

inspection report

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

Mount Tamar Special School

Row Lane

St Budeaux

Plymouth

Devon

PL5 2PY

29th March 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Mount Tamar Special School

Address

Row Lane, St Budeaux, Plymouth, Devon, PL5 2PY

Tel No:

01752 365128

Fax No:

01752 351227

Email**Address:**www.mount
.tamar.school@plymouth.
gov.uk**Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school**

Plymouth City Council

Name of Head

Mr B Jones

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of schoolResidential Special
School.**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

10/12/02

Date of Inspection Visit		29th March 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Alison Clark	093646
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	Alison White	138137
Name of NCSC Inspector	3	Mathias Foundling-Miah	
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mr. B. Jones and Mrs. J. Cook	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

This document summarises the inspection findings of the NCSC in respect of Mount Tamar Special School

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

The report will show the following:

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

INSPECTION VISITS

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

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Mount Tamar School is situated in a pleasant residential area, on the west side of Plymouth. The school buildings have lacked maintenance over the years and now look shabby on the outside. This is unfortunate, as the work which is carried out in the school, meets the very individual needs of local pupils.

The school works in small classes to give the pupils as much attention as possible. The staff are trained and committed to helping the pupils do as well as they are able.

The residential provision has improved immensely since the first inspection in December 2002. The Head of Care has settled into her position and is providing strong leadership and direction. She has worked hard to improve the facilities at Mount Tamar House, as the hostel is now called. The building is not conducive to a homely atmosphere, but the Head of Care has rearranged and refurbished bedrooms and lounges to provide relaxed and homely rooms.

Mount Tamar House is open on 4 nights each week, during term time. There are 2 groups of pupils who attend, for 2 nights each week, either Monday and Tuesday or Wednesday and Thursday. One group is for younger pupils and the other for older pupils. This arrangement allows for evening activities to be geared to the age of the pupils.

The care staff work closely with school staff to exchange information and care plans for the pupils.

The pupils who used Mount Tamar House were offered a variety of activities, from the time that school was over, until bedtime. There was the opportunity for a group meeting straight after school. At this meeting, the pupils were able to share their news and decide what activities they would like to do. The pupils were able to "let off steam" outside when the weather was good. There were also plenty of things to do indoors.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The Head and the Head of Care had worked hard to improve the facilities at Mount Tamar House. There were more single rooms for the pupils and the lounge and bathroom facilities had been refurbished to a high standard. The Head and Head of Care are to be commended for all the alterations, which have taken place in a relatively short time. The building is of an unusual design and is not easy to manage or supervise.

At the time of the first inspection, Mount Tamar House had been without a Head of Care for some months. The staff were working hard to ensure that the pupils were well cared for. They were also trying to put policies and procedures together. The arrival of the Head of Care has obviously given the group support and guidance. Throughout the inspection, the staff were consistent in their handling of the pupils, as well as being firm and fair. The ideas and opinions of the pupils were taken into account and discussions took place, when a decision had to be made.

The staff ensured that the pupils understood how to behave in the transport on the way to the ice rink and when they got there. The pupils were closely supervised at all times, but this did not get in the way of them playing games and other activities. The pupils gained from the fact that the school was situated near to a swimming pool, beaches, the moor and the town. This allows for a wide range of activities to suit the abilities and tastes of the pupils. After a strenuous evening at the ice rink, the children had a snack on the way back to Mount Tamar House. The staff dealt sensitively with bedtime, and in particular, with one pupil who was feeling a bit homesick.

All of the parents, who completed a questionnaire, commented on how much they appreciated what the staff did for their children, how well the staff kept in contact with them and how welcome they were, when they visited Mount Tamar House.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The inspection showed that the staff had worked hard since the first inspection, to create policies, procedures and guidelines. These were now supporting the work with the pupils and allowing the staff group to work in a consistent manner, as well as recording progress, events, incidents etc.

There are still some details to be added to policies such as child protection and reporting of incidents.

Other policies and procedures, which need attention are the setting up of a bound and numbered book for recording sanctions and likewise for recording physical intervention. The policies and procedures for the administration of medication, risk assessments and the recruitment procedures all need to meet the Standards. The standard on the administration of medication was inspected in much greater detail than on the first inspection, hence the number of issues to be addressed.

The inspectors found that the staff dealt with the pupils in a firm, fair and consistent manner. The pupils knew where the boundaries were and what was expected of them in standards of behaviour. The staff communicated well and checked out with each other, as the evening progressed. The Head of Care gave good leadership and support. Mount Tamar House was a difficult building to work in and supervise. However, the staff had worked out routines and arrangements to ensure that the pupils were well cared for.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

The inspectors felt that the staff at Mount Tamar House had done an incredible amount of work since the first inspection. The grounds near the house were tidy and had flower beds and a patio laid and looked welcoming. Bedrooms, bathrooms, toilets and lounges had been refurbished and provided light, bright and homely accommodation.

Policies, procedures and guidelines were in place and it was obvious that the staff group had worked hard to achieve this. There were some issues still to be addressed, such as details on child protection, sanctions book, physical intervention book, medicine administration, risk assessments and the recruitment procedure.

The pupils were found to be happy, active, well fed and well cared for. They talked to the inspectors and happily shared their home and activities. Parents recorded their appreciation of all that the staff did for their children and how welcome they felt at Mount Tamar House when visiting.

The inspectors would like to thank the Head, the Head of Care and the staff for their forbearance throughout the 3 days of the inspection. Also for the use of the room, where papers could be left and discussions take place.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

NO

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

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
1	RS3	<p>The school should expand its policy and procedures on staff dealing with pupils of the opposite sex, as required by Standard 3.8.</p> <p>The school should create policy and procedure for searching pupils' possessions, as required by Standard 3.11.</p>	31-07-04
2	RS4	The school should ensure that all parents know how to make a complaint and that all records are signed and dated.	31-07-04

3	RS5	<p>The school should expand its policy on their support to staff against whom an allegation has been made, as required by Standard 5.6.</p> <p>The school's child protection policy and procedures should name the Child Protection Co-ordinator and the deputy.</p>	31-07-04
4	RS7	<p>The school should ensure that the Commission for Social Care Inspection is informed of any serious incident, as detailed in Standard 7.6.</p>	31-07-04
5	RS10	<p>The school should set up a bound and numbered book in which to record sanctions, as required by Standard 10.9.</p> <p>The school should set up a bound and numbered book in which to record physical interventions, as required by Standard 10.14.</p> <p>The school should record any discussions with a pupil, following a sanction or physical intervention.</p>	31-07-04

6	RS14	<p>The school should obtain prior written permission from a parent or person with parental responsibility for the administration of first aid, appropriate non-prescription medication and to seek treatment when necessary.</p> <p>The school should ensure that handwritten MAR charts are checked by a second person, confirming with a signature on the MAR chart and referenced back to the original prescription. A reference or copy of the original prescription should be kept alongside the MAR charts.</p> <p>The school should ensure that the medicine policy is dated and signed, with a 2 year review date. The policy should include the action to be taken if an administrative error is made.</p> <p>The school should create a policy and procedures for the administration of non-prescription “household” medication, which includes specific instructions to staff, with reference to the maximum treatment period before referring to a GP. A prescription must be obtained from a GP if non-prescription medication is required for regular use.</p> <p>The school should ensure that clear, unambiguous details of each drug, and individual strength of the same drug, is recorded and referenced back to the details on the prescription. The date of birth and any known allergies must be recorded on the MAR sheet or “nil known” where appropriate.</p> <p>The school should set up a bound and numbered controlled drug register, to record all controlled drugs. The school should ensure that NO cancellations, obliterations or alterations are made in the controlled drug register. Correction must be by dated marginal note or footnote.</p> <p>The school should ensure that any refusal to take medication is recorded on the MAR chart and that there is a policy to deal with refusal.</p> <p>The school should ensure that all accidents, injuries and illnesses are recorded on the pupil’s file.</p> <p>The school should create a policy and procedures for informing parents/carers that a pupil was ill and to arrange for the pupil to go home.</p>	31-07-04
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7	RS19	The school should ensure that the recruitment procedure meets all the criteria of Standard 19.2 personnel file for each member of staff. See details in the text of the report. This Standard cross references with Standard 27.2	30-09-04
8	RS26	The school should ensure that risk assessments are carried out, in detail, with regard to all the points listed in Standard 26.2. This Standard cross references with Standard 13.6.	30-09-04
9	RS27	The school should ensure that the recruitment procedure meets all the criteria of Standard 27.2. See details in the text of the report. This Standard cross references with Standard 19.2	30-09-04
10	RS30	The school should set up arrangements for the supervision of the ancillary staff. A job description and person specification should be on the file of each member of staff.	30-09-04
11	RS33	The school should complete the process of arranging for a Governor to monitor the welfare of the pupils at Mount Tamar House, as required by Standard 33.	30-09-04

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	

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	RS6	The school should consider making the anti-bullying policy more “child friendly”. Maybe the pupils could help to write it.
2	RS8	The school should consider procedures to deal with pupils who return after being absent without authority. Maybe pupils could give their views on what they would like to happen.
3	RS11	The Mount Tamar House handbook was good and the school should consider some more detail e.g. about the “buddy” system”.

4	RS15	The school should consider offering an alternative “main course” for the evening meal, as well as salad and sandwiches, for children who may have eaten little at lunchtime.
5	RS28	The school should consider appointing another member of staff, to enable the Head of Care to have sufficient time to carry out her role, without encroaching on her personal time.
6		All information using the National Care Standards Commission should be changed to the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

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	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO

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

Date of Inspection	29/03/04
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	46.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	6

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

BOYS

GIRLS

TOTAL

Number of separate Boarding Houses

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

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

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

"9" in the "Standard met" box denotes standard not applicable.

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

STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Statement of Purpose was made up of policies, procedures and guidelines, as listed in appendix 3. There was a comprehensive school prospectus, staff hand book, parents'/carers' handbook and a children's guide. The Statement also included procedures for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse. The Statement included the range of pupils' needs for which the school caters, the admission criteria and the number of pupils to be accommodated.

The Statement was sent to placing authorities, [usually only City of Plymouth placed pupils at the school], parents were given one at the interview and there was a copy on the main entrance notice board for the pupils to read.

The present group of staff was meeting the range of needs of the pupils. The school assessed the needs of each pupil, prior to admission, to ensure that those needs could be met.

The Statement of Purpose referred to the whole school and identified good communications between care and education staff.

The Statement of Purpose was due for review in September 2004.

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

There was a policy and procedures to ensure that the pupils were given every opportunity to make their opinions known. There was an "open door" policy throughout the school, whereby a pupil was able to approach any member of staff at any time. Staff were in close touch with the parents/carers of the pupils, to keep them up to date with what was happening in school and in Mount Tamar House.

There was a house meeting every day after school, when the pupils had the opportunity to share, or not, the events of the day. This was also the time to discuss the activities for the evening. The pupils were able to put forward their opinions and wishes, to be included in review reports. Staff were also able to contribute to review reports. Pupils who boarded were able to be members of the school council.

The pupils were encouraged to be as independent as they could be, by helping to lay the tables, keeping their rooms tidy, as well as tidying up the lounges after they had been used. Staff were aware of ensuring that pupils, who had individual needs, were able to make their opinions known. One member of staff was interested in working with pupils with Asperger syndrome, to help them to communicate.

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**

Case records were kept in a locked cabinet in a locked office, and were accessible to only staff who needed to know the contents. Staff were aware of the need to pass on information of a child protection nature. The staff were seen to knock on bedroom doors and wait for an answer, before entering. Bathrooms and toilets had locks on the doors. The doors could be opened from the outside, by staff, in times of emergency.

There was a walk about telephone, which a pupil could use in his bedroom or other quiet area, in private. The pupils were also able to receive their own mail.

There were various rooms in Mount Tamar House where pupils could meet with family and friends, in private.

The school should create a policy to address the issue of staff working with pupils of the opposite gender.

Staff were observed to be sensitive to the feelings of the pupils, by not intruding.

The school did not give intimate care to any pupil.

The possessions of pupils were checked and listed, one their first night in residence, each week. The school should create a policy on the searching of pupils' possessions, as required by Standard 3.11.

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**

There was a complaints policy and procedure for pupils, staff and members of the public, included in the Statement of Purpose, and covered the requirements of Standard 4.3. The school held a parents' group meeting every 2 weeks. Care staff, teachers and governors attended this meeting, when any issues of concern were raised and dealt with. Staff confirmed that they had received training in dealing with complaints, to meet the requirements of Standard 4.4. They were aware that they could not take part in dealing with a complaint which was against them, nor could they take reprisals against a pupil or anyone else making a complaint. The procedures included provision for informal attempts to deal with a complaint and for a complaint made against the Head.

There was one complaint entered in the logbook.

The school was in the process of setting up a monitoring procedure, at the time of the inspection. There was a procedure for the National Care Standards Commission [now the Commission for Social Care Inspection], to be notified of any serious complaint.

One parent stated on a questionnaire that she did not know how to make a complaint to the National Care Standards Commission.

The school should ensure that all administration referring to a complaint, is signed and dated.

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

X

Number of above complaints substantiated:

X

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

X

Number of above complaints substantiated:

X

CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There was a policy and procedures in place for child protection, which were known and understood by all staff. The child protection co-ordinator held a copy of the Area Child Protection Committee [ACPC] procedures. The school's child protection procedures had been sent off to the ACPC some time ago and a reply was still awaited. The school's procedures included all of the requirements of Appendix 1, and made clear that failure to report a child protection issue was a disciplinary offence.

The procedures, which are already in place to deal with a member of staff against whom an allegation has been made, should be expanded to describe the information and support which will be afforded to the staff, whilst the investigation proceeds.

The procedures instructed staff not to be alone with a pupil, without other staff being nearby, to keep bedroom doors open and to be aware of their own vulnerability.

The staff confirmed that they had had training in child protection and that this was updated annually.

The child protection co-ordinator was a member of the Plymouth ACPC and therefore had links to interagency protocols.

The school should name the child protection co-ordinator, and the person who will deputise, in all child protection policies, procedures and guidelines.

The only child protection issue raised, concerned a pupil who did not use Mount Tamar House and had been dealt with appropriately.

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 anti-bullying policy and procedures were part of the staff handbook. The policy included the definition of bullying, measures to prevent it and dealing with it when it happened. Staff confirmed that they had received training in anti-bullying procedures.

Staff demonstrated good awareness of which pupils were likely to be victims of bullying and which were likely to be perpetrators. They used this knowledge to minimise bullying.

All of the pupils at the school knew that bullying was unacceptable. Pupils who had been bullied were dealt with sensitively and those who had bullied were helped to change their behaviour.

It would be good practice for the school to encourage the pupils to make a child friendly version of the anti-bullying policy and to display it in Mount Tamar House.

The inspectors took the opportunity to talk to some pupils informally about bullying. The pupils did not report that they were being bullied. The inspectors felt that it would be unfair to use the percentage below.

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?**

2

The school had a "concerns book", where any incident or event, which caused concern for the staff, was recorded. This book also served as a record of more serious incidents such as a child protection issue, inappropriate conduct of staff, an outbreak of illness or a serious accident. The book included a list of who had to be informed and the Commission for Social Care Inspection [formerly the National Care Standards Commission], should be added to the list. The school was also aware of having to notify the dismissal or resignation of any member of staff, under the Protection of Children Act.

The records detailed the outcomes of any action or investigation. The staff worked closely with other professionals to obtain guidance and help for any pupils who might have problems with their emotional or mental health.

The school included the calling of police to Mount Tamar House, in its reporting procedures. The staff worked closely with the parents at all times and reported all incidents, which included any offences which had been committed.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC 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**

X

X

X

X

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>The school had a policy and procedure to deal with pupils who were absent without authority. In the case of a pupil who did not arrive at school, then the parent/carer was contacted. In the case of a pupil leaving the school or Mount Tamar House, there was a procedure for the Head of Care and parents to be informed. After an hour, the police were informed. In the meantime, staff searched the grounds and local area.</p> <p>In conversation with staff, they confirmed that they would spend time with the pupil on his return and refer any child protection issues. It would be good practice to include both of these issues in the procedures. Written records were kept of all such incidents. The staff were aware that they could not stop a pupil from leaving the campus. The campus was not secure.</p> <p>The number of incidences of pupils leaving the campus were monitored and pupils who were likely to do so, were more closely supervised.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		2

CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>The members of staff were seen to set fair and consistent boundaries, based on “positive” care and control. The concept of positive behaviour was used throughout the school, as well as good role models. Staff were able to balance the needs and wishes of individual pupils, as well as the needs of the resident group. The resident group had been divided into 2, with the younger pupils attending for 2 nights and the older pupils attending for the other 2 nights. Staff found that this helped when it came to deciding what activities could be done. All members of the care staff had been trained in “Team Teach”, which included positive care and control.</p> <p>The staff and pupils enjoyed good relationships, and the pupils knew where the boundaries were. The staff worked the same rota over the 4 nights each week, so that the pupils knew who was on duty and who would be sleeping in.</p> <p>The inspector accompanied the group of staff and pupils on a visit to the ice rink. Staff dealt firmly, fairly and consistently with the pupils when they were excited about the outing. Staff were on the ice with them and displayed a high level of supervision. The pupils knew how to behave on the minibus and to wear their seat belts at all times. The pupils reacted very well when, towards the end of the evening, there was a queue at the restaurant and their burgers and chips were a long time coming. The staff played word games to help pass the time.</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**

The school had a behaviour management policy and procedures, which included the use of sanctions. There was also a policy and procedures on physical intervention. The staff were conversant with the policies and procedures and had signed to confirm that they had read and understood them.

The staff worked on the basis of positive relationships with the pupils and the expectation of acceptable behaviour. Any sanctions were fair and were applied consistently. Reparation and restitution were used if it was felt appropriate, and was geared to the age and understanding of the pupil. The pupils were also encouraged to be aware of their rights and their responsibility for their own behaviour.

Sanctions took the form of losing rewards or suspension from going out on a trip. Deprivation of food, drink, sleep etc was never used. Corporal punishment was never used. There was a system for recording sanctions, but the book which is used, needs to be bound and have the pages numbered, as required by standard 10.9. The sanction should also be recorded on the pupil's file. The inspector observed a member of staff speaking to a pupil about a sanction, agreeing the nature of the sanction and the pupil signing his sanction form.

"Team Teach" was used as the method of physical intervention. Physical intervention was used only when a pupil was in immediate and substantial danger of harming himself or someone else. It was never excessive and was used for the minimum amount of time, to allow the pupil to regain control. The length of time that the intervention lasts should be recorded. There was a system for recording physical intervention, but the book which is used, needs to be bound and the pages numbered. The intervention should also be recorded on the pupil's file.

Two members of staff were trained to be "Team Teach" trainers and all staff had annual training. The Head reviewed the sanctions and physical intervention every half term to ensure that the practices met the requirements of the Statement of Purpose and to identify any pattern of incidents.

Information about acceptable behaviour was included in the pupil handbook for Mount Tamar House, along with details of the "Smiley" reward system.

Staff confirmed that pupils were given the opportunity to discuss incidents individually and during house meetings, but this was not documented anywhere. The police were not involved with the running of the school and were called only when a pupil was missing or there was a security issue.

Staff discussed behaviour issues during meetings. The standard of behaviour was seen to be acceptable, throughout the days of the inspection.

The school worked very closely with the pupils and their families to resolve any discipline issues, and exclusion from school was used only as a last resort.

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

The Statement of Purpose included policy and procedures for pupils to be admitted to Mount Tamar House. The criteria for admission was to help pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged 6 to 16 years. Pupils with serious mental health problem or physical disabilities were not accommodated. The school did not have emergency admissions. All information was gathered and assessed prior to a place being offered to a pupil. The parents/carers were included in the process and were able to visit Mount Tamar House and talk to the staff.

There was a handbook for pupils who used Mount Tamar House, which gave information about routines, the key worker etc. It would be good practice for this handbook to explain about the buddy system, child protection and the review of how the pupil was settling in. The Head stated that the school arranged to keep a place for a pupil, until it was certain that the place was no longer required. This policy and procedure should be part of the Statement of Purpose.

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 care staff confirmed that they were all conversant with the educational needs and progress of the pupils who used Mount Tamar House. They also contributed to annual reviews. The Head of Care visited the school each morning to update the teaching staff on the events of the previous evening.

The teaching staff confirmed the care staff had the pupils ready for school each morning and that they worked closely together for the welfare of the pupils.

There were quiet rooms where pupils were able to do homework, encouraged by staff. Books, games, toys, puzzles etc were seen in lounges, along with suitable videos and music.

The care staff and teaching staff worked together to encourage each pupil's personal development and to support him as necessary.

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 group of pupils who attended Mount Tamar House had been divided into 2 groups. The younger pupils attended on Monday and Tuesday evenings and the older pupils attended on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The care staff felt that this allowed for activities to be tailored to the needs and abilities of the pupils.

The pupils took part in "Feedback time" at 4pm, when news and the activities for the evening were discussed. Depending on the activity and the number of pupils who wanted to go, two activities could be carried out, but at other times, all the pupils went on the same activity.

The inspector accompanied the whole group on a visit to the ice rink. The pupils were very well behaved and the staff were very diligent to make sure that everyone was safe and having good time.

There was time before tea for the pupils to have some free time for games, both indoors and outdoors. If the weather was bad, there were various indoor games, including pool, air hockey, puzzles, watching television etc.

There was a good balance between free time for the pupils and organised time, in the evenings. Mount Tamar House was not open at weekends.

Risk assessments were carried out for the transport and the activity, prior to the staff and the pupils leaving the school.

There was suitable reading material, games, videos, music, etc, in the lounges. The staff had some equipment stored away, as it needed to be supervised when being used by the pupils.

The staff confirmed that the pupils were given the opportunity to attend clubs, such as football, karate, etc. Pupils, who were already attending clubs prior to attending Mount Tamar House, were encouraged to continue with their membership.

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**

This standard was inspected in much greater depth than on the inspection which was carried out in December 2002.

The school promoted a healthy life style through personal, social and health education in school, and during the time that the pupils were in Mount Tamar House. The school implemented any treatment which was required by an individual pupil.

There was a policy and guidance to promote the health of the pupils in the school. This guidance included the dangers of smoking, of taking drugs and promoted good food and exercise, and met the requirements of standard 14.4. The school nurse was very involved with health promotion in the school.

The health plan for each student should include the details of a dentist.

The school nurse visited at least once each week. The nurse also served as the counsellor for the junior school pupils. Care staff, teaching staff and the pupil himself or herself could ask to talk with the counsellor. The permission of the pupil's parent /carer was sought first.

All of the care staff confirmed that they had up to date first aid training. The school should obtain prior written permission from parents/carers for the administration of first aid and appropriate non- prescription medication and to seek treatment when necessary.

The nurse was not an employee of the school. In the event of a pupil visiting a doctor, dentist, the pupil would usually be accompanied by a parent or carer.

First aid and the treatment of minor illness were administered by a qualified first aider.

Each medicine cupboard, which was inspected by the pharmacist inspector, contained medicine required for named individual children. There was no evidence of stock items.

Key security was good and the spare set of keys for the medicine cupboards were kept restricted. The keys for the medicine cupboard in Mount Tamar House were restricted to the Head of Care. Medication was securely stored in locked medicine cabinets. It was observed that all medication was labelled appropriately with the original pharmacy label identifying individual children.

In Mount Tamar House it was noted that MAR charts were hand written. It is strongly recommended that these be checked by a second person, confirming with a signature on the MAR chart and referenced back to the original prescription. A reference or copy of the original prescription should be kept alongside the MAR chart. It is recommended that the medicine policy is dated and signed with a 2 year review date. This policy should include the action to be taken if an administrative error was made.

There was no agreed policy for the provision of non-prescription "household" medication in place at the time of the visit. It is required that Mount Tamar House has an agreed policy and written protocol that provides specific instruction to care staff including the maximum treatment period before referring to the GP. A prescription must be obtained from the GP if non-prescription medication is required for regular use.

There were no pupils administering their own medication.

A written record was kept of all regular medication administered on a medication administration record {MAR} chart. Clear unambiguous details of each drug and individual strength of the same drug should be recorded and referenced back to the details on the prescription. The date of birth and any known allergies must be recorded on the MAR sheet or "nil known" where appropriate.

Controlled drug records were available. It is strongly recommended that a controlled drug register with bound pages and pre-printed numbers is used to record all controlled drugs.

The Pharmacist Inspector informed that NO cancellation, obliteration or alteration may be

made in the Controlled Drug Register. Correction must be by dated marginal note or footnote.

The Pharmacist Inspector was informed that any refusal to take medication would be recorded on to the MAR chart. It is required that Mount Tamar House has a policy if prescribed medication is refused.

All injuries, accidents or illnesses should be documented into each child's logbook.

In the event that a child was taken ill, the Pharmacist Inspector was informed that the staff would stay with an ill child and the parents contacted. There was no procedure available at the time of the inspection to confirm this.

The Pharmacist Inspector was informed that parents were informed about any health problems and treatment.

The Pharmacist Inspector inspected Standards 14.9 to 14.25 and his report is in the above text. A copy of his original report is in the file for Mount Tamar School, which is held at the Ashburton office of the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)

Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The dining room had been improved greatly since the previous inspection. The redecoration had been completed and new chairs and round tables were being used, rather than the long tables. The tables could seat 4 pupils, and this made for a much more homely atmosphere. Mealtimes were well managed by staff. The food was considered to be good and there was plenty of it. There was certainly an improvement from last year and this was due to the appointment of a new kitchen manager. The inspectors felt that the choice of menu in the evening should have an alternative "main" course and not only salad or sandwiches.

A record of menus should be kept.

The local environmental health service had visited the school, and were pleased with what they saw. Staff were alert to the eating habits of the pupils, should anyone not be eating properly. Pupils were not excluded from meals.

All crockery and cutlery were clean and in good supply.

The kitchen manager confirmed that all of her staff had received basic food handling and hygiene training.

Drinking water was available throughout the school.

The inspector observed a pupil with a milk allergy being given an alternative meal.

The school was recommended for its initiative in starting up a breakfast club. Some pupils were arriving at school, not having had any breakfast and this was having a detrimental effect on their schoolwork. As a result of the breakfast club, pupils were more able to concentrate. The club also helped to improve the diet of the pupils.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)

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

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

The pupils were resident for only 2 nights each week. A bag check was carried out on the first night and a list made of all the clothes which had been brought in. The pupils were able to wear their own clothes after school. They brought their own toiletries with them and kept them in the bedroom.

There was a policy and procedure on the storage and recording of pocket money. Pupils were able to take some pocket money with them when they went on activities, to buy sweets, ice cream etc. The pocket money record were seen to be in order, with money in and out accounted for and signed for.

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

There was a satisfactory placement plan in each of the files which was sampled. The needs of the pupil had been identified and how those needs were to be met within the school and Mount Tamar House.

Each pupil who used Mount Tamar House had a key worker, who set aside specific time for the pupil as well as being available at other times. The placement plan included all the points raised in Standard 17.5. The pupils were aware of what was written in the placement plan and that they could read it if they so wished.

All staff at the school who were involved with the care and education of a pupil contributed to the review process. The key worker discussed the forthcoming review with the pupil and noted any views or opinions that he/she wanted to be made known. The key worker also discussed the outcome of the review with the pupil.

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 files, which were sampled, included all the information required by Standard 18.2. This was cross referenced against the absconding records, physical intervention records, sanctions' book, log books and staff meeting minutes.

Staff informed the pupils that they could read certain parts of their file. There was storage space at the school for the files of the pupils who had left.

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?****2**

The school kept a record of all pupils who attended the school and those who used Mount Tamar House.

There was a register of employees, which included all staff.

Three staff files were sampled, one each of care staff, ancillary staff and contract staff.

None of the files contained all the information as required in a personnel file, Standard 19.2.

Two files did not have a CRB check and one had an old style police check. None had recent references, there were no notes of interview, there was no copy of a job description or person specification. This standard cross references with Standard 27.2, to ensure that all checks have been carried out on staff.

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 staff were in close touch with the parents/carers of the pupils who used Mount Tamar House. The pupils were able to use a walk about telephone to contact their families in private.

The pupils were able to have visitors to Mount Tamar House and to meet them in private.

The staff encouraged parents/ carers and siblings to visit Mount Tamar House, providing that it did not upset arrangements for an activity. Visitors were required to sign the visitors' book.

In the case of a pupil visiting home or a friend whilst resident at Mount Tamar House, details were recorded of times, who the pupil was visiting, address of visit, time of return and a contact telephone number. The visiting of staff homes was discouraged.

Staff confirmed that training in working with parents and families was part of the NVQ3 course.

Documentary evidence was seen of contact with school by parents/ carers and vice versa.

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?**

9

This standard was not relevant at the time of the inspection, as no pupil was leaving Mount Tamar House. The pupils in residence were all too young to be leaving.

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**

The group of pupils using Mount Tamar House was seen to be enthusiastic about joining in games and other activities. The staff ensured that each pupil was well looked after.

The pupils were told that they could talk to any member of staff, not just their key worker, about anything. Any individual help and support required by a pupil, was arranged by the school. Pupils, who were experiencing any stress or going through a traumatic situation, were supported by the staff.

The staff ensured that any pupil with dietary requirements, personal, health or any other needs, had those needs met.

There were no therapeutic techniques carried out in Mount Tamar House.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The school was situated in a pleasant residential area of Plymouth. Some of the pupils lived near to the school. There were no pupils attending Mount Tamar House who had disabilities and needed aids. The house was built over 3 floors, with several staircases, corridors and fire doors. The bedrooms were all on the top floor, along with a small lounge and kitchen. It was a difficult house for staff to supervise and they used their resources well, particularly when the pupils were playing indoors and outdoors, after school. There was a snooker hall, a games room, 2 television lounges, cookery room, climbing apparatus and outdoor playing fields and a football pitch.

There were no outstanding requirements from planning, building control, fire service or environmental service.

Mount Tamar House was not used by anyone else whilst the pupils were in residence. The outside doors were secured by an electronic fob system, but could be opened from the inside. There were no electronic monitoring systems within the house. There were no physical restrictions within the house, apart from an alarm on each door of the top of the stairs. These alarms were set when the pupils had gone to bed.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)

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

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

The school had carried out an extensive refurbishment programme since the last inspection. Bedrooms and bathrooms had been redesigned and updated to provide a much higher level of comfort. The interior of Mount Tamar House had been redecorated and refurnished in a homely style. The exterior of all the buildings gave a poor first impression of the good work carried out in all areas of the school. The grounds and play areas had been cleaned and tidied since last year, with a patio area laid and some gardens planted. No other pupils used Mount Tamar House.

There were some single rooms and two dormer rooms, which could accommodate 4 pupils. There were sufficient beds, with appropriate bedding. Each room was carpeted, had a window which provided natural light, curtains and heating. There was storage for clothes, and personal possessions were given to the staff for safekeeping. There were separate bedrooms for sleeping in staff, which were near to the pupils' bedrooms. Some of the pupils brought some personal items from home. As the pupils were resident for only 2 nights each week, they tended not to put up their own pictures. There was a walk about telephone which the pupils could use in private. There were quiet areas where pupils could do homework or work on crafts, puzzles, read a book etc. These areas were also used for pupils to meet with family and friends.

The pupils had chosen some of the decoration and the furniture. There were laundry facilities in the house. There were plans to install a domestic washing machine, to teach the pupils how to use it.

The heating, lighting and ventilation were satisfactory throughout the school. There were no pupils with disabilities using Mount Tamar House.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

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

There were sufficient baths, showers and toilets, which were situated near to the bedrooms. The doors on bathrooms and toilets had suitable locks and could be opened from the outside, by staff, in case of an emergency. There were shower curtains in place. The staff had separate toilet and shower facilities.

Many of the showers had been refurbished in the last year and there was a programme to update the others. The work had been carried out to a high 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**

The inspection of gas installations, electrical installations and equipment and the boilers is carried out under the instruction of the LEA.

The school should ensure that the risk assessments for the premises and grounds are written in detail. Likewise, risk assessments should be written in detail for such indoor activities as the dormitory area at night, cooking etc. The Head of Care was seen to carry out a detailed risk assessment prior to the pupils being taken out in the minibus and the school car. There was also a risk assessment for the ice rink. The pupils were closely supervised on the outing, with staff being aware of where each pupil was.

There was documentary evidence of the testing of the fire alarms and security lighting. The logbook recorded 3 drills undertaken in the last 3 months.

The Head of Care reported that water temperature regulators were in the process of being fitted.

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

The recruitment records of 3 members of staff were examined, one member of the care staff, one member of the ancillary staff and one contract member of staff. One old style police check was found and no up to date CRB checks were found. Two files did not have any references and on the third file, the references did not apply to the application. One file did not have proof of qualification and no file had a copy of the job description or person specification. This Standard 27.2 cross references with Standard 19.2 to ensure that the recruitment process is carried out and recorded.

There were no other adults living on the premises who were not employed by the school. Gap students were not used by the school. The school did not arrange guardians for the pupils. The school did not use agency staff.

Total number of care staff:

5

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

1

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

There was no school staffing policy which states the minimum staffing requirement to meet the Statement of Purpose. However, observation during the inspection saw adequate staffing levels. There were 4 members of staff on duty with the pupils, 2 of whom slept in, on a rota basis. There were no awake night staff. Whilst 4 staff was adequate for the number of pupils in residence at the moment, it may not be so, if more pupils use Mount Tamar House. It would be good practice to have a "spare" member of staff, thereby allowing the Head of Care to carry out organisation, communication and administrative tasks, with out impinging on her personal time.

There were 3 full time members of staff and 2 who job shared. There were males and females in the group. The pupils seemed to be happy with these arrangements and knew who was to be sleeping in each night. The group of staff had been working together for over a year. Agency staff were not used. Any absence was covered by part time staff working extra hours.

Each activity outside of the school was managed by two members of staff looking after each group of pupils. Each member of staff had a mobile telephone.

Staff had a record of the pupils who were in Mount Tamar House each night.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

All new members of staff working at Mount Tamar House underwent a 2 month induction course. There was a checklist spreadsheet and they confirmed when they had been given or read information about child protection, first aid, fire safety, accountability etc.

There was a rolling programme of training, which included child protection and "Team Teach". All of the care staff were coming to the end of their NVQ3 training course. They confirmed that they had received child protection training, and when questioned, knew the lines of accountability. Each member of the care staff had a personal development plan but the ancillary staff did not have one.

The Head and the Head of Care were committed to the training and development of the staff. They were encouraged to find out about courses for themselves.

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 Head of the school was accountable to, and supported by, the LEA.
The care staff were accountable to the Head of Care and were supported by her.
The domestic staff were accountable to the Head of Care whilst working in Mount Tamar House.
Care staff confirmed that they received regular supervision from the Head of Care for 1.5 hours each half term. Each session covered the points in Standard 30.4 and records were kept. A similar system should be set up for the ancillary staff.
The annual appraisals were due to take place in April 2004.
All policies, procedures and guidance were available to staff in the office.
All members of staff knew to whom they were accountable.
Job descriptions and person specifications were not seen in staff files.
The staff group met on a Friday, after the pupils had gone to school.
There was a no smoking and no drinking policy in the Statement of Purpose.

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 - 31.11)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Head of Care was suitably qualified for her position. All other member of staff were due to complete NVQ3 qualification later this year.
Staff rotas allowed for supervision, meetings, hand over sessions, administrative tasks, writing reports etc. Staff meetings took place on Friday mornings. Staff worked during term time, and were off duty during all of the school holidays.
None of the pupils were given responsibility over others.
In the event of a crisis at the school, the pupils were sent home.
The school worked closely with the parents/carers who were told of the schools' policies etc when the pupil was admitted.

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

40 %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The records which were checked, had been countersigned by either the Head or Head of Care. The only record which would appear not to have been checked, was the staff recruitment records.
The Head was required to carry out an annual review of Mount Tamar House for the LEA. There was no involvement of police in the running of the school. There was a low turn over of staff. The last member of staff to leave, transferred to a position much nearer to his home.

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?**

1

At the time of the inspection, the Head was in consultation with one of the Governors, who was planning to carry out the visits and write the reports, as required by this Standard.

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 29th 30th and 31st March 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

NO

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

NO

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 , which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ **of Mount Tamar**
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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