

inspection report

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

St Vincents School for the Blind

Yew Tree Lane

West Derby

Liverpool

Merseyside

L12 9HN

4th – 12th October 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

St Vincent's School for the Blind

Address

Yew Tree Lane, West Derby, Liverpool, Merseyside, L12
9HN

Tel No:

0151 228 9968

Fax No:

0151 252 0216

Email Address:

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

St Vincent's School for the Blind and Partially Sighted Children

Name of Head

Mr Stephen Roberts

CSCI Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

24/11/03

Date of Inspection Visit		4th October 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Julia Toller	080407
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Nick Veysey	124124
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI 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 CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Sister Teresa Tighe	

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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 St Vincent's School for the Blind

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

St Vincent's School For Blind and Partially Sighted Children was founded in 1841 and is a day and residential school. The school offers a specialised curriculum for pupils with all levels of visual impairment, including additional educational needs. The school is a registered charity, and is governed by the Board of Trustees of the Catholic Blind Institute.

The Head Teacher only came into post in September 2004, the previous Head leaving at the end of the Spring term. The school appointed an Acting Head for the Summer term.

The school is approved for 127 pupils with 30 residential places. Currently a total of 63 pupils attend the school, including 28 residential pupils. The residential accommodation is divided into three separate groups; Bridgman, Caulfield and Keller. The majority of the bedrooms are singles, and there are some double bedrooms. The school offers a variety of boarding arrangements depending on the needs of the child, ranging from one to four nights each week.

There are positive links and communication between the school and residential staff. The time after school is seen as an extension of the school day with the same high level of planning and communication that is seen during the school day. Even with this being the case there is a clear distinction made between school time and after school. Children are able to use their free time constructively to pursue leisure and cultural activities and interests.

The school is located in the West Derby area of Liverpool and is nearby to local shops and amenities including leisure facilities. The school has its own swimming pool.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The feedback that the inspectors received from children about the school was extremely positive:

‘Children are looked after well and we are all treated equally’

‘I think it is a brilliant school’

‘I like everything about living at the school’

The inspectors were pleased to find some significant progress since the last inspection in the development of placement plans. The planning for children’s care was comprehensive and thorough. There were many good examples of how the school provides support to individual children, and enables them to develop their living and social skills, and assist them prepare to leave the school. The children’s files were up to date and well maintained. The overall quality of the written records had improved since the last inspection.

The inspector found a good level of communication between teaching and care staff and as a result there was evidence of a continuity of care in supporting pupils appropriate to their needs. The school was particularly good at providing the opportunity for different groups of staff to meet together on a weekly basis to share information, review practice, address issues and concerns, and discuss children’s progress.

The school was efficiently organised and managed. The staff group was skilled and knowledgeable, and well supported. There were opportunities for all staff to develop their skills through training programmes. The operation of the school and the welfare arrangements for the children were monitored.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The governing body needs to further develop its monitoring of the school by making sure that a representative visits the school at least each half term to undertake an assessment of the conduct of the school and produce a written report. The majority of these visits should be unannounced, and the written reports need to include the areas outlined in the standards and include the views of children and staff about the running of the school.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This has been an extremely positive inspection. The school has demonstrated a clear commitment to meeting the National Minimum Standards and to continue to develop its services to meet the needs of the children who attend the school. The inspectors observed a high standard of care practices and competence. The feedback about the school from pupils, and other professionals has been complimentary. The inspectors found many examples of positive outcomes for children.

The inspector would like to thank the head teacher, head of care, staff and in particular the children for their cooperation and assistance during the inspection.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

**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.	RS9	In accordance with NMS 9.5 all staff in direct contact with children should receive training in positive care and control of children including praising children for their achievements.
2.	RS10	A record of all sanctions applied to pupils should now be kept in a bound and paginated book, which contains a list of permitted sanctions. The record is to be made within 24 hours and each entry should now include the name of the child, the date and location of the incident which led to the sanction being applied, details of the inappropriate behaviour, the nature of the sanction, the name of the staff member giving the sanction, the name(s) of any other staff present, the effectiveness and any consequences of the sanction and the signature of the staff member concerned. Where sanctions are imposed, children are encouraged to write or otherwise have their views recorded and sign their names against them, if possible, in the records kept by the school. A similar and separate book relating to restraint should also be kept in the same way see NMS 10.14. The above should also be observed as highlighted in NMS 33.
3.	RS24	It is recommended that the school addresses all the issues with the premises outlined in the main body of the report. It is advised that the school develops a system to identify maintenance and repairs to the residential accommodation and the school makes sure that the work is fully completed in a reasonable timescale.
4.	RS30	The head of care should make sure that following all supervision meetings a record of the discussion and agreed outcomes is kept.
5.	RS30	All staff are to have their performance appraised individually and formally by their line manager (for teachers this will normally be part of Performance Management and does not require a separate process). These are to be kept in each staff members personal file and should identify training needs for the following year as part of the individual's Personal Development Plan.

6.	RS31	The school is to have planned responses to arrange of foreseeable crises (e.g. outbreaks of illness, fires, serious allegations or complaints, significant accidents, staff shortages, and control problems within or outside the school) NMS 31.9.
7.	RS33	<p>The Governing Body/Trustees responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number or a representative who does not work at the school or directly manage the school to visit the school once every half term and complete a written report on the conduct of the school.</p> <p>The majority of the visits should now be carried out unannounced and should include checks on the schools records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, and use of the physical interventions along with an assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school. The responsible person should also have an opportunity to meet with any child or member of staff who wish to talk to them, in private if they wish. Written reports of all the above visits are provided to the head of school within 2 weeks of the visit. Reports of all these visits are available to inspectors, they should now include any action taken, and recorded when taken, by the school on recommendations or issues of concern raised in such reports.</p>

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.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action
1	RS4	The head teacher should make sure that the complaints policy and documentation is developed in line with NMS 4.
2	RS9	The head teacher should make sure that all staff are provided with training in positive care and control.
3	RS10	The head of care should make sure that the recording of sanctions and physical interventions is developed in line with NMS 10.9 and 10.14 to include the views of the young person involved, and comments on the effectiveness and any consequence of the actions taken.
4	RS11	The head of care should give further consideration to the completion and development of pathway plans for young people preparing to leave the school and residential environment.
5	RS14	The head teacher and head of care should consider developing the role of the health care co-ordinator.
6	RS24	The head teacher should make sure that all repairs and regular maintenance, including the internal and external decoration of the school buildings, are carried out promptly and within appropriate timescales.
7	RS26	The head of care should make sure that risk assessments with regard to the potential risks to pupils arising from their specific needs and disabilities are developed further to ensure they all are specific to the potential hazards for individual pupils.
8	RS26	The head teacher should make sure that an appropriate number of staff have Lifeguard qualifications to enable children to use the swimming pool safely.
9	RS26	The head teacher should invite the Fire Safety Officer to inspect the building alterations to ensure that they will meet with the Fire Authority's requirements.

10	RS28	<p>The head of care should develop and formalise a written staffing policy in accordance with NMS 28.2 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of care staff required to be on duty by day (which may include different required numbers for different circumstances), in the evenings and during weekends, • The number of care staff required to be on duty by night, and whether they are required to be waking or sleeping in, • The arrangements for managing the staff on duty group by day and night, • The arrangements for calling senior staff support if required.
11	RS28	The head of care should consider reviewing the staffing arrangements for Bridgman in light of the particular ages needs of the children staying there.
12	RS29	The head of care should make sure that each member of staff has a personal development plan.
13	RS30	The head of care should make sure that following all supervision meetings a record of the discussion and agreed outcomes is kept.
14	RS30	The head teacher should make sure that all care staff have their performance formally appraised on an annual basis in line with NMS 30.6.
15	RS31	The head teacher should make sure that the school's planned responses to a range of foreseeable crises in accordance with NMS 31.9 are completed as soon as possible.
16	RS33	The governing body should make sure that a representative visits the school at least each half term to undertake an assessment of the conduct of the school and produce a written report. The majority of these visits should be unannounced, and they need to include the areas outlined in NMS 33.3.

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	RS1	The head teacher should make sure that the school prospectus is reviewed and up dated to take into account recent changes at the school.
2	RS1	The head of care should make sure that the children's guide is developed further to include a section about what pupils should do if they were feeling unhappy or wish to make a complaint.

3	RS17	The head of care should make sure that key workers include the children's comments and views about their progress in their reports, and encourage children to sign and date them.
4	RS18	The head of care should continue to monitor the quality of the written records and take steps to make sure that they are of a consistently good standard.
5	RS27	The school should consider reviewing its recruitment policy in light of the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry Report in relation to the recruitment and vetting of staff.
6	RS31	The head of care should make enquiries to clarify if the care staff require to register with the General Social Care Council (GSCC). The contact details for the GSCC are 0845 070 0630 and www.gsc.org.uk .
7	RS32	The head teacher and head of care should formalise the process of reviewing and monitoring the quality of the residential provision, with the head of care preparing a written report each half term, commenting on the quality of the service, any patterns or issues requiring action, and any required follow up or consequential action
8	RS33	The governing body should make sure that they include comments from children and staff in their written reports completed in accordance with this standard.

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.

INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS

Direct Observation

YES

YES

YES

- Social Services

YES

- Fire Service

YES

- Environmental Health

YES

- DfES

YES

- School Doctor

NO

- Independent Person

NO

- Chair of Governors

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

NO

04/10/04

09.30

35.35

5

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

The school has a written statement of purpose and school prospectus. The statement of purpose accurately reflects the overall objectives of the school and the services that it provides for pupils. It contains all the information required in NMS 1.3, as well as copies of the children's complaints procedure and new pupil/parent guide. The statement was reviewed during the summer term of 2004 and approved by the governing body on 14th July 2004. The school prospectus should be reviewed and up dated to take into account recent changes at the school.

The statement of purpose is available in other communication formats such as Braille and in large print on request.

The inspectors found that the school was able to meet the range of needs outlined in the statement of purpose and that the school only admits children whose needs can be met within the function of the school. The statement of purpose and the school's written policies and procedures clearly apply to both the residential and educational aspects of the school, and identify how all the staff at the school create a continuum of care for the children.

The school has also a children's guide. This was detailed and informative about the arrangements for residential pupils, including contact numbers for organisations such as the Commission and Child Line. The guide was also available in large print and Braille. However, the guide should be developed further to include a section about what pupils should do if they were feeling sad or unhappy.

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
<p>This is an area of work in which the school was seen to excel. Prior to the start of term, the school has consulted heavily with children regarding numerous issues such as bullying and school policies and procedures. Parents were also notified of these sessions, and it is thought, that in future, their views will be sought further for suggestions.</p> <p>The Inspector was present during a children's meeting held in Caulfield unit. An agenda had been prepared by the chair, a young person, and minutes taken by another young person. The Inspector was pleased to see the children leading the meeting and undertaking a high level of negotiation to achieve decisions. The staff on duty were seen to monitor all the children present throughout the course of the meeting, and assist them to participate in the meeting as necessary. The children obviously enjoyed the time spent discussing issues and were seen to plan future agenda issues.</p> <p>Staff and children should be commended for their achievements in this area of work, and should use this as a model for the other units to achieve similar results dependant upon the abilities of the children.</p>		

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

Children were seen to utilise their bedrooms after school as they wished, staff were respectful of children's privacy, and were seen to not only knock on bedroom doors before entering, but also due to children's needs, will identify themselves on approaching children. During a planned meeting, which the inspector witnessed, staff were heard to share information with other professionals in order to promote the welfare of a specific child.

Staff voiced concerns around issues of privacy and dignity regarding pupil's menstrual cycles; further advice should be sought around this matter to ensure that children are receiving all help available to them.

The school should develop a policy around intimate care, not only to cover issues such as those above, but also around the bathing and personal care of younger children.

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

Children could discuss the complaints policy with the inspector, and were aware of the processes to be followed. Whilst all children who discussed this with the inspector were aware of the location of the complaints box and did not raise any concerns, it would be more beneficial to alter the location of this to enable children to complain anonymously if they so wish.

Similarly, the complaints process would benefit from being developed to enable children to complain, having access to a variety of formats.

Having seen the work that the children achieved with regard to the bullying policy in the summer, it would seem beneficial for the children to be involved in the development of the complaints process.

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?

4

The school has a child protection policy and procedure in line with NMS 5 and are consistent with the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Procedures. There was evidence that the school works closely with local Child Protection Team and other agencies to promote the welfare and safety of the young people. The school has a copy of the ACPC procedures available to all staff.

The academic and welfare staff had child protection training prior to the start of the term in September 2003. The inspectors were provided with a copy of the training materials. These were thorough and included: the legislative framework, the concept of significant harm, indicators of child abuse, what to do if a child discloses, making a referral, record keeping and confidentiality, and allegations against staff. All the staff spoken to by the inspectors were knowledgeable about child protection issues and understood the school's child protection policy.

The school has an allocated child protection co-ordinator, who demonstrated a sound knowledge of child protection procedures, not only in her academic knowledge, but also in the work that she had carried out since the last inspection. It was pleasing to hear that this member of the staff team felt valued and supported in their role. Discussions and interviews with staff indicated that they had an understanding of their separate roles and of the need to inform the child protection co-ordinator of any relevant issues.

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

The school has an anti-bullying policy, this has recently been developed in consultation with children. It was pleasing to see children's views incorporated within this policy. During the inspection, one young person brought posters into school that he had designed, following anti-bullying workshops that have recently been completed, the head of care informed the inspectors that these and others designed by pupils will be displayed around the school.

The school is reminded of the need to complete a risk assessment each time an issue of bullying is identified.

The school is to be commended for the amount of work that they have completed in this area since the last inspection.

Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied

X %

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

There was evidence to show that 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.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

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

0

0

0

0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9) The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Although the school has a policy relevant to this standard, due to the specific care needs of the children who attend this school it is rare for children to be absent from care without authority.</p> <p>The school is reminded of the need to take appropriate action in such instances and to notify all relevant bodies.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		0

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The inspectors observed staff responding positively and constructively with young people in order to promote positive behaviour. Likewise where young people showed negative behaviours staff also responded appropriately. There were a number of examples of good practice and staff managing potentially difficult situations in a sensitive and considered manner. In addition staff and young people were seen engaging well with one another with respect and good humour.</p> <p>It is recommended that the head of care and headmaster ensure that the training staff have received with regard to positive care and control, is consistent and appropriate to the needs of the young people attending the school. All records of sanctions and restraints must be held in a bound and paginated book, in line with the NMS.</p>		

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>There was no evidence that the school uses any unreasonable or excessive sanctions as defined in NMS 10.6. The inspectors were made aware that on occasions some young people serving a school detention didn't receive their evening meal until their detention had been completed.</p> <p>A record of all sanctions is in place, but must be maintained in a bound and numbered book, to include the effectiveness, and any consequences of the sanction, and to record the views of the young people and their signature.</p> <p>Children are able to achieve incentives in line with appropriate behaviours, children were able to discuss this process with inspectors and felt that on the whole the system was maintained fairly.</p>		

QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The young people have a pre-admission interview at the school providing them and their carers to find out about the school.

There was evidence of good work undertaken by the school with young people, their families and other agencies in planning for young people leaving the school, and at times moving onto further education, however, further work needs to be completed around pathway plans for young people, to prepare them adequately for leaving.

It was pleasing to see young people achieving varying levels of independence around the residence, from completing basic daily living tasks, to organising themselves for attendance at college.

Young people also spoke to inspectors about forthcoming work placements, which had been organised by the school, in line with children's interests and availability.

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 school maintains records of pupil attendance and has an established daily routine for pupils, boarders and staff.

Young people have access to a variable selection of educational aids in line with their individual care needs, that are appropriate for their age and educational need.

Children's files reflected that assessments have been completed with regard to individual children's needs, and specifically with regard to visual impairment.

Each child placed by the Local Authority has a Personal Education Plan (PEP).

There was evidence that the care staff encourage and support the young people to do their homework, with staff being available in the school where assistance and support is required for children.

It was pleasing to see young people choosing where to complete their homework, with some choosing to utilise their bedrooms or computer facilities on their residence.

Each residence has homework packs to assist them, and are provided with information from the school about the homework for each day. This was a good example of communication and consistency between the school staff and the care staff.

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

The school provides a range and choice of activities for all pupils outside class time, both indoors and outdoors, throughout the year. The inspectors were particularly impressed with the range of activities offered throughout the inspection including swimming, painting, judo and the youth club which proved to be very popular with the children.

It was pleasing to see the children being provided with a high level of choice around their chosen activity and of the option to change activity as they wished.

Young people on the residential units also have access to a range of activities e.g. board games, cards, television and radio.

All activities are in the process of being risk assessed in accordance with NMS 13.6.

Staff discussed the fact that their lifeguard award had recently expired, the school is reminded of the need to renew these as a matter of urgency.

Children were heard to discuss their choices for potential trips out, it is recommended, that funding for such events is reviewed to ensure that children are provided with opportunities to access community activities in addition to school facilities.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25) The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>There was evidence of progress being made in all areas to promote the health care of the young people. The school has a health care co-ordinator in post who is responsible for the administration of medications during school hours, and is on hand for advice as necessary. It would be beneficial if this role could be developed further to provide advice and guidance to children who stay on the residential accommodation, for issues such as sexual awareness and general health care issues.</p> <p>Whilst it is acknowledged that this person receives regular professional supervision, it is also recommended, that the head of care supervises this person in order to monitor their role within the school and to monitor their training needs.</p> <p>There are two rooms available in the "sick bay" for children who are feeling unwell, these were seen to be bare and would benefit from refurbishment to develop a relaxing welcoming environment for children, especially as children may at times need to wait for a significant period of time for parents to collect them, due to the extensive distances travelled by school attendees.</p>		

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?	4
<p>This is an area in which the school excelled. There was an extensive range of hot and cold foods available for children to choose from at all meal times. Children were seen to read either to print version or Braille copies of menus to consider the choices available to them for that day. Children spoke positively of the foods provided and were seen to enjoy the food eaten throughout the inspection.</p> <p>The inspectors had a number of meals with the young people at breakfast, lunch, tea and supper. The lunchtime meal was nutritious and appeared well-balanced.</p> <p>Mealtimes were sociable occasions with a pleasant atmosphere between staff and the young people. Children were able to choose with whom they sat and conversed freely with other young people at nearby tables.</p> <p>The inspector checked the kitchens and it was pleasing to note that a record of fridge freezer temperatures were being kept, also well planned cleaning schedules and records, which afforded accountability for cleaning.</p> <p>Records of foods eaten by children are also being maintained.</p>		

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**

Young people bring their own clothing from home and pocket money in accordance with their needs.

Children were clear that they have a choice of either holding their money or asking staff to look after it on their behalf. Similarly, valuables can be kept in safe keeping if wished, with records being maintained accordingly.

Staff were seen and heard to provide appropriate guidance and encouragement to pupils in relation to their personal hygiene, and general appearance.

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

The inspectors were pleased to find some significant progress since the last inspection in the development of placement plans.

The inspectors examined a sample of pupil's files. All of these had written placement plans. These documents contained all the relevant information required in NMS 17.1, 17.2 & 17.5. The residential care plans were very detailed based on a thorough assessment of needs, and including information gathered from parents and carers, and children.

The pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that they all had a placement plan, they agreed with it, and that staff were carrying out what the plan said. One pupil said *'yes I do have a placement plan explaining what the school should be doing for me. This plan was discussed with me by my key worker'*

The inspector also spoke to a pupil's social worker. They said that the staff were working with the placing authority and were implementing the plans for the pupil, and that their placement plan was consistent with the placing authority's care plan.

Each child had a key worker within the residence providing individual guidance and support to the child. The inspector observed key workers undertaking work with individual children such as helping children develop their living skills as identified in their care and educational plans. There was evidence of a great deal of positive work being carried out with the children, and this was documented in key worker reports. These reports detailed the work undertaken with the child, and how this related to the plan, and included some evaluation of the child's progress. The overall quality of the key worker reports was of a good standard. The key workers should include the children's comments and views about their progress in their reports, and encourage children to sign and date them.

There was evidence from the children's files to show that staff attend annual reviews and

statutory reviews and produce reports on the children's progress.

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

The inspectors found that pupils have a permanent record of their development and progress. They are securely stored and on the whole well maintained, and included all the information outlined in NMS 18.2.

This information was stored in a number of different places. The children have a main school file containing information about their educational needs and progress in the school, and the health care coordinator also held records of children's health plans. There was evidence that this information was available to care staff and had been incorporated into the children's placement plans.

All the staff have received training in recording skills and the overall quality of the written records had improved since the last inspection. However, the inspectors found that some recording was more detailed than others. The head of care should continue to monitor the quality of the written records and take steps to make sure that it is consistently of a good standard.

There was evidence from the pupil's files that written entries were signed dated and the name of the signatory was clearly identified. There was also evidence that the head of care was monitoring the written records such as each resident pupil's diary sheet and counter signing the entries.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

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

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

The inspectors examined the school's records and found that it keeps appropriate records including a children's and staff register, the menus served, a log of all the accidents occurring to children, staff duty rosters, and a log of daily events, including the names of visitors to the school and the reasons for the visit.

The inspector examined a sample of staff personnel files and found that they contained the information required under this standard.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

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

The written records showed that staff were in regular contact with parents by telephone and by letter, and that staff contact parents about any welfare issues relating to their children. Children were able to have telephone contact with their parents. There are facilities for children to meet parents or other visitors in private and comfortable surroundings.

Any restrictions on contact with parents or other persons imposed by the placing authority or court were implemented and accurately documented in the pupil's records.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)

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

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

There was evidence from the care plans, placement plans and annual reviews that the school was actively involved in developing pupils living skills and preparing them for moving on to a college placement, and more independent living.

The head of care told the inspectors about their plans for developing part of the residence into more independent accommodation for pupils to further develop their living skills and take some more responsibility for their own care. At the time of the inspection discussions were taking place with staff and pupils about how best to put it into practice. The inspectors consider this a positive development.

The inspector found from the records, observations, and discussions with staff and children that children had opportunities to develop knowledge and skills needed for their likely future living arrangements. This included the development of personal care, organisational and living skills such as taking more responsibility for getting themselves up in the morning and ready for school, making snacks, preparing meals and using laundry facilities.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)

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

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

There was evidence in the written records, in discussions with staff and pupils, and observed during the inspection, of children receiving individual support appropriate to their needs and wishes and feelings. The school works hard on developing the social skills of all the pupils and encouraging their involvement in social groups, both within the school and in the local community. There were many examples of excellent care practice where staff were working with pupils to meet their specific needs and to enable them to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities.

Children told the inspectors that they are able to approach any member of staff with personal concerns. There was evidence from discussions with staff and from the written records that children undergoing times of personal stress are supported. The key worker reports provided many examples of good practice by staff, for example, in supporting and encouraging pupils to develop their living and social skills.

The inspector found a good level of communication between teaching and care staff and as a result there was evidence of a continuity of care in supporting pupils appropriate to their needs. There was evidence of staff cooperating in implementing programmes associated with specialist services including low vision assessments, speech therapy and physiotherapy. Such therapeutic techniques are only used with children if specified in the child's care plan and agreed by the parents and placing authority, and are only carried out by suitably qualified persons or on their direction or supervision.

The inspector found evidence that there were opportunities for children to receive support on issues such as identity, racial and cultural background, as well as appropriate personal, health, social and sex education.

Children in the school have access to people, independent of the school and placing authorities, who they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school.

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 location, design, and size of the school were appropriate to meet the needs of the pupils and in accordance with its statement of purpose. The head teacher informed the inspectors that they are aware that due to the reduction in pupil numbers the school buildings is under-occupied and that they intend to keep the use of the premises under review to make sure that they are used effectively to meet the needs of the pupils.

The residence and the grounds provide a pleasant environment for young people. One pupil told the inspectors that the best things about the premises were that *'the grounds are big and there is lots of room to play outside'*. There were no outstanding requirements or recommendations relating to the school from the fire service and environmental health authority.

The school's premises are not also used for activities that compromise or have an adverse effect on the care and privacy of the pupils. There was evidence from the records and from observation that the school was taking effective precautions to maintain the security to the school. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed its security arrangements and taken appropriate precautions to prevent any unauthorised person from gaining access into the rear of the school buildings and grounds.

Pupils have access to all the areas of the school they need to use. Handrails and mobility aids are in place; corridor doors can be opened from both sides and they do have vision panels. The décor of the school is generally bright with colours chosen to offset visual impairment. One pupil said *'the best thing about the school grounds is when people can't see very well, they can trail the left hand side of the wall and it helps them, like me, for example, to get around the school. So, in other words, to help them, and me with our mobility needs'*

The Catholic Blind Institute's business manager informed the inspectors that there are plans to improve the disabled access to the school. The planning authority has now approved the plans for the alterations and the work is due to start in the near future. They also informed the inspectors that the Catholic Blind Institute was currently considering proposals for the development of the buildings on the site not used by the school. The inspectors were

assured that any such development wouldn't compromise the security of the school or compromise the pupil's welfare.

The only visual monitoring equipment noted was the security camera outside the main entrance to the building. There are no physical restrictions for the movement of pupils throughout the school in accordance with NMS 23.8.

The school maintains appropriate links with the local community, and makes good use of local recreational facilities and amenities.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

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

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

The school provides good quality and well-maintained accommodation for the children and was appropriate to their needs. The residential accommodation and facilities were homely and were decorated and furnished to a high standard. They were tidy and standard of cleanliness was excellent.

One pupil said they liked *'having my own on suite bedroom, being entitled to my own privacy, its convenient because I can relax and do some quiet revision for GCSE'*.

The sleeping arrangements for pupils were in keeping with NMS 24.5. All pupils are encouraged to personalise their rooms. Each child had sufficient storage for clothes and belongings. There was space for private study and lockable facilities for pupils to store personal possessions depending on the needs of each pupil. The school has a laundry but there are also facilities for children to learn to wash, dry and iron their clothes. There are rooms in which children are able to meet visitors privately and space for activities and recreation.

Staff have designated sleep-in rooms and bathrooms, which are located close to children's rooms to respond to children's night time needs.

Since the last inspection a considerable amount of work has been done to improve the quality of the accommodation. The school dining room has been significantly improved and decorated, window coverings have been fitted in Keller, and carpets have been fitted in the downstairs lounge in Caulfield. In addition, work has started on making alterations to unoccupied part of Caulfield, and it is anticipated that the work will be completed by the end of the Autumn term.

The following issues were identified during the inspection:

School corridors

- The radiators in the corridors were hot to touch and need covering.
- There were damaged floor tiles in the scullery and outside the assembly hall that need to be replaced.

Keller

- Shower screens need to be fitted in some bathrooms.
- The en-suite bathrooms need to be decorated.

Bridgman

- Curtains, but no other window coverings in the bedrooms

Caulfield

- More appropriate floor covering for one bedroom
- Curtains, but no other window coverings in the bedrooms
- Light room needs to be tidied and an appropriately qualified person should check the equipment.

The Clinic

- The clinic is in need of decoration and refurbishment.

The school has a clear policy and system for the maintenance and repair of the accommodation and school buildings. The head teacher should make sure that all repairs and regular maintenance, including the internal and external decoration of the school buildings, are carried out promptly and within appropriate timescales.

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

The bathroom and lavatory facilities in the residential accommodation were of a good standard, and suitable to meet the needs of the children and enable them to carry out their personal care in privacy with dignity. Most of the children's bedrooms have en-suite facilities. All the children who completed inspection questionnaires said that they all had enough privacy when using toilets, showers and bathrooms.

There was sufficient numbers of baths, showers and toilets in each group to meet the minimum standard.

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?****2**

There was evidence from the written records that the school takes positive steps to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risks and hazards in accordance with health and safety and fire legislation. There was no unnecessary hazard apparent in the school and grounds.

There was evidence that the gas installations, electrical equipment and installations and boilers had been appropriately inspected and serviced.

Generic risk assessments have been carried out in relation to the premises, the residential accommodation, activities, both inside the school and in the community, the use of the swimming pool, transport, playground, and the use of the school minibus. There was evidence of risk assessments being reviewed and adapted as necessary. The pupils' files contained individual risk assessments with regard to the potential risks to pupils arising from their specific needs and disabilities. The majority of these risk assessment had been completed to a good standard, but some of them needed to be developed further to make sure they were specific to the potential risks for individual pupils.

There was evidence that some of the staff needed to renew there Lifeguard qualifications for the swimming pool. The head teacher should make sure that an appropriate number of staff have Lifeguard qualifications to enable children to use the swimming pool safely.

The fire precaution records show that fire drills and the regular testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms, and fire fighting equipment take place as required by the Fire Authority. The head teacher told the inspector it was their understanding that the school had involved the Fire Authority and building control in all the building alterations taking place in the school. The inspectors recommend that the head teacher should invite the Fire Safety Officer to inspect the building alterations to ensure that they will meet with the Fire Authority's requirements.

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

The school has a clear and detailed procedure for recruiting staff and volunteers. The school include children in staff recruitment with them interviewing candidates as part of the selection process. This is a commendable practice and has been formulised in the school's recruitment policy. The school, however, should make sure that notes from these interviews are retained and kept on the successful candidates personnel file.

The Head Teacher should consider reviewing the recruitment policy in the light of the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry Report in relation to the recruitment and vetting of staff. In addition, they should take appropriate steps to make sure that members of the selection panel have had training in the recruitment and selection of staff.

The inspector examined a sample of staff personnel files. The majority of the staff have been employed by the school before April 2002. The personnel files of staff recruited since this date included the all the information outlined in NMS 27.2. All the care staff and volunteers had had recent enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks.

The school has a robust system for vetting visitors to the school. All visitors, including contractors, have to sign in at reception and carry visitor identification.

Total number of care staff:	10	Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:	1
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Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

The inspectors examined the staff rosters. There was sufficient staff in place to meet the minimum staffing requirements during day and night appropriate to fulfil the school's statement of purpose and the needs of individual children. There was evidence in the records that the staffing levels were adjusted to meet the specific needs and numbers of children. However, given the wide age range of children and needs staying on Bridgman, the head of care should consider reviewing the staffing arrangements on this group.

There was a written record of which children and adults are sleeping in the residence each night available for both children and staff.

The school now needs to develop and formalise a written staffing policy in accordance with NMS 28.2 as follows:

- The number of care staff required to be on duty by day (which may include different required numbers for different circumstances), in the evenings and during weekends,
- The number of care staff required to be on duty by night, and whether they are required to be waking or sleeping in,
- The arrangements for managing the staff on duty group by day and night,
- The arrangements for calling senior staff support if required.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

There was evidence that staff have been provided with training and development opportunities to enable them to have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the children. There was a commitment to support staff to enhance their skills and knowledge taking into account their specific learning and development needs.

The staff training programme shows that staff have access to training events that address the issues detailed in Appendix 2 of the National Minimum Standards, as well as access to continuing training in child care through NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. The training records show that all the staff have had training in child protection. Staff have received training appropriate to their role about the specific needs of children accommodated at the school such as receiving training in eye conditions and visual impairment, first aid, moving and handling, and the administration of medication.

The head of care should make sure that each member of staff has a personal development plan.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)

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

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

The inspectors found that the school had a clear organisational structure and the staff were accountable and said that they felt were supported. Staff supervision was taking place in accordance with NMS 30.2, and 30.4. However, the inspectors found from discussions with staff that records of the agreed actions required by the supervisor and the staff member after each meetings was not been kept in every case.

There were suitable arrangements for the supervision of the head of care. In addition to formal supervision, the inspector observed that staff received a lot of informal guidance and support from their managers and colleagues.

The inspectors found little evidence that care staff were having their performance formally appraised on an annual basis in line with NMS 30.6. The head teacher informed the inspectors that an appraisal system was in the process of being introduced.

Staff have been provided with written guidance on procedure and policy that addresses the issues outlined in Appendix 3 of the National Minimum Standards. The school has a system in place to review and up date its guidance to staff annually.

The school was particularly good at providing the opportunity for different groups of staff to meet together on a weekly basis to share information, review practice, address issues and concerns, and discuss children's progress. Minutes and action plans are kept from all these meetings.

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?	2
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The head teacher has only been in post since the start of the Autumn term and at the time of the inspection was very much still in the process of familiarising themselves and monitoring the operation of the school. Having said this they had already introduced some organisational changes, such as the methods of the sharing of information between different areas of the school. Several members of staff from throughout the school commented that they felt that communication in the school had improved since the start of term.

The inspectors were clear from discussions with the head teacher that they were committed to making sure that the whole school was organised and managed in a way to meet the needs of the children and to deliver a high standard of child care practice.

The head of care has at least three years experience at a senior level in a child care setting and has a professional qualification relevant to working with children and has obtained NVQ Level 4 in management. All the care staff have completed the work towards NVQ Level 3 in children and young people, and at the time of the inspection were waiting the outcome of the assessment. It is envisaged that by January 2005 the school will have achieved at least the minimum standard. In addition, the head of care and one of the senior care staff are planning to start the NVQ Assessors course in the near future.

The school has a system in place to make sure that a member of the senior management team is available to be in charge of the school at all times. Each member of the senior management team has substantial relevant experience of working in the school.

The inspector examined the staff rosters and found that staff have sufficient time scheduled to ensure that they are able to complete the tasks outlined in NMS 31.5 without compromising the welfare of the children. The staffing working hours are consistent with the requirements of the statement of purpose and the Working Time Directive.

The school was in the process of developing planned responses to a range of foreseeable crises in accordance with NMS 31.9. The head teacher should make sure that the plan is completed as soon as possible.

The school provides information to parents about the school's policies and procedures, and contact details for the local social services and the Commission.

The head of care should make enquiries to clarify if the care staff require to register with the

General Social Care Council.

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?

3

The head teacher produces each term a report for the governors about the performance of the school. The inspectors examined these reports for the Summer and Autumn terms and found that they commented on the areas outlined in NMS 32.2, 33.3 and 33.4.

There was evidence that the head of care monitors and signs the records mentioned in NMS 32.2, identifies any issues requiring any attention and takes appropriate action. The head teacher and head of care should now formalise this process with the head of care preparing a written report each half term, commenting on the quality of the residential provision, any patterns or issues requiring action, and any required follow up or consequential action.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Representatives of the governing body have been visiting the school and have prepared written reports on the conduct of the school. However, this was an area where further development is needed. The visits need to take place school each half term in line with NMS 33.2, and the majority of the visits should be unannounced.

Generally the reports were detailed and included evidence of checks on the school's records, an assessment of the physical condition of the building, and referred to meeting pupils and staff. The governing body, however, need to develop these reports further and make a more thorough assessment of the conduct of the school at the time of their visit, and the reports should include the comments from the children and staff.

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 4th October 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

NO

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.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 7th December 2004, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

NO

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

D.3.1 I, Mr Stephen Roberts of St Vincent's, 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, Mr Stephen Roberts of St Vincent's, 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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