



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

**Penn Hall School**

**Vicarage Road  
Penn  
Wolverhampton  
West Midlands  
WV4 5HP**

*Lead Inspector*  
**Mike Moloney**

*Announced Inspection*  
**22nd March 2006      11:30**

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

Reader Information	
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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Residential Special Schools*. They can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

*Every Child Matters*, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life.

Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above.

# SERVICE INFORMATION

<b>Name of school</b>	Penn Hall School
<b>Address</b>	Vicarage Road Penn Wolverhampton West Midlands WV4 5HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 558355
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 558363
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Provider Web address</b>	<a href="http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk">www.wolverhampton.gov.uk</a>
<b>Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school</b>	Wolverhampton City Council
<b>Name of Head</b>	Mr A. J. Stoll
<b>Name of Head of Care</b>	
<b>Age range of residential pupils</b>	
<b>Date of last welfare inspection</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2004

**Brief Description of the School:**

Penn Hall School is a Wolverhampton Local Authority Community Special School for pupils aged 3 – 18 whose special educational needs fall predominately in the category of physical disability. Some pupils will have an associated learning difficulty related to their physical disability. The school can accommodate 80 pupils.

The residential unit consists of a number of bathrooms, TV room, games room and bedrooms and can accommodate up to six pupils for overnight stays. The length of stay is flexible and can range from one to four nights with a maximum stay of 16 nights during the year. The aim of the residential unit is to enhance social skills and promote independent living.

# SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This inspection was announced and took place over five and a half hours during the late morning, afternoon and early evening and was carried out by two inspectors. Information was gained from documentation made available by the school, by discussions with the head teacher, the care manager, the staff and students as well as by looking around the building. Questionnaires had also been circulated to the staff and a number of students and their relatives so that they could express their views.

Inspection work undertaken by CSCI is proportionate in relation to how a service has performed in the past. As this provision has a history of providing a good service for children and young people this inspection was brief and focused only on a small number of "key" areas of work

## What the school does well:

The residence continues to:

- Focus on pupils' needs.
- Communicate well among the staff team.
- Listen to pupils' views.
- Provide the opportunity for gradually increasing experiences of independence.
- Provide shared social experiences for pupil/peer groups that might not otherwise be practical.
- Provide a safe environment.

And now:

- Provides an environment that has improved protection from abuse.

## What has improved since the last inspection?

The school has completed the review of its child protection policies and these have been communicated to the staff at the residence. Appropriate arrangements for privacy have been improved around the bathroom doors.

Fire drills are now carried out every half term.

**What they could do better:**

No requirements have been made as a result of this inspection. This is a school that has a history of self evaluation and improvement.

Please contact the Head for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.

# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

## **CONTENTS**

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Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

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# Being Healthy

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.(NMS 14)
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.(NMS 15)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

15

The young people staying at the residence are offered a wide choice of meals as well as the opportunity to help in their preparation.

### EVIDENCE:

Talking to the young people who were staying at the residence during the visit as well as the staff showed that the menus are arrived at by consulting with the group involved prior to and during their stay. All confirmed that arrangements are flexible and that special events, personal or religious, are celebrated if that is what the group decides.

On the day of the visit the evening meal was being prepared by one of the young people and talking with him established that this was an opportunity offered to a number of those who stay at the residence.

The head of care went on to confirm that she always plans a menu that is based on the known likes and dislikes of the group that is going to be staying and that they have the option of changing it. She explained that she takes into account the menu that is being offered at lunch-time within the school so that there is no duplication.

Although standard 14 was not fully assessed on this occasion the arrangements for the storage and administration of the medication belonging to the children and young people was looked at. Records were seen to be appropriately maintained and a secure lockable storage cabinet was seen to have been installed within a locked cupboard in the staff office.

# Staying Safe

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.(NMS 3)
- Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.(NMS 4)
- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.(NMS 5)
- Children are protected from bullying by others.(NMS 6)
- 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.(NMS 7)
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return.(NMS 8)
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour.(NMS 10)
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.(NMS 26)
- There is careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers.(NMS 27)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 26 and 27

Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that the children and young people staying at the residence are kept as safe as possible without unnecessarily restricting their opportunities.

## EVIDENCE:

A number of documents were seen that outlined the residence's commitment to maintaining the privacy and dignity of the children and young people visiting. These included such things as policies and procedures and certain sections of the 'Welcome to Penn Hall' booklet provided to each of the students and their families. Staff were seen responding in a sensitive manner to the personal care needs of the young people. The bedrooms are shared by groups of students and a mobile screen has been provided for privacy and students

said that they were aware of it, new they could ask for it but, in the case of the group that were asked, said that they did not feel the need to use it.

The 'Welcome to Penn Hall' document also outlined the school's complaints procedure and the head of care for the residence also maintains a record of any complaints received and as none had been received this record had not been used. There appeared to be a very open dialogue between the staff and the group of young people staying at the time with views being expressed in a very relaxed manner and informed decisions being made in such a way that the need for complaints would be reduced.

Discussions with the staff of the residence and the nominated member of staff confirmed that the school now has fully agreed child protection policies and procedures. They also confirmed that staff receive appropriate and regular training and updates in this area.

A Whistle Blowing policy and an Anti-Bullying policy were also seen to be available to the staff and they confirmed that plenty of time is available to them to discuss any necessary arrangements and changes in the needs of the children and young people.

Staff talked about how the behaviour of the children and young people staying at the residence is also monitored and any difficulties are most commonly approached through discussions and agreements with the individuals concerned. When this does not work and other measures have to be used appropriate records were seen to be kept and these were signed to show that the senior staff of the school were aware of any incidents and can then discuss any issues arising.

Various other records were made available during the visit that related to keeping the children and young people safe. Such things as the fire alarm tests and evacuation records were available showing that these were carried out at appropriate intervals and risk assessments relating to a variety of activities were also seen.

No new staff had started working at the residence since the last inspection therefore it is not possible to comment on the recruitment process however, new Criminal Records Bureau records have been obtained for the current staff confirming that they are still appropriate to work with vulnerable children.

# Enjoying and Achieving

## **The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.(NMS 12)
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.(NMS 13)
- Children receive individual support when they need it.(NMS 22)

## **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

12

Educational opportunities for children and young people staying at the residence are enhanced by their stay.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The Head Teacher and the residence staff all explained how staying for the week at the unit was part of the educational experience provided by the school.

Students and staff all confirmed that if any homework needs to be done during the stay at the residence then the facilities are made available.

# **Making a Positive Contribution**

## **The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.(NMS 2)
- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.(NMS 9)
- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.(NMS 11)
- Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.(NMS 17)
- 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.(NMS 20)

## **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

2 and 17

The residence is run in a manner that encourages a feeling of self worth in the children and young people staying there.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The group staying at the residence at the time of the visit were observed expressing their views about how their stay should progress. They confirmed that they had decided what the menu should be for that week, what activities they should take part in and whether or not they wished to stay. This particular group of older male students confirmed that they had been responsible for the initiation of a 'wish box'. Staff confirmed that while this could be a positive thing for obtaining feedback some of the suggestions had been quite humorous.

The staff confirmed that they had developed a feedback questionnaire that was given to each of the students after their stay which was designed to be a way of obtaining further suggestions about how they could improve the service.

More basic information about the needs of the children and young people were found in the care records that had been developed for each of them. These were found to contain a full range of information that would be necessary to

provide medical and personal care in a culturally acceptable and age appropriate manner.

# Achieving Economic Wellbeing

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can 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.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

24 and 25

The residence is well maintained and furnished with appropriate facilities being available to protect the privacy and dignity of the children and young people.

## EVIDENCE:

The furnishings used were seen to be of good quality and were clean. The décor of the building was well maintained.

Discussions with both staff and students established that appropriate measures are in place to maintain the dignity of those using the residence with door locks being available where necessary, moveable screens and various areas that are available should a student want to spend some time alone. There are two bedrooms that can be used by students staying at the residence so that mixed gender groups can be accommodated appropriately.

Work was seen to under way to develop rooms adjacent to the residence so that they can be used for life skills work.

# Management

## The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.(NMS 1)
- Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.(NMS 18)
- There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.(NMS 19)
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.(NMS 28)
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.(NMS 29)
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.(NMS 30)
- Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.(NMS 31)
- Children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.(NMS 32)
- The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.(NMS 33)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1, 18, 19, 29. 30 and 31

Parents and children have clear information available to them regarding the function of the residence. Records are kept appropriately by the properly trained and managed staff team.

## EVIDENCE:

The school has a brochure entitled 'Welcome to Penn Hall' in which there is a section dedicated to what the residence has to offer. Talking to the young people staying at the residence established that they were aware of this but they explained that they had become aware of what was available to them from others who were already using the facility.

The files on each of the young people staying at the residence were seen to contain the information that is necessary for this type of facility.



Staff records were made available to the inspectors and it was seen that background checks were carried out at appropriate intervals. The records also showed that the staff undertake training that is appropriate for this particular setting and that they receive appropriate professional supervision to ensure that they and their manager have the opportunity to raise and discuss such things as training and changes in the children and young peoples' needs.

# SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	x
<b>15</b>	3

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>3</b>	3
<b>4</b>	3
<b>5</b>	3
<b>6</b>	3
<b>7</b>	x
<b>8</b>	x
<b>10</b>	3
<b>26</b>	3
<b>27</b>	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	3
<b>13</b>	x
<b>22</b>	x

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>2</b>	3
<b>9</b>	x
<b>11</b>	x
<b>17</b>	3
<b>20</b>	x

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>16</b>	x
<b>21</b>	x
<b>23</b>	x
<b>24</b>	3
<b>25</b>	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1</b>	3
<b>18</b>	3
<b>19</b>	3
<b>28</b>	x
<b>29</b>	3
<b>30</b>	3
<b>31</b>	3
<b>32</b>	x
<b>33</b>	x

no

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the proprietor meets the Children Act 1989, Inspection of Schools and Colleges Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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