school exhibits commendable practice for the planning and implementing of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation.

The fire alarm panel is specifically designed to continuously print activity reports for all fire emergency lighting, detectors and alarms. These clearly identify any issues such as low batteries and faults.

During the course of the inspection it was observed that throughout the boarding facilities door wedges were being used to prop open designated fire doors. It is strongly recommended that the Fire Authority visit the school to assess and advise on alternative door mechanisms that can be fitted which will enable the doors to remain open within the current legislative guidelines.

There are no unusual or onerous demands on boarders. The school provides adequate free time for pupils as well as prep time.

The school presently does not rent out the premises or accommodate pupils other than its own boarders.

Staffing (standards 31-39)

All 9 standards were assessed with 2 not met and 1 met with commendable practice.

There is a duty rota in place, which identifies a good overlap of teaching staff, which helps provide after school activities. All trips off the school's premises undergo a formal risk assessment process and supervision is in place for all trips and activities. In addition the school has a signing in and out book for boarders and emergency contact numbers are available to both staff and pupils. The school security officer is given a list of all planned weekend activities, which further ensures the safety of pupils.

There is always a minimum of two staff sleeping in. In addition Gap students are also housed on site. Through pupil group discussion, junior and senior pupils all felt they were able to contact a member of staff during the night if required.

All staff have an up-to-date job description, an induction takes place with all policies and procedures reiterated each September term. Annual staff appraisals take place. Inspectors additionally advised the school to ensure that whenever staff performance issues were discussed outside of the context of annual appraisals that these are also formally recorded.

A separate handbook is available to all boarding staff, which covers all areas of boarding life. A policy document file is made available to all staff.

All pupils spoken with conveyed a positive relationship with the Head of Boarding and found her to be approachable and supportive. All pupils expressed a positive relationship with gap students and teaching staff and believed boarding staff were available and approachable.

Inspectors judged that aspects of bathroom privacy could be improved as, at the time of inspection, some shower curtains were missing and those in place were ineffective. The Headmistress has subsequently informed the Commission the missing curtains were being laundered at the time of the inspection.

During discussion with the Headmistress and Bursar it was confirmed that these areas have already been identified for improvement. The inspectors recommend that these improvements are given priority and that all staff (including domestic staff) are reminded of the importance of reporting any breakages or shortfalls in the physical environment as soon as is reasonably practicable.

The school has a commendably thorough recruitment procedure in place. This includes the obtaining of CRB clearance at enhanced level as well as police clearance for all overseas staff and Gap students from their relevant police authorities. Two written references were held on file for all staff with relevant full employment history, qualifications, certificates, application, and written records of interviews.

Staff do not obtain a start date from the school until all relevant checks have been carried out successfully. Male maintenance staff are supervised when visiting the boarding areas when pupils are present. It is usual practice for maintenance staff to undertake their duties whilst pupils are attending classes, thereby avoiding direct contact with the pupils.

Premises (standards 40-52)

All 12 standards were assessed with 5 not met and 1 not applicable to the school.

The boarding facilities in this school are separated by age; the juniors are placed in the main building of the school with the seniors living in purpose built facilities above the school classrooms.

Junior pupils are located in the old Farmhouse, and inspectors raised a number of issues relating to the physical environment in this area. The senior accommodation is situated in purpose built accommodation above the school classroom facilities and again inspectors identified some environmental concerns. Priority needs therefore to be given to the recommendations made under standards 40-49 to ensure all expectations with regard to risk assessment and health and safety matters are fully met.

Boarders have access to changing facilities in the sports hall during school hours; these are of an exceptionally high standard with separate facilities for visitors. All changing facilities have toilet and washing facilities provided. Risk assessments are in place for all outdoor and indoor facilities. Pupils can only access the swimming pool if a designated lifeguard is on duty and the upstairs gym suite also requires a fully trained staff member to be present.

The inspectors are aware that the present laundry area is being redesigned to further meet the needs of the school; it is advised that the plan continues with the proposed training instigated.

The school does not arrange short stay accommodation for pupils other than that used for school trips. The school do not arrange any lodging to accommodate pupils therefore this standard is not applicable to the school.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION					

YES

No	Standard*	Recommended Actions	

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 Boarding 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	3	That contact details for NCSC and the local Social Services are added to the child protection policy and procedural guidelines.	28/07/04
2	6	That an additional review and comments page is added to the welfare/care plans used to identify individual needs and support for boarders. These should include additional information such as that on allergies	28/07/04
3	15	That the school, in liaison with its nominated GP, puts in place procedures to ensure pupils' GP health records are stored and accessed with due regard to normal patient confidentiality expectations	28/04/04
4	15	That all medication administered is recorded appropriately stating the name of the drug, dose of the drug, time of administration and signed by the staff member responsible.	28/04/04
5	15	That the current protocol on the use of homely remedies is reviewed to ensure a comprehensive and definitive list of approved homely remedies for use in the school is put in place and that GP approval for the use of these remedies is obtained in respect of individual pupils.	28/07/04
6	15	That all staff designated with the task of administering medication in the absence of the school nurses receive appropriate training.	28/08/04

7	15	That all medication and health records held by the school's nurses for boarding pupils are individually maintained and held confidential to that individual pupil.	28/07/04
8	23	That written risk assessments are put in place where individual boarders have been assessed as being at risk when using certain equipment.	28/07/04
9	26 & 42	That the school liaises as a matter of urgency with the fire authority for advice on alternative door mechanisms that can be fitted to avoid the need for the use of door wedges on fire doors	28/07/04
10	40	That the school addresses all identified issues of concern noted under standard 40 in respect of heating, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness.	28/07/04
11	42 & 47	That a check of radiator surface temperatures is carried out to ensure appropriate steps are taken to minimise risks to pupils from those radiators with a surface temperature in excess of 43°C	28/07/04
12	42 & 48	That the school carries out a comprehensive risk assessment of the need for the installation of window restrictors in boarding areas and takes action accordingly.	28/07/04
13	42	That the central hot water pipe in Larch dormitory is boxed in to prevent scalding	28/07/04
14	42	That additional wall sockets are fitted throughout the boarding facilities to avoid the need for overuse of extension leads and gang sockets.	28/07/04
15	44	That thermostatic valves are fitted to ensure that water temperatures at outlets accessible to pupils are maintained at a safe level.	28/07/04
16	34	It is recommended a more formal supervision process be adopted to ensure all issues relating to staff performance are consistently documented.	28/08/04

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	4	That if the care plans for any pupil indicates a likely need for use of physical intervention the school ensures relevant staff receive training in appropriately safe techniques for this.
2	5	That the school ensures boarding pupils are regularly reminded of the complaints procedures.
4	15	That the school undertakes an advisory pharmacy inspection to support further improvement in standards of the school's procedures for boarding pupils.
5	19 & 20	That a system to record the safe keeping of personal possessions is formulated and that any limitations on boarders' use of mobile phones are formally noted.
6	21	That the school considers extending the current buddy system for new girls to include the boarding setting.
7	37	That proposed improvements to bathroom facilities in the junior house are given priority and that the school ensures staff report any shortfalls in provision are reported for attention soon as is reasonably practicable.

*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been 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 and Individuals

• Social Services	NO
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person or Counsellor	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	YES
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	NO

Date of Inspection	22/03/04
Time of Inspection	09:30
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	90
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	9

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION:**AGE RANGE OF BOARDING
PUPILS****FRO
M**

9

TO

18

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:**Boys**

0

Girls

45

Total

45

Number of separate Boarding Houses

2

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 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) |

"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.

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school has worked extremely hard to produce a variety of documents to ensure standard 1 is met, these include:

- Boarding Handbook
- Parents introduction to the school
- School magazine
- Student Planner
- Staff Handbook
- School Prospectus.

These documents outline the school's boarding principles and practices and are available to parents, boarders and staff. Copies were made available to the inspectors and are now held at the local NCSC office.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6) The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has a comprehensive policy document in place, which was reviewed in 2003. The policy has a clear definition of bullying and the sanctions currently in place. In addition the school has implemented a prevention procedure, which is available to all new pupils during their induction to the school.</p> <p>The policy identifies relevant persons available for the reporting of any issues of concern; each girl is issued with a pupil handbook at the start of the academic year, which clearly outlines the anti bullying policy. Throughout the boarding facility contact numbers for key personnel and outside agencies were posted including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixth formers • Any members of staff • Parents • School counsellor <p>During discussion with boarding pupils there was an awareness of anti-bullying strategies and policies that the school has implemented. Feedback from pupils was positive with no evidence of bullying amongst boarding pupils. The school fully meets this standard.</p>		
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED	97	%

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

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

The policy in place includes:

- Codes of good practice
- Reference to Buckinghamshire area child protection committee guidelines
- Prevention, protection and support information
- Recognising abuse
- Signs and symptoms of abuse
- Referral procedures
- Protective culture
- Training and curriculum input
- References and extracts to inter agency guidelines and legislation, for example Working Together to safeguard Children, Home Office, DFES policy.
- Helplines
- Membership of principle agencies, for example NSPCC, Thames Valley Police, Bucks Social Services.

The school has a proactive approach towards the protection of children and the policy is of a good standard. The present procedural guidelines in place will need to be amended to reflect the contact details of the NCSC and Social Services. All staff spoken with clearly identified the designated lead child protection officer for the school and training was up-to-date and aimed at all levels of staff, this included ancillary staff.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

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

The school has a policy in place regarding behaviour and discipline. The policy clearly identifies the sanctions used and how to record them appropriately. In the boarders' handbook information relating to sanctions is outlined as follows:

For Juniors

- Early bedtimes
- No television
- No tuck for the day

For Seniors

- No television
- Early rising to help with duties.

All sanctions are recorded in a bound book. Evidence in this book of three sanctions being given since January 2003 was observed, these included extra prep and early to bed. A rewards and sanctions questionnaire was issued in November 2003 to all pupils to gain their views on current systems in place and how these could be improved. An area was included for the pupils to identify effective sanctions and the least effective.

Feedback from boarding pupils was positive, with no evidence of misuse of the sanctions system. However a number felt there was a degree of inconsistency amongst staff in deciding which behaviours warranted formal sanction and which did not.

Advice was given during the feedback of this standard that should restraint be a necessary course of action to ensure the safety of a pupil or staff member, (as identified in the child and staff protection policy), then it will be necessary for all staff who may undertake this to be trained appropriately. It should be noted however this has never been a necessary course of action at the school.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has a good system in place with a rapid timescale for action to ensure all complaints are investigated appropriately.</p> <p>Complaints are thoroughly investigated, evidence of correspondence within stated time frames is held on file. The complaint as well as the follow up correspondence to all parties involved is held with the original complaint documentation. There have been three complaints in the past twelve months, which have all been actioned within expected time frames.</p> <p>The policies in place are accessible through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff handbook • Girls handbook • Parent guidelines • Boarders handbook • School's policies and procedures file. <p>The complaints procedure clearly identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What constitutes a complaint • How should a complaint be made or concern expressed • Procedure, which is divided into three stages • Principles of handling complaints at Pipers Corner <p>A separate document for the pupils is also available which includes information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I go about making a complain/suggestion or airing concerns • To Whom • Does it matter what the issue is • What will happen next • Do others have to know? <p>The school has also implemented suggestion forms and school council meetings where views can be expressed. The school has clearly met this standard; however, advice is given to include NCSC contact details in complaints documentation. The inspectors advised that the complaints policy is reiterated at the beginning of each term to all boarders.</p>		
Number of complaints, if any, received by NCSC about the school during last 12 months:		0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The school has a policy in place for the prevention of major risks to health. Information on health care issues was provided to pupils through their normal curriculum. The school also has arrangements for regular input and advice from external specialist agencies working in key adolescent health areas. In addition the school has a counsellor who visits weekly; a booking system is in place which maintains the confidentiality of the individual. The school fully meets this standard.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Individual welfare/care plans are in place. These are well written and were reflective of the needs of individuals. Implementation of a dated and signed review/comment sheets was advised to further develop these plans.

Consideration should be given to inclusion in the welfare plan of relevant information held in the nurse's surgery for such things as allergies. All boarding staff need access to these files to ensure continuity of care, therefore a copy should be distributed to relevant boarding houses as well as the main building staff room and central filing system. An advisory recommendation is made to this effect.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
A clear management structure was evident throughout the inspection. The Head of Boarding has dual responsibilities, as she is also one of two school nurses. The Head of Boarding is BSA trained and has been in post for several years. In addition to her boarding and nursing duties the Head of Boarding is also scheduled to undertake BSPI training, which will further develop her understanding of the standards and inspection procedures.		
There is an adequate level of experienced staff within the boarding team with additional support from Gap students. The school has a strong, supportive governing body that regularly visit the school and boarding facilities. The school fully meets this standard.		

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3) The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>Excellent initiatives are in place for crisis management planning, which are fully supported by the senior management team and governing body. For example a fire authority exercise was scheduled during the inspection to ensure all fire evacuation procedures were appropriate and safely managed. A planned evacuation of which the boarding pupils had no knowledge took place during the evening, which was successful, and showed evidence of good practice.</p> <p>Relevant risk assessments are in place with all staff aware of their responsibilities should an emergency occur; these assessments were found to be of an extremely high standard. Equipment necessary for dealing with an emergency was appropriately placed throughout the school.</p> <p>The school has utilised the previous experience and expertise of the Bursar, in identifying possible major risks to the school with appropriate procedures implemented, with training made available, to ensure all staff are aware of the new strategies. The written and practical approach shown to meeting this standard is evidence of commendable practice.</p>		

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5) The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The boarding facilities in this school are separated by age; the juniors are placed in the main building of the school with the seniors living in The Founders Wing, which is purpose built accommodation above the school classrooms. There is no discrepancy in boarding provision for the varying ages.</p>		

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

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

A large variety of activities are available which are appropriately staffed with safeguards in place.

The school produces an activity timetable for evenings such as

- Cricket club
- Lacrosse
- Netball
- Swimming
- Art
- Computer
- Drama
- Handicraft
- Arabic dancing
- GCSE classes

These activities are open to all pupils as well as boarding pupils.

Boarders have sufficient and suitably timed free time, the inspectors observed pupils relaxing, watching TV. or playing in the grounds. Boarders sign in and out of their living area and systems are in place to ensure staff know their whereabouts at all times.

Internet access is supervised with suitable safeguards in place. This was observed by the inspectors who were shown by the computer teacher the linked system identifying sites pupils were entering. The boarders have access to excellent sports and arts and drama facilities with a new swimming facility, which also incorporates an exercise suite on site.

During pupil discussion groups the senior pupils felt more consultation was needed for the planning of their activities especially over the weekend period.

The school fully meets this standard.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2) Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The boarders have formal opportunities to express views in the operation of the boarding facilities; there is a boarding council, which is utilised as a place for pupils to express views on Boarding provision. The Head of Boarding reports the findings of the meetings to the Headmistress for action.</p> <p>Senior Pupils, during discussion groups spoke of wanting further feedback on specific timescales for work to be carried out, such as improvement in cleaning, installation of plug sockets, upgrading of facilities. During discussion with the Headmistress it was identified that pupils did receive feedback information, however, timescales for work was not always given as an action plan. The school should consider whether this is viable.</p>		

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7) Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school operates a prefect system, all prefects have a role description and an induction process takes place. The inspectors observed senior pupils supervising pupils during lunch, which ensured appropriate behaviour was maintained during this period.</p> <p>A points system is in place, which is facilitated by the prefects, which pupils reported as being fair and consistent. There was no evidence or reports of any abuse of prefect powers. The school fully meets this standard.</p>		

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

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

In addition to the boarding staff, pupils are able to access a variety of people they could talk to, as identified in standard 3. However during group discussion the pupils identified that they turn to Sister Hamilton (Head of Boarding/Nurse) as the person they felt most confident with. They also identified that the Deputy Headmistress would also be a preferred choice of person to approach and during school hours she would be the most likely person they would contact.

The school makes available a counsellor and ensures easy access to this person. All pupils were aware of the booking system and how this system could be facilitated. A CRB is in place for all external people who have contact with the pupils, for example the school counsellor and the chaplain.

Helpline numbers such as the Samaritans were observed and NCSC contact details were on the notice board in the boarding area.

The school fully meets this standard.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- **Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.**
- **Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.**
- **Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.**
- **Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.**
- **Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.**
- **Boarders' possessions and money are protected.**
- **New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.**
- **Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.**
- **Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.**
- **Boarders receive good quality catering provision.**
- **Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.**
- **Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.**
- **Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.**
- **The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.**
- **Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.**
- **Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.**

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

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

The school provides the appropriate first aid equipment, which is available to the nurse and boarding staff

The school holds GP files in the school surgery and this was discussed at length with the Headmistress. This practice has been adopted to ensure easy access to all pupils' medical files by the registered GP. However, it must be noted that these files are the sole responsibility of the GP, and as such must remain completely confidential to the GP without access by any member of the school staff, including the school nurses.

The holding of these files on school premises is not a recommended practice by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) and the school is therefore advised to liaise with their nominated GP to ensure that if records are to be held on site, they are stored and accessed with due regard to normal patient confidentiality expectations.

The nurse generally administers prescribed medication to the pupils it is prescribed for, however, it was noted that paracetamol, prescribed for one named pupil, was being accessed for general use. Deficits in the recording of administered medication were also noted. Records viewed by the inspectors were found to contain a listing of all pupils (on an A4 sheet of paper) who had received medication on any given day; in addition the name or dose of the medication was not clearly stated and records of medication received into the school or the disposal of medication is not presently recorded. A protocol for the use of homely remedies, as outlined in standard 15.9, is in place, however it must be noted additional homely remedies were found in the lockable cabinet. The school is reminded that written parental permission needs to be obtained for the administration of first aid and appropriate non-prescription medication and the engaging of an optician and dentist.

At the time of the inspection a recommendation was made to the nursing staff that records need to be individually maintained in respect of the boarding pupils and held confidential to that individual pupil. Furthermore, all senior staff who have designated responsibility to administer medication in the nurse's absence must receive appropriate training to undertake this task.

It was advised during feedback to the Headmistress and bursar that NCSC could provide a Pharmacy Inspector to undertake a separate advisory visit to aid the school to further improve the systems in place. This will be negotiated once the draft report has been made available to the school.

The boarding facility has registered nurses in post and the inspectors reminded the nurses that it is their responsibility for monitoring their own practice and ensuring they are working in accordance with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) codes of practice, for the safe administration and recording of medication procedures.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3) Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school has a well-equipped facility, which adequately supports any pupil who may be ill. Should a pupil become ill for more than one day the school will organise and facilitate the pupil's return to the care of their parents or guardians.		

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8) Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Welfare plans are in place, which are agreed with parents. As previously mentioned in this report a further comments and review sheet needs to be implemented. Also previously mentioned was the need for inclusion of any allergies or relevant issues of concern in these plans to ensure continuity of care. If any pupil stated as having special educational needs this is recorded within the school's general files. There were no reports of homesickness amongst the pupils, pupils describe the boarding environment as supportive and are able to identify staff and peers they would approach in times of emotional crisis.		

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6) Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There was no evidence of inappropriate discrimination shown towards pupils. All care is given in a sensitive manner and is individual to the needs of pupils. The school fully meets this standard.		

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6) Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Private telephone facilities, which are well located, are available for pupils to contact family members. Pupils are also able to use their own mobile telephones to maintain contact. Comments on the storage and clarity on the boundaries on usage of mobile phones have been made elsewhere in this report.		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3) Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Mobile phones are held in a main office of the boarding facility, these are locked securely. However, phones were stored together with no system in place, which identified whose phone had been stored and when they had been received or redistributed. It is advised a system is implemented for the safeguard of personal possessions.</p> <p>An appropriate system is in place for the recording of monies held on behalf of all boarders, a safe is provided for the safe storage of monies. Balances were not checked on the day of inspection; however balance sheets were made available for the inspectors to view.</p> <p>Lockable facilities are provided for boarders, however during the environmental inspection the inspector was unsure whether all pupils had lockable facilities, on feedback the Headmistress assured the inspectors this is the case.</p>		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3) There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>An induction pack is given to all new boarding pupils; this includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls handbook • Boarders handbook <p>The handbook clearly identifies necessary regimes and activities within boarding.</p> <p>It was advised during feedback that the school considers extending the current use of the "buddy system" for new girls to more formally include boarding routines and to support new boarders during their early days of orientation in the school.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4) Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
<p>The school does not appoint guardians and has no input in the organising of guardians for pupils.</p>		

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4)

The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.

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

The Headmistress and or Bursar regularly monitor the complaints, incidents, accidents and sanctions records. The Bursar collates all the risk assessments carried out by the heads of various departments when the risks are identified. There is a health and safety committee in place and risk assessments are updated annually. There are extremely good assessments of activities evident and the health and safety policy clearly refers to risk assessments. Inspectors felt however that boarding staff needed reinforcement of the expectation that they undertake initial assessment and countering of emerging risk rather than leave this to identified maintenance or health and safety staff if any significant delay were likely.

A recommendation is also given for individual risk assessments for pupils to be undertaken regarding the use of such things as the kettles, showers and baths. Presently this has been done informally and pupils identified as at risk are known by staff. However this should be evidenced in a written risk assessment format with clear actions identified and a review date and process evident.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.

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

The catering for the school is supplied by Sodexo and has been for two years. Food sampled was of a good standard with menus reflective of what was offered on any given day. A variety of foods were available which included a well-supplied salad bar, hot meal, baguettes or jacket potatoes. The main lunch meal is supplied for the whole school with separate menus available for the breakfast and evening meal. Breakfast consists of anything from cereals, pastries to a full cooked meal with the evening meal being a hot option including a vegetarian alternative with the availability of the salad bar. There are always three desserts on offer.

All meals are taken in the school dining room, which is sufficient in size to meet the needs of the boarders. Crockery and cutlery was all cleaned to a high standard and sufficient in numbers.

Records held by the catering team were found to be of a high standard and all relevant temperature recordings were up to date. Recommendations from the last Environmental Health Inspection, which took place on The 25th February 2004, have been actioned. All catering staff hold a current and valid food handling and hygiene certificate.

The inspectors joined the pupils for meals throughout the inspection and found the food to be tasty, nutritious and adequate in portion.

A domestic bursar is employed by the school to oversee all domestic issues, as the school now facilitates this role and not the contractor's, changes are planned for the coming term. The current domestic bursar has been in post since December 2003. It was advised that the domestic bursar continues with her planned consultations with all boarders regarding favourite meals and ensures that these are incorporated within the supper menu on a term-by-term programme.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5) Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Snacks are available in the boarding facility, however the inspectors did not observe snacks being consumed. It was discussed during feedback that snacks are made more readily available in the junior boarding facility due to the risks involved for some boarders preparing their own snacks.</p> <p>Facilities for the safe storage of perishables are made available in the senior common rooms.</p> <p>A suggestion was made by senior boarders for a more flexible breakfast option during weekends, for example preparing breakfast over the weekend in their common rooms. The Inspectors would support this initiative but feel the school should make a decision as to the viability of the suggestion.</p> <p>Drinking water is readily available throughout the boarding facilities and the school.</p>		

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5) Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>As stated in standard 9 the school exhibits commendable practice for the planning and implementing of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The fire alarm panel is specifically designed to continuously print activity reports for all fire emergency lighting, detectors and alarms. These clearly identify any issues such as low batteries and faults.</p> <p>Fire extinguishers were due to be tested in April 2004. The last fire alarm test was carried out on 23rd March 2004; these are carried out on a weekly basis. During the three-day inspection an evacuation, with the fire brigade, was carried out on the 22nd March 2004 at 20.33hrs. 54 people in total were evacuated in less than 4 minutes. On the 8th September 2003 there was a record of fire instruction training, which 60 staff members attended.</p> <p>The last emergency light testing was recorded as May 2003; however, this system of monitoring has now been replaced by the automated printed system.</p> <p>During the course of the inspection it was observed that throughout the boarding facilities door wedges were being used to prop open fire doors, which obviously compromises the effectiveness of fire safety measures. It is strongly recommended that the Fire Authority be invited to visit the school to assess and advise on alternative door mechanisms that can be fitted which will enable the doors to remain open without compromising fire safety.</p>		

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3) Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
There are no unusual or onerous demands on boarders. The school provides adequate free time for pupils as well as prep time. The school fully meets this standard.		

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2) The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school presently does not rent out its premises or accommodate pupils other than its own boarders.		

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6) Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
As previously mentioned in Standard 9 and 23 the school fully meets this standard.		

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5) Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Access to the outside world is freely available throughout the boarding facility with the use of the internet being a main option. In addition televisions and newspapers are found throughout. Additional information relating to this standard can be found under Standard 11.		

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

There is a duty rota in place, which identifies a good overlap of teaching staff who help provide after school activities. Supervision is adequate to meet the needs of the pupils and each boarder knows who is on duty as acknowledged during pupil's group discussion. All staff interviewed identified and confirmed adequate support for all staff undertaking boarding duties. Discussion took place during feedback for additional support to cover activities during weekends in the event of sickness.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

All trips off the school's premises undergo a risk assessment process and supervision is in place for all trips and activities. In addition the school has a signing in and out book for boarders and emergency contact numbers are available to both staff and pupils.

The school security officer is given a list of all planned weekend activities, which further ensures the safety of pupils.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5) Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There is always a minimum of two staff sleeping in. In addition Gap students are also housed on site. Through pupil group discussion junior and senior pupils all felt they were able to contact a member of staff during the night if required. Staff are aware of who is in residence on any given night. The school fully meets this standard.</p>		

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7) All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>All staff have an up-to-date job description and an induction takes place with all policies and procedures reiterated each September term. Maintenance staff are all supervised when accessing the boarding area and attempt not to access the area when pupils are in residence.</p> <p>All staff are trained in child protection and are aware of who the designated child protection officer is. Ancillary staff also confirmed this during their interviews.</p> <p>Annual appraisals of staff take place, however inspectors were not clear that other meetings that might take place to discuss individual staff performance were always formally recorded and noted. The school was advised to ensure this always took place to protect the interests of both pupils and staff alike.</p>		

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4) All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>A separate handbook is available to all boarding staff, which covers all areas of boarding life. A policy document file is made available to all staff. The school fully meets this standard.</p>		

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4) There are sound staff/boarder relationships.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>All pupils spoken with conveyed a positive relationship with the Head of Boarding and found her to be approachable and supportive. Generally communication is positive between staff and boarders, however senior pupils felt a lack of consultation appropriate to their age group from some boarding staff. All pupils expressed a positive relationship with gap students and teaching staff and believed boarding staff were available and approachable.</p>		

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.

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

In general the supervision of boarders is maintained appropriately, however, pupils reported (and the inspectors observed) staff knocking on doors before entering pupils' rooms, but not always waiting for a response before entering. Bedrooms do have a facility which allows them to be locked for privacy and security.

The school are reminded to ensure any items removed from pupil's rooms due to safety hazards are done in consultation with the individual. Records need to be maintained of all items confiscated/removed.

The bathrooms in the Junior facility provide limited privacy, shower curtains were missing and the pupil feedback was that those in place were ineffectual. (The Inspectors have been informed since inspection these were in the process of being laundered) During discussion with the Headmistress and Bursar it was conveyed that these areas have already been identified for improvement. The inspectors recommend that these improvements are given priority and in the interim all staff (including domestic staff) ensure any breakages or inefficient equipment is reported as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****4**

The school has a commendable recruitment procedure in place. This includes the obtaining of CRB clearance at enhanced level as well as police clearance for all overseas staff and Gap students from their relevant police authorities.

Two written references were held on file for all staff with relevant full employment history, qualifications, certificates, application, and written records of interviews. Staff do not obtain a start date from the school until all relevant checks have been carried out successfully. CRB procedures are also in place for the use of a local taxi company.

As a matter of good practice it was suggested by the Inspectors to carry out CRB disclosures on existing staff employed prior to April 2002 to ensure all staff have been subject to similar clearance.

The school fully meets this standard with commendable practice.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

All appropriate clearances are obtained as already outlined under previous standards. Male maintenance staff are supervised when visiting the boarding areas when pupils are present. It is usual practice for maintenance staff to undertake their duties whilst pupils are attending classes therefore avoiding direct contact with the pupils.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- **Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.**
- **Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.**
- **Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.**
- **Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.**
- **Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.**
- **Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.**
- **Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.**
- **Boarders are protected from safety hazards.**
- **Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.**
- **Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.**
- **Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.**
- **The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.**
- **The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.**

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

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

The boarding facilities in this school are located in two separate buildings and are appropriately separated by age.

Junior pupils are located in the Old Farmhouse and a number of environmental concerns were raised about this area during feedback to the Headmistress and the Bursar. The senior accommodation is situated above the school classroom facilities and again the inspectors have identified environmental concerns. Priority needs to be given to the recommendations made under standards 40-49, as they presently do not meet current health and safety expectations

For the purpose of this report environmental issues will be identified for the two facilities.

LIGHTING:

- Main lighting in both facilities was domestic in nature and is adequate to meet the needs of the pupils, however due to a shortage of sockets in all bedrooms pupils are unable to use personal bedside lights.

HEATING:

- There are problems experienced with the regulation of temperature in the junior facility. In some areas of the building radiators were running extremely hot with pupils reporting that the environment is cold overnight and when the heating system fires up early in the morning banging and clanging is heard, the inspectors also heard these noises. The inspectors tested the temperatures of those which were hot and found them to be ranging between 53°C and 68°C.
- The senior facility is also experiencing similar difficulties with the regulation of temperature, those radiators tested by the inspectors in this facility were ranging between 53°C and 67°C

VENTILATION

- Both boarding areas provide an adequate numbers of windows to provide ventilation. There was a limited number of window restrictors in place throughout both facilities; those observed and tested were found to be inadequate.

CLEANLINESS

- The junior boarding area was maintained to an adequate standard and free from dust and dirt.
- The senior boarding area was not maintained to an acceptable standard. The inspectors viewed rooms that had evidently not been thoroughly cleaned for a considerable period of time, such as the bathrooms and shower rooms. Unacceptable levels of dirt and dust were observed throughout.

FURNISHINGS AND FIXTURES

- All furnishings and fixtures throughout the two facilities were adequate to meet the needs of the Pupils.

All of the above points were discussed during the feedback to the Headmistress and Bursar and recommendations are made reflecting the findings.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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All accommodation is reserved for the use of boarders.

Excellent security systems are in place to ensure the safety of all boarders; a locking up takes place each evening, which is facilitated by the Security officer. A doorbell is in place on each boarding facility for use out of hours. There are two access roads to the grounds; one is locked throughout the evening with the other gate monitored by the security officer.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14) Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
JUNIORS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large rooms accommodating up to 6 beds, at this time no more than 3 pupils reside in these. A number of rooms have cabin beds. • All rooms have built in wardrobes, which are adequate in size for the individual. • Desks and chairs are provided for each pupil. • There is a shortage of sockets with an overuse of extension leads and plugs. • Some areas would benefit from re-decoration; however, this is facilitated on a rolling programme during holidays. Ongoing assessment of this facility needs to take place, with an action plan to be put in place to address the shortfalls. • As previously mentioned in this report the fitting of adequate and appropriate window restrictors is a priority. • A central hot water pipe in Larch dormitory requires boxing in, the temperature of this pipe on the day of testing was found to be 63.3°C. • Radiator temperatures require risk assessing and appropriate steps taken in response to those with surface temperatures in excess of 43°C. • As already noted there was widespread use of door wedges on fire doors. SENIORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All bedrooms are either double or single accommodation and are personalised. • All rooms have built in wardrobes, which are adequate in size for the individuals. • Desks and chairs are provided in all bedrooms. • Wall spot lamps are in place. • Radiators need risk assessing with all temperatures above 43°C, plus or minus 2°C. One radiator was cold to touch with a convector heater in place; repairs need to be facilitated to this radiator to ensure adequate temperatures are maintained. • Additional wall sockets need to be fitted, as at this time there is overuse of extension leads and plugs. • As already noted there was widespread use of door wedges on fire doors. 		

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2) Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school provides both supervised and unsupervised study facilities. Each bed space, as previously mentioned, contains its own study desk.		

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10)

Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

JUNIORS

- There are four bathroom facilities in the junior accommodation, all require attention and refurbishment to ensure they fully meet the needs of pupils and provide appropriate privacy and maintain the dignity of individuals. For example some baths needed sealing, there were some cracks in tiles, and there was insufficient water pressure in showers.
- Hot water temperatures of baths and showers range between 38°C and 60°C. Individual thermostatic valves need to be fitted to these facilities to ensure scalding does not occur.
- Radiator temperatures in bathrooms were found to be between 64°C and 67°C. Radiator temperatures require risk assessing and appropriate steps taken in response to those with surface temperatures in excess of 43°C.
- All toilets are lockable.

SENIORS

- There were 5/6 Bathroom facilities available for use. These all require attention and refurbishment to ensure they fully meet the needs of pupils and provide appropriate privacy and maintain the dignity of individuals.
- The need for cleaning of these facilities was substandard, this was discussed during the feedback to the Headmistress and Bursar and action will be undertaken to improve this service.
- Hot water temperatures of baths and showers range between 44°C and 70°C. Individual thermostatic valves need to be fitted to these facilities to ensure scalding does not occur.
- Radiator temperatures in bathrooms were found to be between 53°C and 66°C. Radiator temperatures require risk assessing and appropriate steps taken in response to those with surface temperatures in excess of 43°C.
- All toilets are lockable.

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3)

Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Boarders have access to changing facilities in the sports hall during school hours, these are of an exceptionally high standard with separate facilities for visitors. All changing facilities have toilet and washing facilities provided.

The school fully meets this standard.

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6) Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
All school amenities are available to boarders, with additional recreational space available throughout the boarding facility. The boarders have access to the new swimming facility, which also has a well-equipped gym suite.		

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9) Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
Risk assessments are in place for all outdoor and indoor facilities. Pupils can only access the swimming pool if a designated lifeguard is on duty and the upstairs gym suite also requires a fully trained staff member to be present. The risks presented by hot water, radiators, extension leads and the absence of window restrictors have been identified earlier in this report.		

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4) Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
The school has a surgery located in the main building close to the junior boarding area. There are two rooms with three beds in each. A treatment room and a bathroom provide adequate washing and bathing facilities with additional toilets. The bedroom area windows do not have window restrictors installed and are of a major concern to the inspectors as the windows open up onto a flat roof, therefore it is essential that these restrictors be fitted urgently in this area.		

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The inspectors are aware that the present laundry area is being redesigned to further meet the needs of the school, it is advised that the plan continues with the proposed training instigated.		

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2) Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Pupils believed the school met all stationery needs. In addition, due to a high proportion of pupils boarding weekdays, provisions are also brought in from home.		

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11) Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This standard is not applicable to this school.		

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8) Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The school does not arrange short stay accommodation for pupils other than that used for school trips.		

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

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 week commencing 22nd March 2004, and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Recommended Action

Page 14

Number 11 – Standards 42 and 47

We still do not accept that this check of radiator surface temperatures should be included under the recommended action section of the report. Whilst we are grateful that this matter has been brought to our attention, we feel that it should be included under **Advisory Recommendations** and not **Recommended Action**. There is no mention of heating in this standard.

Part B: Inspection Methods and Findings

Page 39

Standard 34

We remain confident that the school meets this standard and therefore do not agree with the judgement '2'.

Page 40

Standard 37

We remain unsure why our current shower curtains are ineffective. As we said in our last comments they fit slide and are opaque. We do not agree with the judgement of '2'.

Page 43

Standard 40

Our concern about radiator temperature being cited as one reason for the judgement remains. We accept this as an advisory recommendation but not as a comment against the standard.

Page 45

Standard 42

There is no mention of heating in the standard and we remain confident that we meet it.

Page 46

Standard 44

There is no mention of heating in this standard, which we feel we meet.

Summary Statement

I would urge the Commission to ensure that no boarding sector inspection takes place without the presence of a boarding sector professional inspection.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the Head

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

NO

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, 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 recommended actions in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion

NO

Head has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I, _____ of Pipers Corner 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 Pipers Corner School
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.

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