



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Cicely Haughton

Westwood Manor

Wetley Rocks

Staffs

ST9 0BX

1 & 2 December 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

Cicely Haughton

Address

Westwood Manor, Wetley Rocks, Staffs, ST9 0BX

Tel No:

01782 550202

Fax No:

Email Address:

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

Staffordshire County Council

Name of Head

Mr N Philips

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

EBD

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

20/01/04

Date of Inspection Visit		1s December 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Elizabeth Taylor	075779
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Robert Hewston	
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection			

CONTENTS

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

Brief Description of the school and Residential Provision

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings

What the school does well in Boarding Welfare

What the school should do better in Boarding Welfare

Conclusions and overview of findings on Boarding Welfare

Notifications to Local Education Authority or Secretary of State

Implementation of Recommended Actions from last inspection

Recommended Actions from this inspection

Advisory Recommendations from this inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods Used & Findings

Inspection Methods Used

1. Statement of the School's Purpose
2. Children's rights
3. Child Protection
4. Care and Control
5. Quality of Care
6. Planning for care
7. Premises
8. Staffing
9. Organisation and Management

Part C: Head's Response

C.1. Head's comments

C.2. Action Plan

C.3. Head's agreement

Lead Inspector Elizabeth Taylor

Signature *Elizabeth Taylor*

Second Inspector Rob Hewston

Signature *Rob Hewston*

Date 5 April 2005

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) 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 CSCI in respect of Cicely Haughton

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
- 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

Cicely Haughton is a Staffordshire Local Education Authority school offering day and residential places to boys aged 5 – 11 years who have a range of emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties (classified as EBD).

The school is an extended and modernised Victorian manor house standing in approximately twenty acres of parkland. It is located in a rural area between Cheadle and Leek. The classrooms, main staff office plus laundry and catering facilities are located on the ground floor of the building. The residential accommodation consists of two well-furnished living areas known as Wedgwood House and Coalport House. Each has a television with video and music facility. The sleeping areas are, in the main, small dormitories. Wooden screening is fitted in dormitories to form separate sleeping compartments for each child which promotes privacy and dignity.

In the school grounds there is a football pitch, softball area and an adventure playground. There is also a tarmac playground with flood lights. In a courtyard there is a climbing room, outdoor pursuits room and woodwork/craft room. In addition, the grounds include large areas of established woodland which pupils are able to access, under adult supervision, for learning experiences and leisure activities.

The boarding provision operates on a Monday to Friday basis during school term-time. Flexible boarding arrangements are encouraged, according to individual children's needs and circumstances, ranging from one night each week up to four nights per week.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The Head of Care continued to develop the service for boarding pupils. A pleasing development in the form of a pupils weekly 'comments sheet' had been implemented since the last inspection. The form asked boarding pupils to indicate, by drawing either a happy or sad face, their opinion about the standard of care offered to them and about any problems. The format was appropriate to the needs and ability of most of the pupils and, the responses showed, were proving to be effective in gaining their views.

There was also a pleasing development in the form of a system called 'Listening up', which was specifically designed for younger children to raise any concerns. Forms were easily accessible to pupils in both residential units. Completed forms showed topics discussed, staffs' response, boarding pupil's opinions and the action taken towards resolving the complaint. All documents in the log had been signed by the young people, key worker and the Head of Care. In discussions with the young people they described the 'Listening up' as a good format. It was clear they understood how to use it and were

confident in doing so.

It was pleasing to note that there had been child protection training for the whole staff group in the school, including ancillary staff and the schools' Governors. However, the training had not taken place until approximately four months or more after care staff had taken up post.

The school has extensive grounds, including woodland to the back of the property. The grounds offer a wide range of settings for different activities, including hard surfaced and grassed areas. A new, all-season, hard surface area was being completed at the time of the inspection. Pupils were very excited at the thought of having this facility.

The boarding accommodation continued to offer a comfortable living environment for pupils. Flexible boarding arrangements remained in operation, with a maximum fifteen boarders at any one time. The arrangement was commented on favourably by pupils themselves as they were able to maintain links with home and their neighbourhood, as well as spend time with their friends at school.

A Keyworker system was in operation which enabled care staff to have 1:1 sessions with boarders, as necessary. Systems for gaining the views and opinions of children in the operation of the school were in place and there was evidence their views did influence decision making.

Staff were observed to respond to unacceptable behaviours displayed by pupils in a firm but measured way during the inspection. However, a small number of entries in various records showed inappropriate responses by staff to incidents. Generally, there were clear strategies for managing individual pupil's unacceptable behaviours which the Inspectors considered were particularly well written as they contained practical guidance. Pupils continued to be encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions and to develop alternative strategies for managing their behaviour in a more appropriate way.

Clear transition arrangements for pupils moving on remained in place. Records showed teaching staff were proactive in enabling pupils to visit their next placement and prepare for change prior to their discharge from school.

Boarding pupils were very complimentary about the meals offered, with comments varying from 'smashing' to 'good'. It was particularly pleasing to note that action had been taken to establish a kitchen for use by boarding pupils, under the supervision of staff. The kitchen was domestic in style, contained good quality fittings and was nicely decorated. Adequate basic provisions were supplied by the main kitchen each day to enable staff to offer regular drinks and snacks to boarding pupils.

Health and safety matters throughout the school continued to receive good attention. A system had been established for assessing risk throughout the school building and grounds. There was written evidence to show the risk assessments were being regularly reviewed. Records maintained by the Maintenance Officer showed repair work was prioritised and basic checks completed. Security in the school was satisfactory. An intercom system had also been installed to external doors on the ground floor, to monitor visitors to the school. Also, an intruder alarm system which was activated at night-time to alert care staff to any unauthorised entry or exit from the building.

Good attention continued to be given to the training needs of care staff. New staff had undertaken a comprehensive Induction programme and had completed basic training in Physical Intervention, Fire Safety, First Aid and Asthma Awareness. Individual staff were also undertaking specific training in related areas such as Managing Challenging Behaviour and Counselling. The Head of Care was undertaking a Diploma in Social Work.

A representative of the Local Education Authority continued to visit each half-term to review the conduct of the school and produce a report of their findings. The monitoring system was seen to raise pertinent issues and there was evidence action was being taken in response to matters raised.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

There was evidence to show staff were reporting child protection concerns in accordance with local child protection procedures. However, some gaps were identified in the schools' procedures and recording system. Inadequate recording and monitoring of incidents meant senior staff did not have an effective way of evaluating whether individual pupils' behaviour was improving and whether there were any triggers for incidents. It was also not possible to evaluate whether staff were responding in a measured or consistent way to individual pupils. There was no formal 'whistle blowing' policy for staff in place.

Whilst the school had established links with some specialist health resources, links with other medical specialists such as a Child Psychologist, CAMHS (Children and Adult Mental Health Service) and the Learning Disability team were tenuous. There remained a need for staff to have regular contact with specialist services to support them in addressing particular emotional and behavioural difficulties displayed by some pupils.

There was a lack of clarity in respect of recording pupils 'absconding' from school. Some pupils were recorded as having 'run off' into the extensive school grounds, requiring staff intervention. However, these tended not to be viewed as 'absconding' or 'unauthorised absences'. It was considered there was a need for clear staff guidance in this respect. Clearer recording would enable more effective monitoring of such events. The need for guidance was particularly pertinent in view of the number of new care staff in post and their lack of familiarity with individual pupils and patterns of behaviour.

Whilst the school had appointed an Independent Visitor, he had not attended the school for some months and new pupils had not had an opportunity to meet him. The Head of Care spoke about seeking a second person to act as an Independent Visitor, acknowledging that the pupils were unlikely to contact someone unknown to them to share any concerns. The Inspectors would support this development.

Information about independent Helplines was provided but in written form only. It was somewhat disappointing that the latter had not been 'converted' into a pictorial form, in keeping with the pupils' needs.

A small number of boarding pupils continued to be unhappy about bullying incidents which were said to occur during school hours. The majority of the bullying incidents were described as name-calling although some incidents of physical assault were said to occur in the playground. The latter was observed by one of the Inspectors; incidents tended to happen when a pupil either became over-excited as a result of 'rough play' or there was conflict between players in a game. Staff were noted to respond quickly to such incidents.

There was a need to develop recording systems to assist senior staff in more readily identifying trends or patterns. An example was the need for a separate log book, bound and numbered, for recording incidents resulting in restraints which occurred within the boarding

provision. Records in this respect were seen to lack sufficient detail. There was also a need for a separate log, bound and numbered, for recording measures of control imposed in the boarding provision.

Fire safety matters were receiving good attention but it was considered records could be improved by naming pupils involved in planned fire drills to ensure all attended at least one drill every twelve months.

There was a need to ensure adequate information was gained by the school, prior to the admission of boarding pupils, to enable staff to effectively plan to meet the individual needs of the child and to avoid drift in gaining appropriate support services.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The Head of Care continued to provide clear leadership and support to staff whilst displaying a child-centred approach to the development of the service. Staff were seen to be deployed to best use and were able to offer individual attention to pupils. There were good communication systems within the school and positive working relationships between teaching, care and ancillary staff. The safety and well-being of the pupils remained the focus for all staff.

Although over half of the care staff team had changed since the last inspection, mainly as a result of the re-deployment of staff to specific care or educational roles, relationships between care staff and boarding pupils were observed to remain relaxed and positive. Newly appointed staff were seen to work cooperatively alongside more experienced staff, to provide consistency in approach to individual pupils. All care staff demonstrated a commitment to ensuring pupils felt safe and happy within the boarding provision; the emphasis remained on providing a nurturing environment which promoted mutual respect, both between pupils and staff and pupils themselves. All the boarding pupils said they felt safe in the residential provision.

Improvements continued to be effected including the development of a system for gaining the views of pupils about boarding on a weekly basis and a more child-friendly system to enable them to raise concerns. A positive development in the residential accommodation of a kitchen for use by pupils, under staff supervision, was also to be commended.

Pupils remained complimentary about boarding at the school. They liked the flexible boarding system and said they enjoyed the range of activities available to them at school. Care plans were in place which aimed to encourage pupils to develop a sense of self-worth and achievement. There was a clear nurturing approach adopted by staff and pupils said they felt safe in the residential provision.

It was considered the boarding welfare continued to provide an environment which promoted pupils' care and welfare and supported their educational development.

Discussions about future developments elicited that the Education Department had proposed extending the range of special needs catered for within the school. It was evident the proposal would have a major impact on both pupils and staff. Inspectors were not clear what timeframe was operating in respect of the new proposal but were concerned that any change to the current service should be gradual and measured, allowing time for the Head of Care to plan and for staff to undertake relevant training – particularly as the majority of the care staff are newly appointed and inexperienced. Inspectors were aware that the Head of Care was due to commence a placement elsewhere as part of a Social Work qualification, from February, 2005 for a few months. Clearly, it would be in the best interests of staff and pupils if the proposed changes were to be deferred until the Head of Care returned to her post and could be actively involved in the development plans.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection 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:

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	RS30	The Head of Care is offered regular, formal supervision.	With immediate effect

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended actions 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	RS4	Matters raised via the 'Listening up' system are recorded centrally and monitored on a regular basis.	30/04/05
2	RS5	Newly appointed staff receive child protection training as part of their Induction programme.	With immediate effect
3	RS5	Information about independent Helplines is made available in a form more appropriate to pupils level of ability.	30/05/05
4	RS5	The child protection procedure is revised to include information about staffs' responsibility in reporting any concerns.	30/05/05
5	RS5	The Head of Care ensures records of all child protection meetings are gained. Also, that records demonstrate what action has been taken by the school to ensure the decisions of the meetings have been carried out fully.	With immediate effect
6	RS5	A bound and pre-numbered incident log is implemented. Also, that the Head of Care or other senior staff member monitors entries in the log to evaluate individual pupils behaviour and identify any issues.	With immediate effect
7	RS5	A formal 'whistle blowing' policy is developed.	30/04/05
8	RS8	All incidents of pupils 'running off', although remaining on school premises, are viewed as unauthorised absences. Staff guidance should be developed.	30/05/05

9	RS8	Risk assessments in respect of individual pupils should be regularly reviewed, to ensure they are effective in minimising the level of risk.	With immediate effect
10	RS10	Separate log books are implemented for the recording of all measures of control and restraints.	With immediate effect
11	RS10	Senior staff ensure clear information is recorded in respect of any physical intervention used with pupils.	With immediate effect
12	RS11	The admissions process is robustly implemented; no boarding pupil should be admitted until adequate information has been gained.	With immediate effect
13	RS13	Risk assessments covering leisure activities needed greater detail about specific risks associated with certain activities.	30/05/05
14	RS14	Adequate information is gained in respect of the health history of pupils. Also, written health care plans are fully completed.	30/05/05
15	RS14	A system be implemented whereby an independent person such as a local Pharmacist or Nurse reviews, on an annual basis, the arrangements for medication in the school.	30/09/05
16	RS17	Small, measurable targets are set in placement plans. Keyworking sessions should relate to targets in the placement plan.	30/05/05
17	RS22	Arrangements are made for staff to have regular contact with specialist services to support them in addressing particular emotional and behavioural difficulties displayed by some pupils.	30/09/05
18	RS22	Care staff receive training in working with parents prior to undertaking this role and responsibility.	30/09/05
19	RS28	The Head of Care monitor the arrangement for night staff cover to ensure it is adequate to meet the needs of the young people	On-going

ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No	Refer to Standard*	Recommendation
1	RS3	Pupils' views about privacy in dormitories continue to be sought.
2	RS4	A second Independent Visitor is gained to ensure the system is effective in meeting pupils needs.
3	RS11	Either the Head of Care or proposed Keyworker is involved in admission meetings for boarding pupils.
4	RS22	The reference to the use of the room as being a 'therapy' area be discontinued.
5	RS15	The Cook is invited to meet with boarding pupils, on a regular basis, to gain their views and suggestions about the meals. (It may be appropriate for her to attend part of the residential forum meetings).
6	RS25	Consideration is given to how to promote privacy for pupils using washing facilities in the bathrooms.
7	RS26	The fire log include the names of boarding pupils present at the time of a drill. Also, that a check is undertaken by the designated fire officer to ensure all boarding pupils are involved in an evacuation procedure at least once in each twelve month period.
8	RS31	A policy is developed in respect of related persons working alongside one another.
9	RS29	If the 'quiet' room is intended to be used for a 'therapeutic' reason, training is provided to staff in its purpose and function.

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	NO
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• 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	NO
Placing authority survey	NO
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	01/12/04
Time of Inspection	09.35
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	39.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI 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
---------------------------	---------------	---

There was a Prospectus for the school and a separate 'Mission Statement'. Also, a separate Parent's and Pupil's Guide. These documents, collectively, provided comprehensive information about the manner in which care is provided at the school.

There was evidence all documentation was being reviewed on a regular basis, in response to changes in children's services resulting from new legislation.

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?	4
---------------------------	---------------	---

The ethos of the school was identified as 'a child centred establishment where children and parent's views and rights (were) paramount'. There was evidence this ethos guided staffs practice. Various systems were operating to ensure the views of pupils and their parents were gained both about the operation of the school and the individual care of pupils. These included house meetings, assemblies, keyworking sessions, a schools council, home/school books and so on.

A pleasing development in the form of a pupils weekly 'comments sheet' had been implemented since the last inspection. The form asked boarding pupils to indicate, by drawing either a happy or sad face, their opinion about the standard of care offered to them and about any problems. The format was appropriate to the needs and ability of most of the pupils and, the responses showed, were proving to be effective in gaining their views. This development is to be commended.

There were opportunities for parents to visit the school during weekday evenings although, as pupils were placed from all over Staffordshire, the distance between home and school meant this was not feasible for many parents. Parents were invited to attend regular school events throughout the year and to attend their child's annual Review.

The Head of Care spoke about further refining some procedures and systems to ensure all pupils were able to use their preferred method of communication, to make their wishes and feelings known about the care and treatment in the school.

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

Care staff were generally observed to respect confidentiality although there was one lapse throughout the two day visit.

Arrangements for separate sleeping areas within the dormitories, created by wooden partitioning, provided a degree of privacy for occupants. Although in one room this was compromised by beds which were raised high as they had a study area underneath. However, none of the pupils raised any concerns about lack of privacy.

It is advised that pupils views about privacy in dormitories continue to be sought.

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**

Boarders of varying ages had some understanding of the school's complaints procedure. They understood they could make a complaint in writing but most said they preferred to tell staff, teaching and care, or their parents about any concerns. They said they were satisfied that staff listened to them and did take action to rectify the matter.

There was a pleasing development in the form of a system called 'Listening up'. The system was specifically designed for younger children to use. Completed forms showed topics discussed, staffs' response, boarding pupil's opinions and the action taken towards resolving the complaint. All documents in the log had been signed by the young people, key worker and the Head of Care. In discussions with the young people they described the 'Listening up' as a good format. It was clear they understood how to use it and were confident in doing so.

A record of complaints made by boarders was being maintained. There was a need to ensure matters raised via the 'Listening up' system were recorded centrally and it is recommended this is implemented.

Boarders who had been resident for some time knew the name of the Independent Visitor, though more recent boarders did not. Contact arrangements for the Visitor were clearly displayed in a telephone cubicle in the boarding area. However, the Visitor had not attended the school for some months and new pupils had not had an opportunity to get to know him. The Head of Care spoke about seeking a second person to act as an Independent Visitor, acknowledging that the pupils were unlikely to contact someone unknown to them to share any concerns.

It is advised a second Independent Visitor is gained to ensure the system is effective in meeting pupils needs.

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 CSCI 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

There had been considerable changes within the care staff group, since the last inspection visit, as a result of staff being designated to work either in the education or care setting. As a result, half of the care staff team were new although one of the four new appointees had had previous residential child care experience. It was pleasing to note that there had been child protection training for the whole staff group in the school, including ancillary staff and the schools' Governors. However, the training had not taken place until approximately four months or more after care staff had taken up post.

It is recommended all staff receive child protection training as part of their Induction programme.

Care staff did not have time or opportunity to develop links with other agencies; they tended to work somewhat 'in isolation'. There was evidence the Head of Care was building up a wider network of links with outside agencies. However, it is advised care staff are provided with opportunities to engage in inter-agency training; particularly in respect of on-going child protection training.

There was a phone for use by pupils located in a recess off a corridor connecting both residential units. Information about the Independent Person was displayed by the phone, including his picture, with simple, clear steps for contacting him. However, information about independent Helplines was provided in written form only. It was somewhat disappointing that the latter had not been 'converted' into a pictorial form, in keeping with the pupils' needs.

It is recommended information about independent Helplines is made available in a form more appropriate to pupils level of ability.

Unfortunately, the Independent Person had not visited for some months. The Head of Care said arrangements were being made for a second person to be appointed to ensure regularly visits by someone independent of the school. A new system had been implemented to assist pupils in raising concerns; the system was a national initiative called

'Listen Up'. Leaflets and forms were seen to be displayed around the boarding provision. This demonstrated good practice.

There was evidence staff were reporting child protection concerns in accordance with local child protection procedures. However, some gaps were identified in the schools' procedures and recording system. For example, guidance to staff did not specify that 'failure to advise someone in the school about any concerns or suspicions about abuse of pupils' would be viewed as a disciplinary offence.

It is recommended the child protection procedure is revised to include information about staffs' responsibility in reporting any concerns.

Separate records were being maintained of child protection meetings convened in respect of individual pupils. However, there was no central system for recording incidents/concerns. Following a joint visit to the school by representatives of Ofsted (from the Department for Education and Skills), CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection) and NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) a few weeks prior to this inspection, the senior management team were implementing two, new, central logs. These were to record child protection referrals and 'Children In Need' issues.

Either the Headteacher or Head of Care were noted to attend all strategy/conference meetings convened in respect of child protection concerns. However, records of the meetings were said not to be sent to the school on all occasions. There was no evidence that steps had been taken to ensure the minutes were forwarded or that senior staff had satisfied themselves that action required to be taken by other professionals had been carried through. Consequently, many of the child protection referrals remained 'open' in the recording system, with no hard evidence that action had been taken to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils concerned.

It is recommended the Head of Care ensures records of all child protection meetings are gained. Also, that records demonstrate what action has been taken by the school to ensure the decisions of the meetings have been carried out fully.

The incident log book was not bound or numbered in a way that could prevent records being removed. Whilst incidents and physical restraints were being recorded, there was no evidence they were being analysed or monitored by senior staff to see if they indicated any patterns or issues about staffs practice. Records of incidents did not include staff present at the time, describe the events leading-up to the incident or record the views of the pupil/s about the way the incident was managed by staff. Inadequate recording and monitoring of incidents meant senior staff did not have an effective way of evaluating whether individual pupils' behaviour was improving and whether there were any triggers for incidents. It was also not possible to evaluate whether staff were responding in a measured or consistent way to individual pupils.

It is recommended a bound and pre-numbered incident log is implemented. Also, that the Head of Care or other senior staff member monitors entries in the log to evaluate individual pupils behaviour and identify any issues.

A number of incidents had resulted in the temporary exclusion of a pupil, with parents being requested on occasions to collect their child. This had happened once during a school

excursion. However, records show the expectation on the pupil at the time was unrealistic in terms of his assessed needs. Other recording referred to staff telling a pupil that he would be excluded if he did not behave; this was considered to be wholly inappropriate.

There was no formal 'whistle blowing' policy.

It is recommended a formal policy is developed.

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

None of the boarding pupils identified any concerns about bullying in the residential provision. However, a small number continued to be unhappy about bullying incidents which were said to occur during school hours. The majority of the bullying incidents were described as name-calling although some incidents of physical assault were said to occur in the playground. The latter was observed by one of the Inspectors; incidents tended to happen when a pupil either became over-excited as a result of 'rough play' or there was conflict between players in a game. Staff were noted to respond quickly to such incidents.

A pictorial system had been implemented, known as the 'residential feedback sheet', which enabled boarding pupils to indicate on a weekly basis any concerns about bullying or other matter. This was seen to have been effective in practice; individual pupils' views and feelings were clearly demonstrated by the use of a happy/sad face against various items relating to the residential provision and service. The Head of Care was noted to be evaluating the contents of the feedback sheets on a weekly basis and there was evidence to show she had followed up matters raised by pupils.

(The figure below is based upon responses gained from boarding pupils only).

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

90 %

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?	3
<p>There was a system in place for notifying appropriate authorities of significant events.</p> <p>The Head of Care has demonstrated an on-going commitment to notifying the Commission, promptly, of child protection concerns and other significant events.</p>		
NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI 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?	3
<p>Various 'checking' systems continued to operate throughout the day and evenings, formal and informal, whereby the absence of a pupil without consent was likely to be picked up quickly and responded to. Administrative staff said they contacted pupil's parents if the child did not arrive at the start of the school day, but was expected.</p> <p>Risk assessments had been carried out in respect of a small number of pupils whose behaviour included 'running off'. Some pupils were recorded as having 'run off' into the extensive school grounds, requiring staff intervention. However, these tended not to be viewed as 'unauthorised absences'. Whilst experienced staff were able to describe examples of individual behaviour in this respect and action taken to ensure the safety of each pupil, written guidance for staff was inadequate. This was particularly pertinent in view of the number of new care staff in post and their lack of familiarity with individual pupils and their patterns of behaviour.</p> <p>It is recommended all incidents of pupils 'running off', although remaining on school premises, are viewed as unauthorised absences. Staff guidance should be developed. Also, risk assessments should be regularly reviewed, to ensure they are effective in minimising the level of risk for individual pupils.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		X

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
---------------------------	---------------	---

Although over half of the care staff team had changed since the last inspection, relationships between care staff and boarding pupils were observed to remain relaxed and positive. Newly appointed staff were seen to work cooperatively alongside more experienced staff, to provide consistency in approach to individual pupils.

All care staff demonstrated a commitment to ensuring pupils felt safe and happy within the boarding provision; the emphasis remained on providing a nurturing environment which promoted mutual respect, both between pupils and staff and pupils themselves. Clear professional and personal boundaries continued to be maintained by all staff, within a relaxed framework.

Care staff were observed to promote choice and support pupils to develop self-help skills.

All the boarding pupils said they felt safe in the residential provision.

The staffing arrangement in each residential unit varied between two to three, dependent on the number of boarders each weekday. The minimum staff:pupil ratio was one to two and the maximum one to three. The Head of Care continued to work each weekday evening, providing support to care staff and checking on pupils welfare. The staffing ratios were seen to enable staff to offer all boarders some individual time during the evening.

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?

4

Boarding pupils were clear about staffs expectations of them in respect of what was considered acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They were also able to give examples of positive and negative measures of control which staff could administer. None of the boarding pupils raised any concerns about the sanctions imposed and records showed they were consistent with permissible measures. Staff continued to encourage pupils to think about the consequences of their actions and were observed to manage unacceptable behaviours displayed by some pupils in a quiet but firm manner.

It was pleasing to note all but one of the care staff team had received training in a restraint method adopted by the school known as SCIP (Strategies for Crisis Intervention and Prevention). Some joint recording between school and the residential provision was being undertaken in respect of restraints undertaken on day and boarding pupils. There was a need to establish a separate log book, bound and numbered, for recording incidents resulting in restraints which occurred within the boarding provision. Records in this respect were seen to lack sufficient detail. For example, a record referred to a pupil being 'escorted to their bedroom'. There was no information about what type of 'hold' or physical intervention, if any, had been used by staff to escort the child.

There was also a need for a separate log, bound and numbered, for recording measures of control imposed in the boarding provision. The separate logs would enable the Head of Care to more easily monitor events and to identify any patterns or issues in the residential provision.

It is recommended separate log books are implemented for the recording of all measures of control and restraints. It is recommended senior staff ensure clear information is recorded in respect of any physical intervention used with pupils.

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?	2
<p>A review of some boarding pupils' main file showed the school had gained only brief information on them prior to their admission and, in some cases, remained insufficient until some considerable time afterwards. The lack of information impacted on care/education planning and delivery. It was not possible for staff to effectively carry out an assessment and devise an action plan which addressed the whole needs of pupils, in the absence of essential information.</p> <p>It is recommended the admissions process is robustly implemented; no boarding pupil should be admitted until adequate information has been gained.</p> <p>Clear transition arrangements were in place to support pupils moving on to other schools.</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?

3

The evening routine in the residential provision continued to support the educational programme for pupils. A period of time was set aside for pupils to complete their homework early in the evening. Care staff continued to demonstrate their awareness of the need to build pupils' confidence levels, to assist the learning process.

Each boarder had an area for quiet study in their dormitory cubicle. Reference books plus a computer were available in each residential unit for use by boarders.

Close links were maintained between care and teaching staff to ensure consistency in approach and expectations of boarders in their educational progress. Care staff were aware of the educational targets for each boarding pupil and care plan items were developed to support educational targets.

It was pleasing to note care staff attended Education Reviews for boarding pupils however, they were not involved in the admissions meetings for new boarders.

It is advised that either the Head of Care or proposed Keyworker is involved in admission meetings for boarding pupils.

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

All boarding pupils were positive about the wide range of leisure pursuits and equipment available to them in the boarding provision. Pupils were able to choose their preferred activities.

Although organised activities in the community were still taking place, this was not on a regular basis. The introduction of flexible boarding, resulting in the majority of boarders only residing one or two nights a week, was said to have reduced the need for boarders to be enabled to maintain community links.

An inspection of the risk assessments covering leisure and activities were in place although required more details of specific risk to certain activities. This will be a recommendation of this report.

A good balance was seen to continue to be maintained between organised and free time for boarders.

A room had been developed for use by boarding pupils which was described as a 'therapy' area. Discussion with staff and observation of the use of the room elicited that it was a 'quiet' room slightly removed from both boarding units. Furniture and furnishings had been selected to promote relaxation, with the use of various lighting effects such as bubble lamps and 'touch response' strobes. Seating arrangements were large settees and floor cushions. A television and video player was in the room and viewing was specifically selected by staff to engage the interest of the pupils but not excite or stimulate them. This facility was seen to be enjoyed by the young people in the room and did induce a 'calming' effect on them. However, it is advised the reference to the use of the room as being a 'therapy' area be discontinued. There is a danger that the term 'therapy' could be understood to mean a professional technique used by staff to work with pupils.

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?

3

None of the boarders had intimate care needs though most required verbal prompts and/or instructions regarding personal care tasks, to a greater or lesser extent. Written health plans for individual pupils were in place but many had sections which were incomplete. There was also considerable variation in the information gained in respect of pupil's health history.

It is recommended adequate information is gained in respect of the health history of pupils. Also, written health care plans should be fully completed.

Information in respect of prescribed medication for pupils appeared to be up to date. A copy of the instructions from parents was kept in the medical room. Short-term, prescribed medication and over-the-counter medicines were also administered by staff but, again, only with the written consent and instructions of parents.

Medication held within the boarding provision was kept in a lockable cabinet in the medical room, sited close to the residential units. There was an expectation that boarding pupils bring sufficient medication for their residential stay each week. No 'spare' medication was kept and staff said that in the event of a child arriving at school without their medication, they would take steps to gain it from the child's home if possible. Recording of the administration of medication continued to reflect good practice, in that a second member of staff countersigned as having witnessed a staff member administering the dosage. Nevertheless, there was no external monitoring system in respect of arrangements for the storage, administration and disposal of medication.

It is recommended a system is implemented whereby an independent person such as a local Pharmacist or Nurse reviews, on an annual basis, the arrangements for medication in the school.

Basic first aid equipment was available to staff in the medical room. All but one of the care staff held a recognised First Aid qualification.

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

Boarding pupils were very complimentary about the meals offered, with comments varying from 'smashing' to 'good'.

Records of menus showed pupils were being offered a varied diet which offered choice at all times. Although the Cook said pupils told her of their food likes and dislikes during mealtimes, there was no formal system for gaining the views of boarding pupils about menu content and so on.

It is advised the Cook is invited to meet with boarding pupils, on a regular basis, to gain their views and suggestions about the meals. (It may be appropriate for her to attend part of the residential forum meetings).

A Environmental Health Officer had visited the school in July,2004. No recommendations were made following the visit. Conversely, the written findings referred to the 'excellent' standard of hygiene and provision offered to pupils.

An appropriate difference was noted between the organisation and structure of the main lunchtime meal, which catered for the whole school, and the evening meal which catered for boarding pupils only. Both were observed to be orderly, sociable occasions though the evening meal was more relaxed.

It was particularly pleasing to note that action had been taken to establish a kitchen for use by boarding pupils, under the supervision of staff. The kitchen was domestic in style, contained good quality fitments and was nicely decorated. Adequate basic provisions were supplied by the main kitchen each day to enable staff to offer regular drinks and snacks to boarding pupils.

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?

3

All pupils were expected to wear school uniform during the school day. However, boarding pupils were able to change into their own leisure clothes, which were brought from home, in out-of-school hours.

Boarding pupils were expected to bring their own toiletries although a small supply of provisions were kept by staff for boarders use, if necessary.

A record of monies brought in by boarding pupils each week was kept in one log book. The record was monitored on a weekly basis by the Head of Care. Boarding pupils confirmed that all money was logged in and logged out.

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?	3
---------------------------	---------------	---

Placement plans for boarding pupils were in place, based on a detailed assessment of each child's current needs and skills level. There remained a need for individual targets in the plans to be expressed as small, measurable steps; this would aid staff to more accurately evaluate whether a pupil has achieved a target or not.

Some clear strategies for managing individual pupil's unacceptable behaviours were contained within the plans; the Inspectors considered these were particularly well written as they contained practical guidance.

It was pleasing to note records showed care staff were undertaking individual keyworking sessions with boarding pupils, to address elements of their placement plans. However, there remained a need to ensure recording in this area was related back to the pupil's placement plan.

It is recommended small, measurable targets are set in placement plans. Keyworking sessions should relate to targets in the placement plan.

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

Each boarding pupil had an individual file which was seen to be continued to be maintained in good order. The files were kept securely in the main staff office. They were in modular form which enabled important information to be gained quickly and easily.

Pupils said they were not interested in reading their file though they were happy to be involved in their placement planning. Those spoken with were aware of at least part of their plan.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Clear records were being maintained in respect of staff working in the school, day pupils attending school and pupils boarding each weekday evening. All required record keeping was being maintained though, some information needed to be recorded in separate logs to comply with National Minimum Standards. (A requirement is made earlier in the report in respect of this matter).

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Boarding pupils had easy access to a card operated phone during out of school hours. The phone was sited in a small cubicle area off a connecting corridor between the two residential units.

Boarding pupils spoke freely about their being able to use the phone and said they could make and receive calls, in private, during the evening up to bedtime. None raised any concerns regarding access to a telephone either during the day or evening.

Contact arrangements for individual pupils were documented, in accordance with the wishes of parents/carers. However, staff were seen to help pupils to speak with family members outside these times, if they wished. The majority of boarding pupils were resident for only one to two nights per week which meant they saw their parents on a frequent basis.

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?**

0

This standard was not assessed as it was not applicable to any of the pupils.

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?**

2

Care plans for each pupil were based on an assessment of their individual needs and circumstances. Areas of need identified as particularly problematic for the child or requiring specialist support were clearly documented. However, in one file there was no evidence that a recommendation made by a Paediatric Occupational Therapist had been incorporated into the pupil's placement plan.

There was written evidence to show the multi-disciplinary team within the school were working together to address the emotional and behavioural difficulties displayed by the pupils. Records also showed there was good communication between staff and other professionals such as social workers, doctors and so on. However, links with medical specialists such as a Child Psychologist, CAMHS (Children and Adult Mental Health Service) and the Learning Disability team were tenuous.

It is recommended arrangements are made for staff to have regular contact with specialist services to support them in addressing particular emotional and behavioural difficulties displayed by some pupils.

The Head of Care spoke about developing the role of care staff to include visits to parents of boarding pupils to provide support and guidance. Whilst this development is to be commended, it is recommended care staff receive training in working with parents prior to undertaking this responsibility.

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
---------------------------	---------------	---

The school is a large, detached Victorian property which has been extensively extended. It is sited in a rural area between Leek and Cheadle. Access to the school is via a long driveway, which is in poor condition in some parts.

The school has extensive grounds, including woodland to the back of the property. The grounds offer a wide range of settings for different activities, including hard surfaced and grassed areas. A new, all-season, hard surface area was being completed at the time of the inspection. Pupils were very excited at the thought of having this facility.

The teaching area plus administrative, catering and laundry facilities were sited on the ground floor of the building; the boarding accommodation was sited on the first floor. The boarding pupils said they liked the size and design of the main building although they thought some areas felt 'spooky' at night such as classrooms which were (unusually) quiet.

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**

The residential provision was comprised of two, separate 'units' which were connected by a corridor on the first floor of the main building. Each unit has its own sitting room with dining area, dormitories and bathing facilities. The sitting rooms were decorated and furnished in a manner consistent with good quality, domestic style living.

Bedrooms and dormitories varied in size, accommodating between one to four respectively. It was pleasing to note sleeping arrangements in each room were based either on the wishes of boarding pupils to share with friends or according to their age. Partitioning had been put in rooms with two or more beds to provide each pupil with their own private space. These rooms were also in good decorative order and appropriately furnished. Each bedroom was identified by a painted 'themed' picture on one wall. Boarding pupils had been involved in the choice of themes and were very proud of them.

A kitchen for use by pupils, under the supervision of staff, had been developed since the last inspection. This facility was seen to also be domestic in style and contained good quality fittings and equipment.

Overall, the boarding units were considered to provide a comfortable, homely environment for pupils.

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**

Washing and bathing facilities had been upgraded. There were an adequate number of baths, showers and toilets. Bathing and shower facilities promoted privacy although washing facilities were fitted side by side along a wall, with no screening to promote privacy.

It is advised consideration is given to how to promote privacy for pupils using washing facilities in the bathrooms.

Appropriate locks were fitted on all toilet and bathroom doors and were in good working order.

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

A system had been established for assessing risk throughout the school building and grounds. There was written evidence to show the risk assessments were being regularly reviewed. Records maintained by the Maintenance Officer showed repair work was prioritised and basic checks completed.

Fire safety matters continued to receive good attention. Records showed fire alarm tests were being carried out on a weekly basis. The emergency lighting system was regularly tested throughout term-time. Fire fighting equipment was in place. Whilst two false fire alarms were noted to have occurred since the last inspection, twelve drills had also been carried out – with no problems identified. However, an inspection of the fire records did not identify how many young people were boarding at the time of the planned fire drills or the names of the young people.

Due to the varying numbers of boarders resident each day, it is advised that the fire log include the names of boarding pupils present at the time of a drill. Also, that a check is undertaken by the designated fire officer to ensure all boarding pupils are involved in an evacuation procedure at least once in each twelve month period.

Security in the school was satisfactory. An intercom system had also been installed to external doors on the ground floor, to monitor visitors to the school. Also, an intruder alarm system which was activated at night-time to alert care staff to any unauthorised entry or exit from the building.

Testing of electrical equipment throughout the school was completed on an annual basis by external contractors and water temperature checks were being undertaken monthly.

A programme to upgrade the electricity supply and fittings had been implemented.

It was pleasing to note individual risk assessments were also in place for boarding pupils in respect of their use of the facilities throughout the school and grounds.

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?	3
---------------------------	---------------	---

There was a Departmental policy and procedure in respect of the recruitment of all staff. Records pertaining to care staff appointed since the last inspection were looked at. Appropriate checks had been completed for all staff prior to their starting work in the school. A CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check had also been completed on all Governors of the school. A gender balance continued to be maintained within the care staff team.

Evidence of staffs' previous qualifications were said to have been gained and kept in a separate file kept by the Headteacher.

Good practice was evidenced in the recruitment process. However, a recent joint, independent survey looking at child protection arrangements in residential special schools had identified some concern about the lack of a policy in the school, in respect of related staff working alongside one another.

It is advised a policy is developed in respect of related persons working alongside one another.

Although there had been considerable changes within the care staff team since the last inspection only one person had actually resigned. Other changes had occurred as a result of changes in the deployment of staff; designated staff teams had been developed to work either in the school or care settings.

Total number of care staff:	6	Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:	1
------------------------------------	---	---	---

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

The school is staffed at all times of the day and night, at or above the minimum level specified under standard 28.2. Records of staff actually working in the school demonstrate achievement of this staffing level.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The maximum number of boarders catered for at any one time was fifteen. However, the introduction of flexible boarding meant the usual number of boarders each weekday tended to be between ten to twelve. Rotas showed care staffing levels varied between two to three each weekday, dependent on the number of boarders resident. The varying level was seen to be adequate to enable staff to offer some individual time and attention to boarding pupils.

Night staffing arrangements were for two sleeping in persons; one located on each residential unit. Sensors were fitted along corridors to indicate, in the sleeping-in rooms, when a pupil left their bedroom. It was not clear whether parents were aware of the use of the surveillance system. Bedtimes were noted to be between 8.00 to 8.30pm. Records showed that there had been a small number of occasions, from the start of term in September, when boarding pupils had not settled till 10pm and were awake by 6.30am.

It is recommended the Head of Care monitor the arrangement for night staff cover to ensure it is adequate to meet the needs of the young people.

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?

3

Good attention continued to be given to the training needs of care staff. Two established staff had commenced NVQ level III training whilst three of the four newly appointed care staff had been registered to commence the training; the remaining newly appointed person already held the qualification. New staff had undertaken a comprehensive Induction programme and had completed basic training in Physical Intervention, Fire Safety, First Aid and Asthma Awareness. Individual staff were also undertaking specific training in related areas such as Managing Challenging Behaviour and Counselling. The Head of Care was undertaking a Diploma in Social Work.

Training in areas such as Child Protection had been offered to the whole staff team and had included school Governors. However, the training tended to take place at the commencement of each school year, in September. Newly appointed care staff were noted to have commenced working from April onwards, resulting in a gap of five months before they received child protection training. The training was provided in-house.

It is recommended newly appointed staff receive child protection training as part of their Induction programme. It remains an advisory recommendation that consideration be given to inter-agency training in respect of Child Protection.

A 'therapy' room had been developed for use by the boarding pupils, sited in a corridor between the two units. The room contained various items to aid relaxation such as special lighting effects, soft seating and so on. There was no evidence that care staff had received training in respect of the purpose and function of the room although one member of staff was about to commence 'Nurture' training in January, 2005.

If the room is intended to be used for a 'therapeutic' reason, it is advised training be provided to staff in its purpose and function.

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?

3

Newly appointed care staff were clear about lines of accountability within the school. All care staff said they received regular supervision from the Head of Care; half-termly for established staff and fortnightly for new staff. Arrangements for formal supervision for the Head of Care had still not been implemented although she said she continued to receive good informal support from the Headteacher.

It is recommended arrangements are made for the Head of Care to receive regular, formal supervision; this matter should be given priority. Consideration should be given to the supervision being provided by an independent person, due to the increasing demands on the Headteachers time.

Discussion with the care staff team showed they continued to provide a good degree of informal support to one another.

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 Inspectors considered the management of the boarding provision continued to be well organised. The Head of Care provided clear leadership and support to staff whilst displaying a child-centred approach to the development of the service. Staff were seen to be deployed to best use and were able to offer individual attention to pupils.

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

0 %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The Commission for Social Care Inspection 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?**

0

This standard was not assessed. The school is funded by Staffordshire Education Department and there was no evidence of monetary constraints at the time of the inspection.

However, discussions about future developments elicited that the Department had proposed extending the range of special needs catered for within the school. The proposal would have a major impact on both pupils and staff. Inspectors were not clear what timeframe was operating in respect of the new proposal but were concerned that any change to the current service should be gradual and measured, allowing time for the Head of Care to plan and for staff to undertake relevant training – particularly as the majority of the care staff are newly appointed and inexperienced. Inspectors were aware that the Head of Care was due to commence a placement elsewhere as part of a Social Work qualification, from February, 2005 for a few months. Clearly, it would be in the best interests of staff and pupils if the proposed changes were to be deferred until the Head of Care returned to her post and could be actively involved in the development plans.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

A representative of the Local Education Authority continued to visit each half-term to review the conduct of the school and produce a report of their findings. Copies of the reports were being forwarded to the Care Standards Commission. There was evidence action was being taken in response to matters raised during the visits.

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

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 1 & 2 December 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

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

Note:

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

C.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 3 May 2005, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

C.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

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

Commission for Social Care Inspection
33 Greycoat Street
London
SW1P 2QF

Telephone: 020 7979 2000
Fax: 020 7979 2111

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120
www.csci.org.uk

S0000038731.V161182.R01

© This report may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of the Commission for Social Care Inspection



The paper used in this document is supplied from a sustainable source