



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Bowden House School

**Firle Road
Seaford
East Sussex
BN25 2JB**

Lead Inspector
Kevin Whatley

Unannounced Inspection
9th & 10th October 2006 12:30

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

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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 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

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

Name of school	Bowden House School
Address	Firle Road Seaford East Sussex BN25 2JB
Telephone number	01323 893138
Fax number	01323 492057
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Bowden House School
Name of Head	Mr Asif Arif
Name of Head of Care	Team Leaders - Mr Spencer Pullinger & Miss Lindsey Haworth
Age range of residential pupils	10 to 16
Date of last welfare inspection	19/10/05

Brief Description of the School:

Bowden House is a maintained, residential special school catering for boys between the ages of 10 and 16, with an educational statement for emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. It is maintained by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and currently accommodates 26 pupils, 26 boarding and 3 day pupils on one site. Boarders are placed by Tower Hamlets together with boys from a wide range of local authorities, including East Sussex.

The school is under the overall management of the Headmaster supported by the Head of Education, who is responsible for the delivery of the school curriculum and two team leaders of the care staff. The main 4-storey building stands in 11 acres of mature grounds on the outskirts of Seaford. The boarding facilities are located on the upper 3 floors and a programme of refurbishment and reorganisation of the sleeping arrangements, is resulting in a pleasing upgrading of the facilities overall. The staff sleeping-in facilities are located on each floor providing good supervision of the pupils.

In the past the school has closed every other weekend, but as many of the pupils are choosing to return home every weekend, it is now a weekly boarding establishment with 7 residential weekends offering special events.

SUMMARY

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

This summary is written in a way that children and young people may find easier to understand.

The Head of Bowden House School, Mr Arif, was told that an inspection was going to take place just over a week before the Inspectors turned up. Two Inspectors visited the school on Monday 9th October and Tuesday 10th October and spent around 16 hours at the school carrying out the inspection.

Both Inspectors:

- Spoke with Mr Arif and a lot of the boarding staff, especially Mr Pullinger and Miss Haworth.
- Spoke with quite a few young people.
- Were shown around the boarding area of the school by young people.
- Watched how the young people and staff got along together.
- Spoke with some parents and social workers to see how they felt about Bowden House.
- Looked at lots of files and paperwork.

To help the inspectors to write the report even better 17 young people had already kindly filled out a questionnaire, whilst Mr Arif, Mr Pullinger and Miss Haworth had sent the inspector lots of information about how young people are looked after when they board at the school. Mr Arif, Mr Pullinger and Miss Haworth also wrote to the inspectors and told them what they thought the school did well and what they could improve on. The inspectors also used other information, which they already knew about the school.

What the school does well:

- Young people who spoke to the Inspectors said they were 'very well looked after' and thought they could 'always ask for help'.
- Young people said they 'were listened to' and lots of paperwork that was seen proved that every part of how children and young people should be looked after when they stay at the school was being done really well by Mr Pullinger and Miss Haworth and all the other staff.
- Young people said they felt staff 'knew them very well' and the Inspectors thought this was especially true where young people were being kept safe, were being helped to be healthy, were being helped in school, were able to say how they felt and were being given time to talk with staff when they wanted to.
- Many young people said they really enjoyed the food and said they had 'lots of choices' about what they could eat; quite a few said that choosing and cooking their own breakfasts now and again was also 'great'.
- The school is very good at rewarding pupils for reasonable behaviour and effort and all young people said they understood how to gain points and ticks and how you can get rewards.
- The school is also really good at providing activities and things to do in the evenings. Most young people said that they enjoyed a lot of the activities but it was clear that 'run outs' are the most popular thing to do.
- Young people thought that the boarding part of the school has everything they need with nice bedrooms and shared areas where they can watch TV, DVD's, Video's and play computer.
- Most young people spoken to said they were happy that they had come to Bowden House, whilst the parents and carers who were

spoken to felt the school was the best place for their sons to be to help them with their education and behaviour.

- The Inspectors thought that Mr Arif was a very good Head Teacher and that Esme Anderton was really good at making sure all parents and carers are kept up to date with how things are going for their sons.
- The Inspectors also felt that Mr pullinger and Miss Haworth and all the other boarding staff were very good at looking after young people who stay at the school and looked after them properly.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school continues to look after young people who board there very well and not many things needed to be improved after the last inspection just over a year ago. However a few things have been improved to make sure the way young people are looked after is done even better.

- The school have introduced a further reward scheme that now means young people are encouraged to behave even better in the evenings to make sure they can have the choice the following evening to enjoy all the activities. Young people said they thought this was a 'good idea' as they all knew what the reward scheme meant anyway.
- Esme has also made even better contact with adults who can help young people to cope more with their problems and this means young people do not have to wait so long to talk to people who are experts at helping them.
- Some work has also been done to make the boarding part of the school even nicer for young people who stay there, this includes a newly painted common room and hallway.

What they could do better:

As has already been said The Inspectors thought the school do most things very well and there are no major things that they could do better. However there were a couple of things that the Inspectors felt the school should think about changing so that the way that young people are cared for remains really good.

- The school should think about getting the doors fitted to the few shower cubicles that still have curtains as soon as possible so that everyone feels really private when they take a shower.
- The school should also make sure that when they have to write things down about when young people have misbehaved, when they have needed to be restrained or when they have been given sanctions that they write these in separate books so that it is easier for adults and Inspectors to know what happened and when.

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 or by contacting your local CSCI office.

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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):

14 and 15

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school promotes the health of pupils and ensure that their physical, emotional and health care needs are met. The school has an award winning catering team and pupils benefit from excellent meal choices that offer variety, nutrition and quality.

EVIDENCE:

Files viewed confirmed that the physical, emotional and health care needs of each young person admitted to the school are identified and assessed at the point of referral with such needs being incorporated into health care plans. Health care plans were seen to identify each young persons medical history, current medication, specific needs and allergies.

The previous report made a recommendation that there needed to be greater emphasis within health care plans as to how boarding staff will meet the assessed health care needs of each young person. Health care plans viewed on this occasion indicated that opportunities remain to develop the current format further. For instance when the needs of a young person who is prescribed a cream for their eczema is noted as 'when required' there was no clear guidelines for boarding staff as to the signs of the condition that may indicate the need for the cream to be applied.

Records confirmed that all young people are registered with a local GP when they are boarding at the school, whilst they also remain registered in their home areas. Records confirmed that all necessary dental & optical appointments are arranged as required with a list of all forthcoming appointments for each week being listed in the staff room to ensure all staff are aware when to assist, remind and accompany young people.

A weekly surgery takes place at the school with the local GP and nurse with senior house-parents identifying a list of children who need to see the Dr. If a young person is unwell, he stays in house whilst staff monitor their symptoms with monitoring records being maintained to ensure the young person is regularly checked. First Aid boxes are situated around the school and boarding areas.

The school promotes the idea of a healthy lifestyle with good evidence of posters around the school and in boarding areas that encourage young people to enjoy healthy eating and to stop smoking. The school has a no smoking policy, though both the Head of school and the Heads of Care acknowledged that young people participate in smoking when away from the school. Two parents expressed concerns that their sons 'smoke too much' whilst they are at school, though accepted the limitations of the school in respect of young people being able to obtain and smoke cigarettes when they are off school grounds and away from supervision.

All medication is administered by one of four staff all of who have had medication training. Medication administration records viewed confirmed that all medication had been administered accurately with clear recordings of all prescribed and non prescribed medication being given. Staff work with the local GP if any medication needs amending and it was pleasing to note that the GP is pro-active in reviewing young people's long term prescribed medication dosages. The school do not hold a general stock of homely remedies with only Paracetamol given as non-prescription 'household' medicine. Any medication not administered is recorded and given back to local chemist for disposal for which two staff need to sign to confirm amounts etc. All controlled drugs are stored in a suitable locked cupboard inside another locked cupboard. All controlled drugs were seen to be accounted for and any administration has to be signed for by two staff.

The school employ the services of an Educational Social Worker (ESW) who is based on site. Part of her role is to oversee the provision of support, guidance and liaison to young people who require input regarding any mental health issues they may have. The school have continued to develop good links with the local Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and there was good evidence of young people being provided with a quicker response to addressing their mental health needs. Some young people are admitted to the school with existing mental health issues and it was clear that the ESW works hard to maintain contact with each local CAMHS to ensure a joined up approach is taken to meet the needs of young people whilst they are in school and when they are at home.

The school also benefit from the services of a Systemic Psychotherapist employed via Tower Hamlets who visits the school on a 6 weekly basis. These visits help to assess and assist young people who have issues such as

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and provide boarding and education staff with guidance and support as to how best to meet individual needs and behaviours.

The previous report found that meal provision at the school was excellent, it would appear that such a standard has been maintained with many young people commenting very positively on the food they are offered. One young person stated that 'the food is great', whilst another said you get to choose lots of 'different meals'.

The menus seen confirmed that young people have four different choices of main course every lunch-time that included a vegetarian option. Daily meals offer a considerable amount of variety, choice and nutrition and include culturally different meals such as jerk chicken, curries, and chillies. Menus are planned by the cooks and bursar with the likes & dislikes of young people being ascertained several times a year via a survey and built into menu planning.

Meals are taken in the main dining room and are a key part of the school and boarding day with both education and boarding staff eating with young people at lunch time. Meals times were seen to be orderly occasions that were well managed and social.

Young people also have the opportunity to prepare breakfast on Wednesdays in small groups of two or three with a member of staff; young people spoke excitedly about choosing their preferred breakfast and this is clearly a popular event. There are also opportunities for cooking on a one to one basis with staff members. One young person in particular enjoys preparing West Indian food and is able to prepare his choice of meals weekly.

The kitchen recently gained the 'Clean Catering Award' for East Sussex to accompany the 'gold star catering award' it has already received from Tower Hamlets. The kitchen team are very proud of the standard of catering they provide and the Head of school noted his wish for such high standards of practice to be shared within other schools within the local area.

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, 8, 10, 26 and 27

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school ensure that their policies, procedures and care practices protect young people from the risk of harm, neglect or abuse and enables them ample opportunity to voice their wishes, concerns or complaints. The school has a commendable behaviour management programme and as a result young people benefit from clear boundaries and appropriate role modelling with an emphasis on positive rewards.

EVIDENCE:

From observing the daily routines of the school it became clear that wherever possible the pupils have their privacy respected. The previous report noted that there was a need for a few remaining shower cubicles to have doors fitted to replace the existing shower curtains. The Head of school stated that the doors were now on site and would be fitted shortly. All files relating to pupils are suitably kept in lockable cupboards in the office. No young person raised any concerns that their privacy was not considered properly.

Bowden House have adopted a robust complaints procedure that is displayed around the school. This outlines a number of ways that pupils can make a complaint and includes contact details for the NSPCC Childline and the CSCI and the name of the schools Independent Visitor, though thought should be given to improving the manner that he can be contacted more regularly. Pupils explained how the complaints procedures work and stated that 'people help us' and staff 'look after us'. No young person or parent expressed any concerns that the school do not deal with issues, concerns or complaints seriously or appropriately. The CSCI have not received any complaints since the last inspection.

The school consider the protection of young people in a suitable manner and have implemented robust child protection policies and procedures. The Education Social Worker (ESW) explained how the process works and was able to describe a current minor situation and how the education staff and boarding staff liaised to ensure that the information was forwarded to her as soon as possible. Staff spoken with displayed a good level of understanding in relation to child protection matters; all boarding staff have attended refresher child protection training since the last inspection. No child protection matters have been reported to the CSCI since the last inspection.

Pupils confirmed that in general the amount of bullying behaviour that occurs at the school is low. Where bullying has occurred young people stated that they can inform 'any member of staff' whether they work in school or in boarding and that any problems are 'always sorted out'. The Heads of care said they are vigilant in respect of bullying issues and confirmed they undertake a 'bullying survey' every term to seek the level of concerns pupils have. The surveys were seen to offer young people a safe opportunity to express their views on who if anyone is bullying them. From this information the staff team set targets for those identified as 'bullies' to reduce such behaviour. Similarly issues of racism are occasionally identified through this process. One member of boarding staff raised an issue that there had been recent name calling at the school that were of a racist nature. The school clearly take such issues seriously and both Heads of care expressed their wish to increase the level of awareness in the school in respect of such matters. The level of staff supervision both in school and in the boarding facilities helps to limit the opportunity for such behaviour to occur.

Good systems remain in place to manage absconding and these are supported by a long-standing working partnership with the local Police Liaison Officer. The school ESW has links with the placing local authority Social Inclusion and Education Welfare Officers in order to deal with children that go missing; risk assessments are completed when a new pupil joins the school. One Social Worker confirmed that the school are swift to respond to absconding and noted that all relevant parties are informed immediately when a young person has left the school without permission.

The school place a significant emphasis on the behaviour of it's pupils and to this end have established a comprehensive system of positive rewards for appropriate behaviour. Each pupil has a number of individual targets to meet that cover the whole day including the daily routines of the boarding provision and engagement in their education. There are several reward schemes in place that run parallel to each other and that allow pupils the opportunity to gain rewards such as trips out of school as a result of their good behaviour over the course of the week or for spontaneous acts of kindness or effort on a daily basis. Young people clearly understood all the different ways that points and rewards could be gained and generally displayed a very positive response to achieving their targets. The Heads of care explained that every pupil is given individual targets so as to allow them every opportunity to receive recognition for their behaviour and effort and that all young people are considered in relative terms to ensure they can all achieve rewards at some stage. A new innovation has recently been added to the reward system with the introduction of evening expectations that are separated from the school day. Boarding staff stated that this move has lead to more defined evening expectations of behaviour and has subsequently enabled them to encourage young people to behave appropriately throughout the day with suitable consequences implemented the following evening, such as not being allowed un supervised time.

The considerable focus placed on the reward system means that the need for punitive sanctions are greatly reduced. Records confirmed that a few sanctions are implemented when necessary as a response to inappropriate behaviour, these were seen as being suitable though the school should establish a separate sanctions book that clearly describes the nature of approved sanctions that can be used and when they can be applied.

The schools incident files confirmed that where incidents have occurred that they are dealt with appropriately. All staff have received 'Team Teach' restraint training with the number of physical restraints needing to be used being relatively low. Despite all information being recorded sufficiently and in appropriate detail the school need to establish a separate restraint file and should consider having just one incident file to ensure no significant incident is recorded in the minor incident file. No young person expressed concerns that where restraints had occurred that they had not been carried out appropriately.

The Domestic Bursar has responsibly for overseeing the health and safety of the premises. She produced clear evidence of the school undertaking fire alarm and lighting testing on a regular basis whilst fire drills are carried out at suitable intervals and at different times of the day. All required certification regarding health and safety was seen to be up to date.

Two members of the domestic staff team and one member of boarding staff have been employed since the last inspection. Their staff files confirmed that all necessary employment checks including Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and previous employment and character references were completed prior to them working at the school.

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, 13 and 22

Quality in this outcome area is excellent. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school ensures that the needs of young people are considered in an individual and holistic manner with the provision of boarding care being committed to supporting pupils in their education. Young people have substantial opportunities to engage in activities, events and interests and benefit from receiving individual support and guidance.

EVIDENCE:

Care staff integrate with education staff during the day and offer classroom support, whilst members of the education team provide evening support to pupils. This takes the form of rotating two members of education staff each evening to allow them the opportunity to engage with the young people in the boarding environment. Both the support given by boarding staff in school and education staff in the boarding facility were seen as being positive and structured. From observing the end of the school day and the beginning of the boarding routines of the afternoon and evening it was clear that pupils benefit from consistency with the open sharing of information between the school and boarding staff providing a holistic approach to meeting their needs.

Both of the Heads of Care share an office with the Educational head and this in turn appears to provide a shared response in meeting the daily educational, social and emotional needs of all pupils.

Suitable numbers of care staff are deployed at appropriate times of the morning to ensure all young people have enough support and encouragement to attend school in the morning and throughout the day; attendance to lessons

is very high. At the end of the school day there is a school meeting where classroom staff outline progress during the day to care staff and care staff explain activities available for the evening and who will be joining in with each.

The school take a commendable approach in addressing the need for young people to have the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities on a regular basis. Such evening activities, linked closely with the reward schemes, provide a considerable amount of choices for young people including the popular run outs (hide and seek), football, arts and crafts, IT, swimming and cinema and bowling trips. A number of care staff noted that the young people enjoy seeing adults, whether they be boarding or educational staff, participate in activities with them and that this subsequently helps to create a greater understanding between pupils and adults.

A majority of the activities based on site are readily available to most pupils each evening, though as stated the activities carried out outside of school are more likely to rely on the pupils daily behavioural targets being met. Risk assessments were seen to be in place for all activities and for different areas of the school as well as for individual children; such risk assessments are reviewed annually.

The school operate a Key-worker system whereby named boarding staff are involved with overseeing the care provision given to specific young people in their group. This involves assessing the needs of young people in their care and establishing their care plans and reviewing them on a six monthly basis. Key-workers are expected to play a lead role in maintaining contact with the young persons parents or carers and in meeting any identified needs such as ensuring that culturally diverse care is provided such as with hair and skin care and that the young person is encouraged to attain their individual targets. Key-workers also provide the pupil they are key-working with opportunities to address issues, events or concerns on a one to one basis. Records confirmed that one to one sessions can be planned or spontaneous with key-workers assisting pupils to consider such issues as poor or challenging behaviour, relationships or life after school. The Heads of Care noted that it is the schools intention to increase the number of evening staff by one to ensure that any young person wishing to speak to an adult on a one to one basis can do so. A majority of the young people commented most positively on being able to talk to staff with one pupil stating that 'you can always talk to staff' and another noting that 'I know I can always ask for help whenever I need it'.

Where specific needs are identified the school has developed good links with the Parents Advice Centre in Tower Hamlets who have on occasion been able to assist with a number of issues including providing an interpreter to ease communication between the school and parents. Bowden Houses sister school based in Tower Hamlets also provides staff with advice and guidance in respect of meeting the cultural needs of pupils.

Notice boards situated around the school provide contact information for young people should they wish to contact 'Childline'. An Independent Visitor has been in post at the school since 2004 and visits each half term. The independent visitor noted that he meets all new boys and explains who he is and what he does, as well as the heads of care. He also stated that he goes around school's communal areas such as the playground and gym to be available for anyone to meet with him. The independent visitor said he does not announce his visits to the school but attends the school council if he is able.

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, 9, 17 and 20

Quality in this outcome area is excellent. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The school ensure that pupils have ample opportunities to express their views and address their individual needs through good care planning. Pupils benefit from sound relationships with staff, whilst the Education Social Worker ensures that communication between the school and parents/carers is excellent.

EVIDENCE:

Pupils confirmed that they are able to communicate their views in a number of ways including weekly boarding group meetings where they meet in their own groups with the boarding staff from that group to discuss any issues that affect them. There is also the school council which meets every term; two young people who are on the council explained that they had been voted onto it by their fellow pupils and that prior to each meeting they canvas their particular group to gain any questions, views or concerns that pupils have and subsequently take them to the meeting. The meeting comprises of the Head of school and pupil representatives from each year group, whilst the chair of governors is invited to attend along with the independent visitor. Pupils spoken with stated that the council 'is a good thing' and 'they are listened to'. Young people also have the opportunity to attend their six monthly reviews and

comment on their progress; records indicated that attendance to this from the young people and their parents/carers is very high.

It was clear throughout the two days of inspection that pupils share good relationships with boarding and education staff and the atmosphere within the school was found to be relaxed and open.

The schools Education Social Worker (ESW) plays a key role in liaising with parents and carers. All parents/carers and other care professionals spoken with commented very positively on the work that she undertakes notably in respect of keeping them all informed of events, issues or situations that affect the pupils. Young people and parents/carers confirmed that the ESW liaised with them prior to starting at the school and noted that she was 'brilliant' in helping to arrange visits to the school before the young person was due to begin. Key-workers also contact parents/carers regularly and positive comments were received from carers/parents who noted 'it was nice to get a call from the school as they tell me about the good things that have been happening and not just the bad'.

A number of pupil's files were viewed and these confirmed that each young person has a care plan and education plan. The school are in the process of implementing an amalgamated Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that identifies the young persons personal and emotional, educational and social care needs. The ILP's were seen to offer care and educational staff a clear overview of the needs of each young person and in doing so presents a more holistic and joined up approach in meeting the young persons needs whilst they are boarding at the school. School and boarding staff meet formally on a weekly basis to discuss the pupils and their relevant issues.

Each young person has their ILP individually completed with targets set for general behaviour, education and social aspects of living at Bowden House that reflect their own needs and wishes. These targets are reviewed on a six monthly basis and each pupil keeps a copy of their own targets in their room. The Inspectors felt that the ILP's could be developed further to include more detail of how the needs of each young person will be met by staff.

The school ensure that pupils have the opportunity to contact their parents and carers at reasonable times of the day and telephones are provided before and after the school day to allow young people to call home. No young person expressed any concerns that they were not able to contact home when they wished to. As stated the ESW ensures that contact is maintained through her role, one Social Worker noted that the ESW was excellent at keeping them regularly informed of the progress one Looked After Child (LAC) was making at the school.

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):

16, 21, 23, 24 and 25

Quality in this outcome area is good. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Pupils are able to wear their own clothes outside of school hours and those young people approaching school leaving age are assisted to consider and prepare for life after school. The school environment has had some improvements made and generally provides pupils with a suitable place to study and live.

EVIDENCE:

Young people wear school uniform during the day, this being provided and laundered by the school. Following the end of the school day pupils can choose to wear their own clothing. Each young person has a space provide for them in their rooms where clothes brought from home can be stored. Young people assist boarding staff to collect clean washing from the laundry store.

Pupils who are approaching or who are in year 11 are placed in the same living group. These young people tend to participate in the same activities, which can incorporate more learning life skills, such as learning budgeting to prepare a meal and cook it, noting how to fill in forms, how to answer at an interview, gaining some financial insight and guidance about the value of money in

relation to day to day expenses and the cost of living. Staff spoken with appear very mindful of the need to prepare pupils for independence. One Social Worker spoke positively on the manner that the school has engaged in one young persons LAC reviews, notably as he approaches the end of his statutory schooling.

A tour of the boarding area noted that there is adequate common room space complete with TV's, DVD's and video's; year 11 pupils also have mini fridge in theirs. Pupils rooms are locked during day and opened for the evening once school has finished. Several bedrooms remain as double rooms, with two treble rooms. All shared rooms have been suitably divided to allow personal space and privacy with pupils who share them being grouped together in close age groups. Bedrooms seen had been personalised with duvet covers and posters, whilst safe storage space was available to store personal possessions. Care staff sleep in facilities are situated near to young people's rooms to respond to night-time needs.

The schools facilities were seen to be decorated to a reasonable standard throughout although one or two areas appeared a little tired in parts. There was evidence of the premises being reasonably maintained, with one of the common rooms recently being decorated along with a corridor that the last inspection highlighted as needing improvement. Appropriate and sufficient numbers of toilets, baths and showers are available, though as previously stated a few shower curtains are currently in the process of being replaced by doors to provide greater privacy.

Young people are not allowed in each other's rooms or in each other boarding areas except by specific invitation. Telephone facilities are available in the form of one phone room with a free phone facility before 9pm and an additional payphone room, both areas enable privacy for phone calls to be made.

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, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32

Quality in this outcome area is excellent. This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Information is made available to pupils, parents/carers and others in suitable detail to allow them all an opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the school in general and the boarding provision in particular. Boarding staff are experienced, committed and caring and are supported to carry out their roles by senior staff who offer consistent and clear leadership, whilst good training opportunities are provided to inform and improve staff practice. The school is run in a manner that is positive, open and dedicated to offering pupils who board there a high standard of care provision in an environment that is inclusive and supportive.

EVIDENCE:

A good range of attractive and helpful written information is provided to parents and placing authorities whilst a student handbook is available for pupils that details information about the school including the names and positions of senior boarding and education staff. Staff are all provided with comprehensive handbooks as part of their induction. Parents and carers are kept well informed of the progress of the school through reports produced every term, whilst the Board of Governors produce a yearly report; weekly reports are sent to each parent/carer regarding the progress of their son. The numbers of boarding staff on duty day and night provides adequate support and care for the number of pupils boarding at the school. Boarding staff structures are very clear and defined with two Heads of care delegating tasks to Senior House-parents who in turn oversee the house-parents in their individual groups. Staff are able to have opportunities to care for all young people placed at the school due to mixed groups in the evening for activities etc this subsequently provides pupils with a sense of consistency across all year groups, whilst allowing boarding staff to work with various age ranges.

It was clear throughout the inspection that boarding staff know their duties well and carry them out in a committed, sensitive and caring manner whilst strong leadership is provided to them via the senior staff team. Every member of boarding staff commented that they felt very supported in their roles and spoke highly of the way the boarding provision is managed and run by the two Heads of Care. From talking to staff, parents/carers and indeed young people, and from observing the standards of care practice at the school it is clear that the ethos of boarding provision remains young person focused.

Staff stated that they have suitable opportunities to attend relevant training, records confirmed that since the last inspection training has taken place in respect of Child Protection, Team Teach, First Aid, Managing Conflict and Aggression in Education, Food Hygiene and CAMHS awareness. A number of staff now hold the required National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 award in caring for children and young people, whilst a number of others are currently undertaking the award.

The Chair of Governors stated that the board are 'very happy' with the way that things are progressing at the school noting that the school is run in a manner that provides clear leadership and vision to improving standards of boarding provision. He also noted that since the last inspection the board have been able to recruit a parent to sit on the board and this has assisted the school to be even more in tune with the needs of the young people and their parents/carers.

It is very clear from this and previous inspections that Bowden House is being run in a way that seeks to improve and sustain high standards of boarding care provision whilst assisting and encouraging pupils to fulfil their educational goals.

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	
Standard No	Score
14	3
15	4

STAYING SAFE	
Standard No	Score
3	3
4	3
5	3
6	4
7	X
8	3
10	3
26	3
27	4

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
Standard No	Score
12	4
13	4
22	4

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Standard No	Score
2	4
9	4
11	4
17	3
20	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
Standard No	Score
16	3
21	4
23	3
24	3
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
Standard No	Score
1	4
18	X
19	X
28	4
29	3
30	3
31	3
32	4
33	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)
1.	RS3	The school should remove the existing curtains in the shower cubicles with the new doors as soon as possible.	
2.	RS4	That the school considers a more regular and available contact arrangement for young people to be able to contact an Independent Visitor or independent advocacy organisation should they wish to.	
3.	RS6	That the school considers utilising the information gained via the 'bullying surveys' to further their anti-bullying ethos, such as facilitating workshops or activities focusing on these and related issues.	
4.	RS10	That the school needs to establish a separate sanctions book for the recording of punitive measures and that this should contain definitions of all permitted punitive sanctions.	10/03/07
5.	RS10	That the school should establish one incident book to ensure all significant incidents are recorded in a central log.	10/03/07

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