



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

St Francis

Wickenby Crescent

Ermine Estate

Lincoln

Lincs

LN1 3TJ

5-6th November 2002

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

St Francis

Tel No:

01522 526498

Address

Wickenby Crescent, Ermine Estate, Lincoln, Lincs, LN1 32T

Fax No:**Email Address:****Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

Lincolnshire County Council

Name of Head

Ms Ann Hoffmann

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Local Authority Residential Special School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

N/A

Date and Time of Inspection Visit	5-6 th November	ID Code
Name of NCSC Inspector(s)	Rachel Cook & Alan Geeves	
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):	N/A	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)	N/A	
Name of any Signer or Interpreter	N/A	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools, published by the Secretary of State under Section 87C of the Children Act 1989, and other relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 as amended. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of St Francis. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

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

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

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

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

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

Up to 28 pupils were recorded as using the residential places at the school either on a full time or part time basis. However, the school usually accommodates no more than 23 children at any one time. Boarding is available from Monday to Friday during school term time.

All accommodation is on one level and there are 3 separate living areas. Each of these has a lounge with adjoining bedrooms and bathrooms. There are 2 main dining areas and a number of facilities within the school that are utilised by the pupils during the evenings for a variety of activities/hobbies. A kitchenette is also available for the young people to prepare their own snacks and hot drinks in the evenings should they wish to do so. The residential area is equipped with a wide range of moving and handling equipment to meet the assessed needs of the young people. The school has its own swimming pool, which is available up to 5pm.

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

The staffing of the residential area of the school consists of a team of Residential Care Officers who are led by the Principal Residential Care Officer. The usual staffing ratio is 8 staff for 23 young people. This includes 24-hour nursing care provided by qualified and registered nurses – 2 during school hours and 1 during the evenings and night.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The parents and pupils questionnaires along with pupil discussion evidence a high level of satisfaction in the quality of care provided by the school. The inspectors verified this quality throughout the inspection.

There appeared to be an open management culture, in which staff felt valued and supported in their work. There were clear staff communication systems throughout the school and a strong team approach. The Inspectors noted the commitment, enthusiasm and quality of care provided by the staff and the child centred approach of the staff. Relationships between staff and pupils were based on mutual respect. Pupils stated they feel listened to, safe living at the school. There was evidence of a caring culture between older pupils to younger pupils.

The school provided a wide range of activities, hobbies and outings. The health and educational needs of the young people were promoted.

Files were well organised and whilst a number of documents were in the process of being formulated in general there were clear policies and procedures in place. There were clear care plans and reviews in place.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Environment:

A number of internal building needs were identified at the inspection. This included re-decoration and refurbishment matters. However, the management and staff were aware of most areas and this was reflected in the school's development plan.

There was no evidence of written risk assessments, fire checks and risk assessment.

Staffing:

A formal supervision system was needed and training for staff in relation to the NVQ recommendations.

The staff recruitment and recording systems were in need of review as a number of staff files examined did not evidence the required checks

Records:

A number of recommended policy guidance documents were not yet in place although generally the records and files were clear and well organised.

A Children's Guide to the school was being devised in an appropriate format.

A staff register was not available at the time of inspection.

Management:

There was a need for internal review and external quality assurance monitoring systems.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The service has been inspected for the first time against National Minimum Standards introduced from 1st April 2002. As a result, this report may contain a substantial number of recommendations. If so, the number of these should fall significantly at the next inspection when the provider will have had time to take account of the new legislation and standards and to take action to meet them.

The majority of the records, policies and procedures identified within the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools were available within the school. The Head and the Principal Residential Care Officer were in the process of reviewing and updating the schools records policies and procedures to ensure those required within the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools were readily available to the residential staff, young people, parents and others with a professional interest in the school. Many of these had recently been completed.

Discussions with young people and the pupils' and parent questionnaires highlighted the high level of satisfaction with the care provided by the school and the positive effect this had had in relation to the young people's educational and social development. This was also evidenced within the records and through discussions with staff.

Inspectors were noted the positive manner in which both the school's management and the staff approached the preparation for inspection in order to meet the National Minimum Standards. The Inspectors also noted that the Management and staff of the school adopted a professional approach in relation to the feedback at the end of the inspection.

The Inspectors were satisfied with the arrangements made to promote and safeguard the welfare of residential pupils.

There were no notifications to be made to the Department for Education and Skills.

The school's strengths are in the open, supportive culture promoted by the Head, the positive relationships between the children and of the staff, the wide range of activities and leisure facilities.

The overall impression is that the school is well managed and the children who board are well cared for.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

Is Notification of any failure to safeguard and promote welfare to be made by the National Care Standards Commission to the Local Education Authority or Department for Education and Skills under section 87(4) of the Children Act 1989 arising from this inspection?

NO

Notification to be made to: Local Education Authority
Secretary of State

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

N/A

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Were the Recommended Actions from the last Inspection fully implemented?

N/A

If No, the findings of this inspection on any Recommended Actions not implemented are listed below:

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
		N/A. This was the first inspection carried out under The Care Standards Act 2000.	

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan is shown in Part D of this report.

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	Time scale for action
1	RS1	The school are recommend to complete the work being undertaken for the statement of purpose to be available in a suitable format for children and parents as identified in National Minimum Standard 1.4	An action plan with timescales is required from the school for recommendations 1 – 15
2	RS3	The school is recommended to provide guidance to staff on the matters identified in National Minimum Standard 3.2 The school have a payphone available for the use of pupils. However, this was situated in a public area. The school were assessing a suitable place where more privacy could be achieved. That the school consider how they could achieve same gender staff to pupil intimate care (NMS 3.8) and devise procedural guidance for staff as set out under NMS 3.10.	
3	RS4	The schools complaints procedure for children and their parents that board should include the contact details for the National Care Standards Commission. National Minimum Standard 4.8	
4	RS8	The school ensure that the procedure for the absence of a child without authority is in the form of written policy and guidance. National Minimum Standard 8.2-3.	
5	RS10	The school provides training for staff in appropriate physical intervention techniques in accordance with, National Minimum Standard 10.12.	
6		That a policy on HIV and AIDS and other blood borne diseases be put in place.	

7		That all staff involved in preparing food for others receive briefing or training in safe food handling and hygiene.	
8	RS19	The school should carryout a review of the records identified in National Minimum Standard 19.2 and take steps to ensure that the record comply with the standard. In relation to staff records for staff in post prior to the 1 st April 2002 staff records should include an employment history, evidence that appropriate checks have been undertaken, copies or evidence of qualifications, details of any disciplinary action taken against them, a contract of employment and a completed application form.	
9	RS24	A number of areas in relation to the residential accommodation should be undertaken to enable the school to meet NMS 24. These were feedback at the time of inspection.	
10	RS25	A number of bathrooms/toilet areas had no locks on the doors. Whilst many of the boarders require assistance with their personal/intimate care needs it is recommended that the school consider how to improve the privacy for the young people in these areas to meet NMS 25.5	
11		<p>The school is recommended to undertake and record the fire checks as set out in NMS 26.6 and in order to comply with the Fire Authority's Regulations and guidance. It is recommended that risk assessments as set out in NMS 26.3 are carried out and recorded.</p> <p>The school is also recommended to undertake a risk assessment on the bedside rails. These were not covered and posed a risk to pupils. One pupil had trapped his leg in one of these.</p>	
12		It is recommended that recruitment and selection of staff include the checks as set out under NMS27. A number of staff files examined evidenced that a number of these were missing.	
13		That the staff-training programme be reviewed in order to address the areas set out under NMS 29.4, Appendix 2. Whilst some of these were included in the schools training programme others were not.	
14		That the staff written guidance be reviewed to cover all the areas as set out under NMS 30.7, Appendix 3. Whilst the majority were in place a number were not.	

15	RS33	The half termly monitoring visits and written reports that are set out in National Minimum Standard 33 were not yet in place. It is recommended that these be undertaken and copies of the reports be made available to the appropriate parties as set in 33.4-33.5	

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	RS NMS 7.2 & 7.4	That the school review the accident recording systems in order to achieve NMS 7.2 & 7.4.
2	RS NMS 14	That the school review the storage of medicines in the old medication cabinet and provide a more robust medication storage facility.
3	RS NMS 26	The school is recommended to find out the date on the last fixed electrical wiring certificate.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were used in the production of this report

Direct Observation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Accommodation	YES
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	YES

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person	NO
• 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	NO
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	NO
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	NO
Answer phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	5/11/02
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	34.
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	4

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following 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) |

Zero "0" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

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?

2

The Inspectors' examined the school's statement of purpose. It was up to date (2002), clear and specific to the residential service provided by the school. Staff informed the Inspectors that they were in the process of producing this in an appropriate format for pupils.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way that the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.
- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)

Children's opinions, and those of their families or significant others, are sought over key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. Feedback is given following consultations.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The young people board at the school for a maximum of 4 nights a week. The rest of the time is spent with their families or carers.

The parent questionnaires indicate that they are consulted regarding key decisions relating to their child.

The school had commissioned a formal parent survey in 2001, resulting in a 35-page report. This also evidenced a high level of satisfaction and involvement between parents and the school, although it indicated that there was still room for improving communication and consultation with parents.

Whilst there were no formal boarders meetings the young people stated they felt listened to by the staff and that they had a say in the day-to-day decision-making. For example they were consulted about food choices activities and outings. The female pupils stated they would like to choose the décor of their bedrooms. Staff discussions indicated that this was already being planned. One young person indicated that he wished to go to bed later as his bedtime was too early in relation to his age. The Inspectors opinion was that this was a reasonable request and it was fed back to the Head and Principal Residential Care Officer at the inspection.

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?**

2

Discussions, pupil questionnaires and records evidenced that this standard was in general met. However, a number of procedural guidelines for staff as set out under NMS 3.2 were not yet in place. For example gender specific care, access to records, practical details about how children's bedrooms, bathrooms and toilets are entered by staff. Observations and discussions with staff and pupils evidenced that there was a lack of privacy when using the payphone, due to its location in a public area.

Parents and pupils questionnaires evidenced that there was sufficient space for privacy when visits took place at the school.

Pupil discussions evidenced that some would prefer the same gender staff to care for their intimate personal care. There was no written guidance on this (NMS 3.10) although staff demonstrated a sensitive manner to these issues in discussions.

Staff discussions and observations evidenced that there was clear respect for pupils who wanted to relax in quiet and not participate in the activities available.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)

Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

The schools complaints procedures for young people that board at the school did not yet include contact details for the National Care Standards Commission. Whilst records evidenced a clear complaints procedure, parent questionnaires indicated that not all parents were aware of this, albeit that there was high level of satisfaction with the school's residential provision. However, discussions with pupils and the pre-inspection questionnaires evidenced that all children felt confident to raise any concerns they may have and that they would be listened to.

Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

Number of complaints received by NCSC about the school over last 12 months:

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

All staff spoken with were aware of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and were clear regarding the reporting of incidents or suspected incidents of abuse. However the catering and cleaning staff as well as the site manager had not yet undertaken any child protection training. There was evidence that this training was planned on a rolling programme and that the training of these staff would be achieved before the next inspection.

The Head is the school's responsible person for child protection and has undertaken a 4 day foundational course in child protection.

The response from the Local Authorities Child Protection Manager, to a pre-inspection request for information, indicated that Social Services were satisfied with the manner in which the school had responded within the LACPC Codes of Practice, including keeping appropriate records.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:

1

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5) The school has, and follows, an anti –bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The school has a clear anti bullying policy that was clearly understood by both staff and young people.</p> <p>Discussions, pupil questionnaires and observations indicated that a caring culture was promoted within the school and that the pupils felt safe living there. The Inspectors particularly noted the caring attitude of older pupils towards younger pupils.</p>		
Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied		95 %

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>See comments at Standard 5.</p> <p>The accident records were incomplete. Not all the records were signed and follow up action was not always detailed. See Advisory Recommendation 1.</p>		
NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:		
• conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children		0
• serious harm to a child		0
• serious illness or accident of a child		0
• serious incident requiring police to be called		0

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9) The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Whilst staff were clear regarding the actions they would follow if a child was absent without consent, these actions were not reflected within the schools policies and procedures.</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?	4
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The pupil and parent questionnaires indicate that the relationship between staff and young people was very positive. It was evidenced from remarks made by young people that there was trust and confidence in the staff.

Discussions and observations evidenced that staff were clear regarding professional and personal boundaries and that relationships were based on mutual respect.

The Inspector's particularly noted the caring attitude between young people, of all ages, towards each other.

The staff demonstrated a good understanding of individual and group needs. There appeared to be a balance of promoting a choice of activities at the same time respecting that young people at times just needed space to be on their own. This was observed at the time of inspection and was evidenced in discussions with the young people.

The schools statement of purpose and policies reflected these practices.

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
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Whilst the school provides training in moving and handling there was no policy or training on physical intervention appropriate to the young people's needs.

There was a clear behaviour management policy. Observations evidenced that this was reflected in practice and was of a positive approach.

The general ethos of the school was that behaviour is managed through interpersonal relationships with the focus of rewarding positive behaviour.

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?

3

Whilst there was some evidence of preparation for leaving, discussions with staff indicated that preparation for independence was an area they were planning to develop further.

The Inspectors had an opportunity to speak with an ex-pupil who had used the residential provision. Her comments were that without the schools support she would never have been able to become as independent and confident as she now was.

It was clear that ex-pupils were made welcome to visit after they had left the school. For example a number of pupils were pleased to see her and it was clear from conversations that they kept in touch with one another.

Clear admission and leaving procedures were in place as evidenced in policies and procedures and staff and pupil discussions. Young people's care plans also reflected this.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)

Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

The schools 24 hour curriculum ensures that there is close working relationship between the teaching and non-teaching staff. This was confirmed through the records and discussions with young people and staff.

Discussions and observations evidenced clear co-operative relationships between the teaching and residential care staff. These were clearly child focused.

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?**

4

The Inspectors noted the wide range of activities available to pupils. For example, bowling, ICT, swimming, drama, IT, cinema, craft/art, music, library, youth club, board games and unihoc, as well as music and television. Pupils expressed a wish to have satellite television. The Health and Safety School Representative was looking into this. The school had 2 mini-buses available for trips out.

Young people considered that the level of activities both within school and in the local community were good.

There were set nights for specific evening events, although the young people stated that they were given a choice to attend or just relax in their bedrooms or lounges.

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**

Many of the boarders had a number of specific physical needs caused by their disability. Staff spoken with had a clear understanding of the individual care needs of the children. This was confirmed through observation of practice and individual structured interviews.

A registered nurse is provided 24 hours a day and a physiotherapist is available during the school day. The nurses provide information and advice to the residential care staff. One area of potential conflict is that the Education Directorate employs the evening nurse, whilst Lincoln Hospital Trust employs the other 2 nurses. The nurses therefore have different line managers, different policies and training opportunities. However this did not appear to affect the quality of nursing care provided to the young people.

Pre-Inspection letters were sent to the School's Doctor and the Consultant Community Paediatrician. The responses included for example that:

- ❑ The children benefited from the social activities
- ❑ That the children's privacy was respected
- ❑ The care provided at the school is good
- ❑ There was a rolling programme to purchase more specialist beds that are needed.
- ❑ A bidet would be an advantage in the bathroom areas
- ❑ Nursing care plans were in place and well understood by staff
- ❑ It would be beneficial if the pupils had more opportunities in the evenings out of their wheelchairs to stretch and relax their muscles
- ❑ There are 13 children who have level 3 care needs that would be impossible for 1 nurse to provide.

Clear health promotion policies and procedures were in place. Each child had a nursing care plan that was reviewed at least annually.

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?**

2

Young people were positive in their views relating to the food provided by the school. The catering staff had a sound understanding of the needs of the young people and it was confirmed that special diets were catered for and there was always an alternative meal available if young people did not like the choices.

2 members of the kitchen staff had not yet undertaken the Food Hygiene training as recommended under NMS 15.11.

A letter from the Environment and Community Services evidenced that an Environmental Health Officer inspected the premises in May 2002 and there were no outstanding matters of concern arising from the visit.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need in a way, which maximises their choice.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

Throughout the inspection the inspectors observed that the young people were being encouraged to make informed choices supported by staff.

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 are 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?

4

There was evidence within the placement plans that individual assessed needs are being met and that the plans are subject to regular review.

Discussions with pupils and parents evidenced that they were able to attend any planning meetings or reviews and that their views were taken into account. The school also has a nursing care plan for all boarders.

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?

4

The young peoples files and records were well maintained and covered the areas identified within the regulations.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

1

The overall school records are well maintained.

It is recommended that the staff records identified in National Minimum Standards 19.2 are reviewed and up dated in accordance with the National Minimum Standards. A number of these were not in place at the inspection. For example, a staff register, a number of personnel items such as CRB checks, copies of qualifications, interview notes and references.

The young peoples records were clear and met the National Minimum Standards 19.2.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

Parents and staff reported a positive relationship between the school and home. Because young people board Monday to Friday parents and carers retain parental responsibility for the young people.

Parents indicated on the questionnaires that they were made to feel welcome by the staff when visiting the school.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

This standard was met and evidenced in records, observations and discussions. For example Transitional and Leavers Reviews on files, plans for further education, and practical support in relation to health care, advice and establishing social contacts. The young people's independence was promoted in the day-to-day living opportunities, such as personal care, cooking, laundry and activities. Staff were observed providing support according to the young person's assessed needs.

One recent development was that of a single room being converted to a bed-sit type environment. The young person showed the Inspectors this room and was clearly delighted with this facility. The care staff spoke of plans to increase these opportunities within the residential accommodation for preparing young people for independence.

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?**

3

Observations indicated that guidance and support, focusing on meeting individually assessed needs, was available to all young people. Staff discussions and records demonstrated that individual special needs of young people were being met.

The school were sensitive to gaining a balance between individual and group needs as stated earlier in this report. All young people spoken with and the pupil questionnaires evidenced that they felt very confident in discussing any concerns with staff and asking for the support they needed.

The school were planning to appoint an independent visitor for the school.

Personal, health, social and sex education was provided within the school's curriculum. The policy on sex education was written in line with the DFES guidelines (2000). The policy is available for parents to examine and parents are able to withdraw their child from a particular lesson should they wish to do so. The statement of purpose stated that this policy is reviewed every 2 years.

The school has a multi-disciplinary team available for all pupils that includes school nurses (registered), a senior physiotherapist, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist.

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
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The school is on one level, has wide corridors and appropriate specialist equipment.

The school development plan indicated that the residential area was being re-designed focusing on independence needs.

At the time of inspection building work was underway, creating additional difficulties with the availability of parking space.

The school had appropriate security measures, such as a lock up routine in the evenings and security codes on the external gates.

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**

There were a number of areas that required attention. These included:

- ❑ No locks on some of the residential doors (bathrooms and bedrooms)
- ❑ High light switch heights in some rooms
- ❑ No covers on bedside rails
- ❑ Some window and doorframes had paint flaking off
- ❑ Some areas had wallpaper coming off
- ❑ A number of radiator pipes were rusty

However, observations and staff discussions regarding the overall appearance of the residential area indicated that the staff had undertaken a considerable amount of time and commitment to make the area as homely as possible within the resources available. This had included investment in new beds, shower room, baths and redecoration of several rooms.

Records evidenced an ongoing re-decoration and refurbishment programme.

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?****2**

A number of bathrooms/toilet areas had no locks on the doors. Whilst many of the boarders require assistance with their personal/intimate care needs it is recommended that the school consider how to improve the privacy for the young people in these areas to meet NMS 25.5 Whilst the majority of young people in the questionnaires (20 out of 22) did not identify this as an area of concern one young person stated that sometimes somebody walks in and it's embarrassing.

There were sufficient bathrooms and toilets for the number of boarders, all equipped with specialist equipment, such as hoists, to meet the young people's specific needs.

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?

1

The school is recommended to undertake and record the fire checks as set out in NMS 26.6 and in order to comply with the Fire Authority's Regulations and guidance. There was no evidence that these had been carried out or of a fire risk assessment. The Fire Prevention Officer visited at the time of inspection and met with the inspectors. He indicated that an inspection would be carried out shortly.

It is recommended that risk assessments as set out in NMS 26.3 are carried out and recorded.

The school is also recommended to undertake a risk assessment on the bedside rails. These were not covered and posed a risk to pupils. One pupil had trapped his leg in one of these.

The Technical Support Manager had recently undertaken the role of Health and Safety co-ordinator. He stated that he would undertake the Lincolnshire County Council's Health and Safety training as soon as a course became available. He confirmed that portable electrical items were tested annually but was not aware of the date of the last fixed wiring certificate.

NMS 26.10 - The school had a pet rabbit called 'Margery' for whom a new cage/run was planned!

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?

1

Staff records are in the main held in personnel services in Lincoln. Lincolnshire County Council should review and up date the recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that the records and checks required under the Care Standards Act 2000 are compliant.

Four personnel files were examined. There was no evidence of Police/CRB checks or references on 2 of these files. There was no evidence of interview documentation on any of the 4 files.

Total number of care staff:

0

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

0

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The staff rotas, young peoples' records, interviews with staff and pupil discussions indicated that the staffing levels are reflective of the needs of the young people at all times.

Nursing care is provided on a 24 hour basis.

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
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It is recommended that the staff training programme be reviewed in order to address the areas set out under NMS 29.4, Appendix 2. Whilst records and discussions demonstrated that some of these were included in the schools training programme others were not evidenced at the time of inspection.

Staff discussions evidenced that they felt valued in their work and that the management adopted an open supportive environment. A new member of staff confirmed that she had undertaken the induction programme.

Staff had developed personal portfolios that included their personal development plans.

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
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Formal supervision was not yet in place at the recommended frequency in NMS 30.2 although there was evidence from staff discussions that there was daily informal supervision.

It is recommended that the staff written guidance be reviewed to cover all the areas as set out under NMS 30.7, Appendix 3. Whilst the majority were in place a number could not be evidenced at the time of the inspection. For example HIV/AIDS, shift handovers, gender specific care, whistle blowing, giving/receiving of gifts, recording and access to records, shift handovers, physical contact with children/one to one time with children and an alcohol policy.

Records and staff interviews evidenced that staff appraisals took place bi-annually.

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

Observations, records and discussions evidenced that the school is well managed and staffed in a manner that delivers a high quality care to the young people.

A high number of the current care staff had not undertaken the NVQ3 in Care. The Principal Residential Care Officer (Head of Care) was planning to undertake the NVQ Level 4 Managers award.

These training needs have not been included in the recommendations due to the timescales within the NMS 31.2 and 31.4.

However, all staff had considerable experience in this specific type of work, and had opportunities to undertake in-house training.

The Inspectors noted the strong team approach, the commitment of staff and the child focused approach of the whole team.

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

0

%

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The National Care Standards Commission is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day-to-day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This was not inspected and will be assessed at the next annual inspection.

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 half termly.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

1

Whilst there was evidence of governor visits and involvement in the school, the visits and written reports as set out in NMS 33 were not yet in place.

The Inspectors had an opportunity to meet one governor at the feedback session with the Head.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

N/A

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____

Date _____

Lead Inspector RACHEL COOK **Signature** _____

Date _____

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents.

PART D**HEAD'S RESPONSE**

D.1 Please provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how the Recommended Actions and Advisory Recommendations in this report are to be addressed, and a proposed completion date within the stated timescale.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS		
Recommended Action No.	Action to be taken	Completion date
1	<p>A response has been supplied by the provider in respect of this report.</p> <p>At this stage, it is not technically possible to include this response in the final version of this report. However, this response will be kept on file at the National Care Standards Commission's Area Office and can be viewed on request.</p>	
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ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS	
Recommendation No	School's Response to Recommendation
1	
2	
3	

D.2 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

Head's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report of the above inspection.

**Head's statement of agreement/comments:
(Please delete one of the following before signature).**

D.2.1 I Ms A Hoffman of St Francis Special residential School confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I will seek to comply with the recommended actions set out in this report.

Or

D.2.2 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:

Signed: _____

Designation: _____

Dated: _____

Note: In instances where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Principal, both views will be reported.

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