

inspection report

Boarding School

Thomas Adams School

Thomas Adams School

Lowe Hill Road

Wem

Shropshire

SY4 5UB

8th November 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

Thomas Adams School

Address

Thomas Adams School, Lowe Hill Road, Wem, Shropshire,
SY4 5UB

Tel No:

01939 233311

Fax No:

Email Address

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

Undefined Owner 01

Name of Head

Mr A P Stephens

CSCI Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

Date of Inspection Visit		8th November 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Vicki Cockcroft	072945
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Helen Whitehouse	115708
Name of CSCI Inspector	3		
Name of CSCI Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		Mary Tippetts	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		N/a	
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?			NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		MR STEPHENS, HEADMASTER MRS NICKY COOPER, HEAD OF BOARDING	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie those aged under 18) is adequately safeguarded and promoted while they are accommodated by the school.

Inspections assess the extent to which the school is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Boarding 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.

Inspections are carried out by the CSCI, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by CSCI may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Thomas Adams 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 SERVICES PROVIDED.

Adams House is a Maintained Boarding School with places for 56 boarders. Pupils attend the Thomas Adams School, a mixed comprehensive, which has recently become an arts college specialising in the media arts. The management of the Boarding School has recently transferred from the Trustees to the Local Education Authority and the school is now inspected as a Boarding School, by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, and under section 87 of the Children Act 1989 and the Care Standards Act 2000.

The school is situated in Wem, a market town in North Shropshire, which is approximately 13 miles from Shrewsbury, the nearest 'big town'.

Boarding accommodation is provided in five separate areas of different ages and types. There are three, older terraced houses in which sixth form boarders live, an older house in which the Lower School Girls live and a newer, two storey block in which the Lower School Boys are accommodated. The sixth form college, the Ruscoe Centre, which is used by boarders and sixth formers from the Thomas Adams School is also on the Boarding School site. There is also a teaching block, with a Library and IT rooms on site.

The Boarding School site adjoins the Thomas Adams School grounds and boarders use the facilities on offer at the school.

Pastoral care and support are provided to boarders by house staff, teaching staff with occasional boarding responsibilities, gap students and ancillary staff, under the leadership of the Head of Boarding and the Head Teacher of the Thomas Adams School.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

Welfare Policies and Procedures

Adams House has written policies in place in relation to most welfare issues. There is an updated Handbook which is written in a form which is accessible to both boarders and to their parents or guardians. The school benefits from links into some of the systems which are in place in the Thomas Adams School to follow Local Education Authority policies and procedures. Amongst these is the school's organisation of child protection matters.

Boarders and staff report that there is very little bullying and that any such behaviour is dealt with appropriately. The status system appears, from boarders reports, to work in promoting good behaviour and to be seen as fair.

The school has updated its complaints procedure since the transfer of management to the Local Authority and the process is referred to in appropriate documentation.

Organisation and Management

Leadership of the school is clear. There has been oversight of the transfer of management to the Local Education Authority by Governors and Trustees, there will be continuing oversight by Governors with experience of the boarding house and there will be a committee of Governors who will be specifically responsible for the Boarding House and monitoring of its welfare provision.

The Head Teacher is committed to the Boarding School and to the mutual benefits for both boarders and the pupils of the Thomas Adams School, derived from its existence.

The Head of Boarding is committed to developing the Boarding School for the benefit of all boarders and to carrying forward the work needed to meet the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

The organisation of accommodation within the school is satisfactory in relation to the age and gender of boarders and there is a developing range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

Welfare Support to Boarders

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment is provided for at Adams House and there are systems in place to ensure that boarders have access to medical, dental and optical services as required. Sick boarders are checked regularly and are accommodated in their own rooms where possible. The school does not have a nurse, although there are members of the school staff who are able to provide support if it is required.

The school does identify health and personal needs of boarders and works with other professionals to support boarders who require it. There is an equal opportunities policy within the school. No discrimination was observed or reported during the period of the inspection.

A mentoring system is being developed for new boarders and boarders are able to make contact with significant people outside the Boarding School. There was no indication that any boarder could not access information about the outside world.

Within the financial limitations placed upon them, catering staff work to provide an adequate standard of meals for boarders.

Staffing

The school was experiencing a period of uncertainty with regard to staffing at the time of the inspection, but the boarders' care was not obviously affected by this. Staff were taking on temporary additional work to ensure that full cover was provided and every effort was being made to mitigate the possibly negative effects of the difficulties.

It was noted that ancillary staff and gap students were very much a part of the staff group at Adams House and were able to provide appropriate support to boarders and to boarding staff.

Sound relationships were seen to exist between staff and boarders and positive comments were received about the commitment and approachability of the Head Teacher and Head of Boarding

Premises

The five separate areas of boarding accommodation at Adams House are clearly separated by age and gender. Bedrooms and dormitories had been personalised by boarders and were clean and well-ventilated.

Since September, the school has started to make improvements to the environment and plans were in place to continue work to upgrade the premises.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Welfare Policies and Procedures

Many of the policies and procedures which are in place at Adams House are those applying to the Thomas Adams School. These need to be adapted to reflect actual practise within the Boarding School. The policies and procedures need to be updated to include all elements required under the National Minimum Standards.

Adams House benefits from its links with the Thomas Adams School, in relation to welfare procedures and monitoring, but there is a need to develop Boarding House systems which ensure that the Boarding School has 'stand alone' systems of monitoring. The already existing links with the child protection system within the school should be developed and

formalised, particularly with regard to training.

Adams House has a good knowledge of the welfare needs of its boarders and works closely with other professionals to provide required support. This work needs to be reflected in written welfare plans, which are monitored and reviewed.

Organisation and Management

The leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school is clear, although it was felt that professional 'boarding' supervision should be provided to the position of Head of Boarding in order to ensure professional, as well as executive, development and monitoring.

The recent transfer of the management of Adams House creates an ideal opportunity for the school to look at areas of its organisation and management in relation to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding. The school could review the current arrangement of communal areas, could consider additional methods of obtaining boarders' views on the operation of the boarding provision and should look at additional support and training for prefects.

Welfare Support to Boarders

Adams House needs to develop its procedures and records in relation to health care and to produce written 'welfare' plans for those boarders who would benefit from them. Clarifying the process of admission to Adams House may enable the school to ensure that it receives all appropriate information regarding potential boarders, which can be used to support their needs and promote their development.

The school needs to be able to evidence that it is monitoring records as required under the National Minimum Standards and to evidence that risk assessments are in place for identifiably high risk activities.

Although the constraints on catering at the Boarding School are understood, the school should look at ways of ensuring that boarders are provided with a healthy and balanced diet.

Staffing

The systems in place for keeping appropriate staff records and for ensuring that all checks have been carried out, need developing and organising within the Boarding School. This is an area where the Boarding School processes need to 'stand alone' from those in place at the Thomas Adams School.

The school must ensure that no member of staff begins work without a satisfactory CRB check having been received by the School.

Training and appraisal of staff, in relation to boarding practice, needs to be developed and recorded and staff need to be supplied with updated policies and procedures as they are produced. The relevance of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools should be included in the training and development of staff.

The organisation of staff sleeping in arrangements needs to be reviewed in order to ensure that there is a member of staff available on or adjacent to each boarding house at night.

Premises

The school is aware that there are areas in which the premises do not currently meet Minimum Standards. In particular, the standard of bathrooms and showers and toilets requires attention and the school has plans in place to address this matter.

Although the boarding accommodation has a 'homely' feel, there was also evidence that maintenance and refurbishment was required in places.

Lighting, throughout the houses, but in particular in study areas of bedrooms, was felt to need an overall review.

As with the arrangement of common rooms, it was felt that the school should monitor the availability of quiet space for boarders.

The school needs to evidence that it has appropriate risk assessments in place for identifiable hazards.

Window restrictors should be provided for upper floor windows where appropriate.

The variation in the standard of provision across the boarding houses was discussed at the inspection and it was agreed that the school would attempt to balance advantages and disadvantages for boarders.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This report is the first by the Commission for Social Care Inspection under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and therefore serves as an audit of the school against the new requirements. The report identifies developments needed to meet the new requirements within a reasonable period of time. Any more urgent issues are identified in the report.

Boarders reported that they find Adams House 'homely' as the Handbook suggests it is. They commented favourably on the support received from boarding staff and the Head Teacher, on the benefits of the relatively small number of boarders on site and on the benefits of being part of the Thomas Adams School. The school ran smoothly during the inspection and boarders related confidently to the inspection team.

The following are broad areas in which the school needs to look at development.

Policies and procedures need to be developed, which are free standing from the Thomas Adams School policies and procedures, but which refer to them as appropriate. From this, there needs to be development of recording and monitoring systems within the school, which can evidence the work which is being undertaken and the management of welfare issues.

A programme of refurbishment, maintenance and development of the boarding accommodation and communal areas needs to be drawn up and actions prioritised.

The transfer of the management of the School to the Local Education Authority and its organisational links with the Thomas Adams School are felt to provide an ideal 'jumping off' point for the further development of boarding practise and the meeting of National Minimum Standards for Boarding. The commitment of the staff who were involved in the inspection, to working to these ends, is acknowledged.

The inspection team would like to thank all boarders and parents and all staff who contributed to the inspection of Adams House.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

Not applicable.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION	
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NA

No	Standard*	Recommended Actions	

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 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 Boarding 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	
1	BS1BS1	Adams' House statement of boarding principles and practice should be updated and amended. Where LEA policies and procedures are in place, these should be adapted to reflect the actual practice within the boarding school	01/09/05
2	BS3BS3	Adams' House child protection policy should include all elements required under standard 3 and an easy to follow procedure for staff	01/09/05
3	BS3BS3	External training in child protection should be included in the training schedule for all staff involved with boarders' welfare and any staff joining the school should receive in house training on arrival	01/03/06
4	BS3BS3	A record of child protection referrals and concerns should be kept in the boarding school as well as being noted in the Thomas Adams school recording system	01/06/05
5	BS3BS3	Scheduled meetings should take place between the Head of Boarding and the individual with responsibility for child protection matters within the school	01/06/05
6	BS4BS4	A system of monitoring major punishments by the Head of Boarding and the Head Teacher should be put in place	01/04/05
7	BS4BS4	A restraint policy, specific to the Boarding School, must be put in place and published	01/06/05

8	BS5BS5	A central record of all complaints should be held which details the name of the complainant, the date and nature of the complaint, the outcome requested by the complainant, the actions taken in response to the complaint and the outcome of the complaint. There should be evidence that this record is monitored regularly by the Head Teacher	01/08/05
9	BS6BS6	The policy regarding illegal substance testing should be reviewed	01/08/05
10	BS6BS6	The policy regarding smoking should be amended to reflect current practice	01/08/05
11	BS7BS7	The system for recording matters relating to boarders' health should be reviewed and records should be kept in a locked container in the locked medical cabinet	01/04/05
12	BS7BS7	Information about welfare needs and any special provision to be made for individual boarders should be recorded and effectively made available to those staff with a need to know that information	01/08/05
13	BS7BS7	Policies regarding those health matters detailed in standard 7 should be produced and provided to all staff	01/06/05
14	BS8BS8	The management of the role of Head of Boarding should include the provision of professional supervision and development	01/06/05
15	BS9BS9	Adams House should develop planned responses to a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises and should liaise with Shropshire County Council's Emergency Response Team	01/06/05
16	BS10BS10	Adams House should examine the possibility of providing additional common space in the sixth form girls' accommodation and should risk assess the potential for inappropriate access to sixth form boys accommodation by sixth form girls	01/08/05
17	BS12BS12	Adams House should put in place additional means by which boarders can contribute their views on boarding provision and should also put in place formal means of communicating responses to these contributions	01/06/05
18	BS13BS13	Adams House should formalise the induction and training of prefects, provide them with written guidance on their roles and responsibilities and ensure that they have basic training relating to child protection and anti-bullying policies and procedures	01/08/05

19	BS15BS15	Adams House should put in place appropriate medicines' policies, including a homely remedies policy	01/06/05
20	BS15BS15	Adams House should keep the written record of medication, treatment and first aid administered to boarders up-to-date and this record should be signed by the responsible member of staff and monitored by a senior member of staff	01/06/05
21	BS15BS15	Written parental permission for administration of First Aid and appropriate non-prescription medication should be held on individual boarders' files.	01/09/05
22	BS17BS17	Individual written 'welfare' plans, agreed with a parent, for any boarder with special welfare needs, significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, or who does not see his or her parent or legal guardian at least three times a year should be prepared by an appropriate member of staff	01/09/05
23	BS19BS19	There should be a private phone on each boarding house, with appropriate helpline or outside contact numbers near each one	01/06/05
24	BS20BS20	Consideration should be given to developing a formal induction programme for all new boarders at Adams House, which includes provision for additional assistance to be provided to students whose first language is not English	01/09/05
25	BS23BS23	A regular system of monitoring the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents should be put in place in order to facilitate the identification of issues requiring action	01/06/05
26	BS24BS24	Adams House should investigate ways of improving the quantity, quality and choice of meals for boarders	01/08/05
27	BS26BS26	Risk assessments relating to fire should be devised and put in place	01/05/05
28	BS26BS26	Adams House should request that the Fire Officer visit to discuss outstanding matters from the last fire inspection and to provide advice regarding any other issues the House has identified. In the meantime, fire doors should not be propped open and combustible material should be removed from areas where they might present a fire risk	01/04/05
29	BS29BS29	Risk assessments relating to high risk activities undertaken by boarders should be put in place and there should be recorded evidence that these activities are competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures	01/06/05

30	BS31BS31	Duty rotas of all staff on duty during the week should be published for the benefit of boarders and staff	01/04/05
31	BS33BS33	The Lower School Boys accommodation should be covered at night by the presence of a full member of staff sleeping in the accommodation	01/04/05
32	BS33BS33	A system by which all boarders and staff accommodated at night can be easily identified should be put in place, for use in an emergency which might require it	01/04/05
33	BS34BS34	Up-to-date job descriptions for boarding roles should be held on all staff files, together with records of supervision, appraisal and recent training in boarding practise and child protection	01/09/05
34	BS35BS35	Adams House should update the Handbook and the House policies to include all elements required under the National Minimum Boarding Standards, to reflect actual practise in the Boarding School and to distinguish clearly between Local Education Authority procedures and procedures in the School. The documents should be made available to all staff and training in amended policies and procedures highlighted	01/09/05
35	BS38BS38	The recruitment process for staff at Adams House should cover the elements detailed in standard 38 and staff files should be organised and indexed appropriately. The use of a check sheet at the front of each file should be considered as an effective means of monitoring information held on files. There should be a full staff list of staff who work, however, occasionally, at Adams House.	01/04/05
36	BS39BS39	A satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau check should be held before any newly appointed member of staff begins work at Adams House	01/04/05
37	BS40BS40	Adams House should put in place a rolling programme of maintenance and refurbishment which addresses findings under Standard 40	01/09/05
38	BS41BS41	Adams House should risk assess security of the school and school site in relation to those findings under Standard 41	01/06/05
39	BS42BS42	Adams House should address findings under Standard 42 in a rolling programme of maintenance	01/09/05
40	BS42BS42	Adams House should review the provision of adequate lighting and adequate sized desks for all study areas	01/09/05
41	BS48BS48	The arrangements for use of the 'sick room' should be clarified for boarders, parents and staff	01/09/05

42	BS44BS44	Adams House should prioritise the programme of refurbishment of bathroom and shower areas and should review the privacy of each area. Water temperatures should be controlled for safety and adequate for purpose	01/06/05
43	BS46BS46	Adams House should review the use of the quiet room when it is converted and consider whether additional quiet space would be appreciated and used by boarders	01/09/05
44	BS47BS47	Adams House should put risk assessments in place for indoor and outdoor areas used by boarders and should look particularly at those findings under Standard 47	01/06/05

!#ZTRECO!#

Use Section 3 button to insert Standards in the Refer to Standard column

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	BS5BS5	Consideration should be given to providing additional details of the appeals process which is part of the complaints procedure and to indicating timescales for written responses to complaints in the next Handbook
2	BS6BS6	Consideration should be given to including details of the PHSE course which boarders follow, in the policy documents and the Adams House Handbook
3	BS11BS11	Consideration should be given to surveying boarders' views on the arrangement of the common rooms and the activities available in them
4	BS14BS14	Consideration should be given to the appointment of an independent Counsellor
5	BS15BS15	Consideration should be given to providing additional nursing support and availability to boarders
6	BS17BS17	Consideration should be given to devising a method by which full information can be requested prior to the admission of any boarder to Adams House.
7	BS18BS18	Consideration should be given to providing EFL support to boarders' whose first language is not English and to investigating access to interpretation services for emergency situations in which they might be needed

8	BS32BS32	The policy relating to boarders who are temporarily away from the school site should be expanded to include transport arrangements
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*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been 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 and Individuals

• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person or Counsellor	NO
• Chair of Governors	YES
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	NO
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	NO
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	NO

Date of Inspection	08/11/04
Time of Inspection	0900
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	91.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	11.5

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION:**AGE RANGE OF BOARDING
PUPILS****FRO
M**

12

TO

19

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:**Boys**

24

Girls

31

Total

55

Number of separate Boarding Houses

5

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

"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.

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

A statement of the school's boarding principles and practice is included in the Handbook for 2004-2005 and is available to parents, boarders and staff. This statement includes the aims and organisation of boarding at the school, but does not currently cover admission criteria. The list of staff in the Handbook is now out of date and the position held by one current member of staff is not indicated.

Although the Handbook refers to the Commission for Social Care Inspection, there is no description of its functions in relation to complaints from parents or boarders.

The school's policies and procedures have been updated in 2004. There is reference to the Children's Homes Regulations, which is confusing and which is not required in this document.

There is a comprehensive index of policies and practices, which cover all aspects of boarders' welfare. Some of these policies are LEA policies which have not yet been adapted to reflect actual practice within the boarding school.

Some of the policies require further consideration and will be identified individually under the relevant standards in this report.

The Handbook states that, 'We aim to make Adams House a real home with a family atmosphere. It's just that our family is larger than most' and several boarders referred to this statement positively, and humorously, during the period of the inspection.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6)

The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.

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

Adams House has included an anti-bullying commitment in its policies and in its Handbook for 2004-2005. This commitment is also included in the prospectus for The Thomas Adams School Wem prospectus which means that there is consistency for boarders across both their boarding and school lives. The commitment makes clear that bullying is unacceptable, that boarders should feel able to talk to staff if they feel they are being bullied and that staff will address any instances of bullying with both any perpetrators or any victims of bullying.

There is a statement on the prevention of bullying which is included with the school's policies. This statement details actions to be taken.

It was clear from reports from staff and prefects and from boarders' questionnaire responses, that bullying is not tolerated at Adams House and is not considered to be a major problem by boarders. One report indicated that bullying didn't happen because the small number of boarders at the school were all 'close' and any problems would be noticed and dealt with.

Prefects identified that because they are encouraged to 'mix' with all of the students within the main house, they are more able to identify any potential bullying situations.

The house parent spoken to identified that occasionally 'teenage' behaviour occurs where an individual is sent to Coventry or 'left out' of what's going on. She stated that, when this does occur, she and the other senior staff encourage the students to discuss their differences and sort it out, without showing favouritism to the ostracised person.

It was reported that boarders who have experienced bullying at school have been supported by boarding staff.

PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED

90**%**

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

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

The school has a written child protection policy which refers to the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures and guidelines, although it does not include a stated requirement that a referral is made within 24 hours to the local social services department regarding any allegations or suspicions of abuse.

Procedures for staff to follow in the event of an allegation or suspicion are included in the policy, but the steps which need to be taken are not included in detail and are not in the form of an easy to follow flow chart. However, the basic policy that staff should refer to a senior member of staff, or directly to Social Services, is clear.

In practice, Adams House child protection system is closely linked with that of The Thomas Adams School. The member of staff with responsibility for child protection matters is involved in training staff in-house in relation to child protection procedures and would also be involved in any referrals made from the boarding school to Social Services, through the Head of Boarding. It was noted that, although no recent child protection referrals have been made from Adams House, there was no recording system in the boarding school which would identify such referrals and it was agreed that such a system would be beneficial.

The child protection system within was found to be clearly established in the school, with formal half-termly meetings between the school and welfare agencies and records of referrals and concerns maintained. It was evident that there were clear lines of communication to the local authority child protection system. It was also evident that any disagreements regarding child protection matters would be handled appropriately and representations made.

Both the individual with responsibility for child protection matters in the school and the Head of Boarding have experience of the child protection system, having attended strategy meetings and case conferences.

Although most staff indicated that they had had some child protection training since joining the school, this was not found to be the case with at least one new member of staff.

Staff have received some internal training on child protection, either through a professional development day at the beginning of the school year, or from the Head of Boarding. Gap students who arrive during the school year are also provided with this training and reported that they had received some verbal instruction from the Head of Boarding.

It is understood that further in-house child protection training is scheduled for the Head of Boarding and for house parents.

Prefects stated that they had received some instruction on child protection from the Head of Boarding. They were aware that they should inform any boarder who confided in them that they might have to pass on information to a member of staff.

Ancillary staff who spoke to the inspection team had been provided with some written guidance regarding child protection matters and were clear that they would refer any concerns to a senior member of staff.

During the inspection there was discussion of the recent changes which have taken place with regard to the management of the Boarding School. It was agreed that the introduction of regular scheduled meetings between the Head of Boarding and the individual with responsibility for child protection matters within the school would now formalise the working systems.

A policy is in place regarding any boarder who is missing from Adams House. Staff indicated that the longest period during which a boarder might be missing without this being apparent was between the end of school and the evening meal. However, staff and gap students reported that, because of the small number of boarders accommodated, they would generally be aware if a boarder was attending a school activity after school and would make enquiries if they were concerned about a boarders' whereabouts.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The school runs a 'status method' where pupils are rewarded for good and responsible behaviour by being awarded a higher status. All boarders who responded had a sound knowledge of the status system, as did the staff who employ it.

The system, along with house and sixth form rules, are described in the Adams House Handbook.

Loss of status penalties include getting up earlier, going to bed earlier, extra household chores or some extra homework.

No excessive or idiosyncratic punishments are employed, according to the system, although one of the punishments (for boarders on a 1*) involved getting up early to have breakfast and it was felt that this could be seen as breakfast being a punishment rather than the getting up early.

Boarders reported, however, that they found the status system fair, although there were some reports of a lack of consistency in application. It is acknowledged that the staffing situation in relation to houseparents was likely to have accounted for some of these reports.

A record of major punishments is kept, but it is not clear that this is being regularly monitored by the Head of Boarding or the Head Teacher as the record was not being signed off.

No policy relating to permissible forms of restraint was found, although it is understood that there is such a policy in The Thomas Adams School. There were, however, no reports from boarders that they were restrained in Adams House.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.

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

The school has an updated complaints procedure in place. This is described in the Handbook for 2004-2005 and is included in the policy document. It is, therefore, available to parents and boarders.

The Head of Boarding is the first contact for complaints concerning welfare issues for boarders and, as the school is now managed by the Local Education Authority, matters can be referred to the Head Teacher if a complainant is not happy with the outcome of contact with the Boarding School. The Handbook could include further information about the appeals process, which is available if a complainant is not happy with the response provided by the Head Teacher.

The policy includes reference to the Commission for Social Care Inspection, although there is no description of the Commission's role in relation to complaints about boarders' welfare.

A clear description was provided of how any complaint would be responded to, including timescales for making contact with the complainant. Timescales for responding in writing to complaints are not currently detailed in the Handbook or the policy document.

Records of complaints were reviewed. While these records contained much information about how complaints had been received and handled, there was no central record of all complaints. Without such a record it is difficult to track the progress of responses to complaints, outcomes of complaints and to monitor complaints for the possible emergence of any trends or patterns.

Boarders who spoke to the inspectors said that they would make any complaint they might have to the Head of Boarding.

There were some reports from boarders that they or their parents had made complaints, in this case regarding the standard of catering, but that they had not had any formal response to these complaints. It was not clear whether these complaints had been made since the start of this academic year.

Number of complaints, if any, received by CSCI about the school during last 12 months:

1

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.

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

Policies are in place regarding major risks to health and these include a policy regarding substance abuse.

This policy, whilst comprehensive is a little misleading. It states ‘*If a member of the school or house has reason to suspect that a boarder is misusing drugs he or she must report the situation to the head of boarding who will decide if further investigation or a drug test is warranted*’. This could have legal implications and runs the risk of any samples being contaminated. The section headed ‘investigation into possible misuse’ identifies a procedure entitled ‘Urine testing for drugs: standard procedure for sample collection, July 1996’. The House must ensure that this is the most recent procedural guidance.

Not all student files sampled had a parental / guardian consent form, to perform testing, completed, despite it being a condition of acceptance of a new boarder to the House that a signed consent form is returned.

It is understood that there is no similar policy in place in The Thomas Adams school.

The policy on smoking is not in line with appropriate current practice and needs to be amended to include the provision made for sixth form smokers.

Personal, social and health education is provided by The Thomas Adams School and, although this was not established directly at the inspection, it is presumed that the content of the PHSE course will be in line with PHSE courses in other Local Authority schools and in line with the requirements of standard 6. It would be appropriate for the content of the course to be included in Adams House policy document and, in an abbreviated version, in the school’s Handbook.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****1**

A card system was in place in the office, on which records of health matters were recorded. However, the entries on these cards were considered to be too brief and insufficiently detailed. They were found, also, not always to have been completed in a timely manner.

These cards should, ideally be held in a locked container and kept within the locked medical cupboard where there is restricted access. Such an arrangement would also increase the likelihood of records being made regularly and immediately where necessary.

In some cases, notes were found in the 'handover' book which should clearly have been entered onto boarders' health record cards. There may be confidentiality issues associated with entering personal information in the 'handover' book which should be considered by staff before any entries are made. Some health information may only be required on a 'need to know' basis. Some entries may need to refer individual members of staff to health records in order to avoid the privacy of some personal information being compromised.

The records sampled did not contain any information on the boarders' welfare despite several files seen clearly demonstrating that there were boarders who had or had had some welfare needs.

Adams House does not yet have clear policies with regard to the administration, ordering, storage of medication or to completed medications. No policy is yet in place in relation to 'homely remedies' or self-medication.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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The responsibility for the management of Adams House has recently transferred from Adams House Trust to the Local Education Authority. The post of Head of Boarding remains and a new postholder was appointed in July 2004. The practice and development of boarding is now led by the Head Teacher of the Thomas Adams School and the Head of Boarding at Adams House.

The Board of Governors of the school and the Trustees have overseen the transfer to the Local Authority. The Trust will continue to exist and there will continue to be foundation governors on the School's Board of Governors, which will provide continuity for the Boarding House. The Finance Committee is currently responsible for Boarding School matters but, in the new year, a Boarding School Committee will be in place which will be responsible for the overall management of Adams House.

Those staff who were spoken to were clear about the changes which had occurred and were clear that the Head of Boarding was their first point of contact for any welfare issues relating to boarders. They were also aware of the role of the Head Teacher and many positive comments were received on the active involvement of the Head since the transfer.

Discussions with the Chair of Board of Governors for the Thomas Adams School indicated that the Board have monitoring systems in place for the school and that these will also be put in place for Adams House.

There are tensions between the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and some Local Education Authority policies and procedures. It was acknowledged that policies and procedures for Adams House needed to be 'free-standing' and that the Governors responsible for the House would use the National Minimum Standards to ensure that the House was being managed in line with these Standards.

Line management is provided for the Head of Boarding by the Head Teacher. Regular meetings are in place, at which support and advice are provided and at which monitoring of the running of Adams House can take place. This system is clearly effective but there is currently no provision for professional supervision or development for the Head of Boarding.

This was felt to be an area which should be developed, in order to maintain and develop good practice, to reduce the potential isolation of the role.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There are standard Local Education Authority procedures in place for major emergencies which, it was indicated, would be followed in the event of any emergency within the Boarding House. There is a policy in place, for Adams House, which refers to Shropshire County Council's guidelines in 'Managing Responses to Major Incidences in Schools'.

This was, however, felt to be an area where LEA policies and procedures would not automatically cover all potential emergency situations within Adams House. For example, the Boarding School has no written plans for the actions which would need to be taken in the event of a major outbreak of a contagious illness or for plans which would need to be in place were there to be a fire or other event which prevented use of the boarding houses.

Liaison with Shropshire County Council's Emergency Response Team would not only enable Adams House to produce plans which fitted the individual circumstances of the Boarding School, but would ensure that the Emergency Response Team were aware that the Boarding School might need a different response from other schools.

Such plans would also enable Adams house to demonstrate that staff would be able to do what was reasonable to safeguard and promote the welfare of any boarder or boarders involved in such an emergency.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)

The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.

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

Boarders are accommodated in five separate boarding houses. Lower sixth form and upper sixth form girls live in two adjoining houses. These are separated from the house in which the sixth form boys live, by staff accommodation. These four houses are part of a terrace.

The lower school girls are accommodated on the first floor of the Main School Building and the lower school boys are accommodated on two floors of the relatively modern block which is situated behind the Main School, but is not attached to it.

Given the differing ages and types of buildings in which boarders are accommodated, there are discrepancies between the physical provision across houses and the facilities provided, although not between the provision for different genders or ages of boarders.

The sixth form girls share a common room with the sixth form boys. This is situated in the boys' house. They have a very small area in one of the girls' boarding houses, with a television, two settees and a telephone. It is acknowledged that this small area was created in order to enable the sixth form girls to have a common space in their own houses, as well as the shared use of the sixth form boys' common room, but it is felt that they are somewhat disadvantaged by these arrangements. It was noted that the siting of the common room, beyond the key pad, potentially allows sixth form girls access to sixth form boys private accommodation.

With the exception of this observation, sleeping areas, recreational areas, toilet and bathroom provision are reasonably separated for boarders of significantly different ages.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

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

The responses to the Boarders' Questionnaires indicated that 40% of them felt that activities were average or below average although, by the time of the inspection, boarders were reporting that the availability of activities was increasing. Some students stated that there was not a lot to do, especially if you did not like sports. Sports sessions currently take place twice a week.

It was clear that there had been mitigating circumstances, which had led to a certain sense of dissatisfaction about activities, but that the situation was improving.

At the weekend following the inspection, a visit to a local ice rink and shopping centre was being organised and there was to be a 'Birds of Prey' display at the school.

Boarders were found to have free time, in which they undertook activities or spent time in common rooms or walked to the shops. It was indicated that boarders were discouraged from walking on their own, for safety's sake.

The common rooms in both the Main House and the Sixth Form Boys House were seen and reported to be well-used. A piano and table tennis table are available in the Main House common room and there is a television and playstation in the sixth form boys common room.

Although the sixth form common room was not seen 'in action' during the inspection, it was reported that there was some competition for the television and the playstation, between the girls and the boys. It was not established whether this competition was detrimental to either side or whether a balance was held between the competing demands. In the Main House common room, the quieter area is not separated from the area in which boarders play the piano and table tennis.

Boarders have internet access, which is suitably safeguarded, although it was understood that not all computers were working at all times.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)**Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

Boarders are able to contribute their views to the operation of boarding provision through Prefects' meetings, catering meetings and House meetings.

Prefects stated that they had fortnightly meetings with the Head of Boarding. House group meetings take place twice a term, but there were some reports of a diffidence about speaking at these meetings and that most contributions were made by prefects. It was reported that these meetings were 'sometimes' useful and 'sometimes' not.

A Catering Book was seen, in which boarders had provided positive and negative comments about meals.

While there are clearly ways in which boarders can contribute their views, it was felt that a Suggestion Box could usefully be employed, as could the distribution of surveys on particular subjects or an annual questionnaire.

Boarders also reported that, if they raised a matter with a member of staff verbally, they would usually get an individual response. They were less clear that communication back from meetings would be as efficient.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)

Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

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

The prefects are voted in by all of the students at the end of the school year (July). The students voted in are then asked if they wish to take on those duties next year. Prefects attend a meeting at the start of the year informing them of their duties and a prefects 'book' is in place, which is used by each group of prefects each year. The prefects enter their ideas into this book for discussion. They receive support from the gap students and staff and learn 'the job' from the previous years' prefects.

They had not received any written guidance which specified their roles and responsibilities. Although they had received no formal induction, they had had one meeting with the Head of Boarding at the beginning of the academic year.

It was reported that prefects do not have any powers of punishment, although it was said that they could verbally 'tell off' any student or withdraw any privileges. They said that they could not drop any students' house status.

Three of the prefects were reported to have received basic first aid training. Although they had not received child protection training per se, they were aware that they could not 'keep secrets' and would inform boarders that they might have to pass information to a member of staff. None of the prefects reported having received any 'anti-bullying' training.

The prefect role within the school was not reported to be onerous. Prefects indicated that they have a general duty to be available to other boarders who might wish to talk to them, above and beyond their other duties.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

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

A policy is in place relating to personal guidance for boarders. The policy indicates that there is an independent person available to boarders and this person is identified in the Adams House Handbook. The relevant section of the Handbook also provides telephone numbers for Childline and the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The current Independent Person is the Thomas Adams School nurse, who is employed by the Health Authority. Adams House does not employ a Counsellor, although the Head Teacher is a qualified and experienced counsellor to whom boarders could be referred by the Boarding School.

All boarders who were spoken to reported that they felt there were people to whom they could turn if they needed someone to speak to, although there was some indication that confidentiality was an issue for some boarders.

CRB checks were found not to be in place for every member of Boarding House staff who might provide guidance to boarders and a recommendation regarding this has been made under standard 38.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.
- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision.
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There is appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment available to boarders with access to medical, dental and optical services as required. The house secretary arranges any medical appointments for the boarders. The house does not employ a designated nurse, although the Thomas Adams School nurse is used in a advisory capacity. Boarders can choose who accompanies them to any GP, hospital, dentist or optician appointment. The surgery accessed by the students enables them to see a male or female doctor or nurse so far as possible.

Four staff employed within the house were reported to have a 1st aid qualification. One example of their certificate was seen on their personal staff file.

Records indicated that prescribed medication appeared to be administered to the correct person at all times.

The house does not have a medicines' policy or a protocol in place for the administration of prescription and non-prescription 'household' medicines to the boarders. During this inspection it was reported that no boarders hold any personal prescribed or non-prescribed medication in their rooms. All medication used at Adams House is kept in a secure location. A written record is maintained by the house of all medication administered to the boarders

but the administration records are not maintained on individual sheets.

The school record currently maintained for illnesses and other medical matters is incomplete and entries are made retrospectively.

Written parental permission for administration of 1st aid and appropriate non-prescription medication was not found in any boarders' files, nor was permission to seek medical, dental or optical treatment. Discussions with the School secretary identified that many boarders parents will not allow their son / daughter to access dental treatment as they would have to pay.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3)

Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

During this inspection three boarders were reported to be 'sick'. Observations were made to demonstrate that these people were being regularly checked and monitored and that information was being handed over to responsible staff.

It was noted that one boarder was appropriately reported sick by another boarder, to a member of staff. The boarder who was sick confirmed that she was being adequately looked after to the inspector who was on a tour of the premises in which she was accommodated.

Boarders who are ill during the night were reportedly able to summon assistance from the duty person by mobile phone or by internal phones sited in the house parents' vicinity.

Those boarders who were spoken to confirmed that they were not left alone for long periods and that they always felt able to summon support. The gap students, who were working at Adams House at the time of this inspection, were seen to be catering for the needs of sick boarders in a competent manner.

It is understood that, where a sick boarder is sharing sleeping accommodation, the other boarder or boarders will be moved to another area to allow the sick boarder privacy and to prevent the spread of infection. It was reported by Lower School Boys that they would stay in their dormitory if they were ill and a boarder was ill in the Lower School Girls dormitory during part of the inspection.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)**Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****1**

Adams House had identified, and was managing, significant needs of some boarders. However, the records of the good work which was being undertaken and of the links with other professional services which existed, were not adequate.

There were clear reports that Adams House was providing support to boarders who were undergoing times of personal stress and that boarders who are homesick are comforted by staff and by other boarders.

Of the six boarders' files sampled the inspector could not identify that any of them had been supported by School in relation to any health or personal problems apart from taking them to a GP.

It is acknowledged that Adams House has not always been provided with accurate and up-to-date information about the health and personal needs of boarders, before their arrival. This was clear from records which were seen to have been received after some admissions to the school.

No written and agreed individual 'welfare plans' were found on any files. It was felt that the development of work in this area would be likely to form part of the proposed regular meetings between the Head of Boarding and the individual with responsibility for child protection within the school.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6)

Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

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

Adams House has an equal opportunities policy, although this is not yet included in the Adams House Handbook.

Throughout the duration of this inspection it was not evident that boarders were experiencing any inappropriate discrimination. The school accommodates a relatively small number of boarders and this was said, by boarders, to encourage closeness and the ability to 'get on' with others.

However it was not evident that pupils who do not speak English as their first language were being provided with EFL support. Resources for providing interpreters for emergency situations in which a boarder might need and want to communicate effectively in their first language were not found to be available.

Boarders are required to speak English when in social situations. It was confirmed to inspectors, by both staff and boarders, that they could communicate in their first language if they had a particular need to do so, or if they were communicating with their friends who spoke the same language, in private.

Boarders reported that efforts were made to provide meals appealing to the tastes of different groups of boarders.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6)

Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.

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

Boarders are able to contact their parents, guardians and friends via letters, telephone and e-mail. Most boarders indicated that they would use their own mobile phones to make contact, but some did comment on the lack of privacy of the house phones.

It was reported that the e-mail service had been temporarily reduced due to inappropriate use by some students and two of the house telephones were not sited where a boarder could hold a reasonably private conversation. Not all phones had appropriate helpline numbers beside them

All boarders spoken to were in possession of a list of contact telephone numbers of people they could ring if they were in need of case of problems or distress. The list included the 'Listener', Childline and internal numbers for the houses, house parents and gap students.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3)

Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.

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

All boarders at Adams open a bank account with Barclays bank to keep their pocket money in, when they join the Boarding School.

Families of boarders are requested to send a float of £250 at the start of term to cover the cost of school trips, stationary and books.

All boarders have access to a locker within their houses, providing they pay a £5 refundable deposit. Some students request that the home's office safely looks after their passports, tickets, visas and other important items.

This provision is in line with the policy which is in place, although this policy does not indicate all the detail above.

There were no reports of any serious problems regarding the safety of possessions, from boarders, during the inspection, although there were references to a certain amount of 'borrowing' which was said to occur at the beginning of a new term. Boarders appeared to be indicating that staff handled situations appropriately and that such matters were resolved amicably

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3)

There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.

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

All new boarders at Adams House are provided with the Handbook. The current Handbook has been updated for the academic year 2004-5. The information contained in the Handbook covers most key areas, although it will benefit from the addition of references to other policies in future years. The Handbook is written in a 'user-friendly' style, although some students from overseas, with a limited initial grasp of English, had found difficulty in reading and understanding the information it contained.

An informal mentoring system was started at the beginning of this academic year and it is understood that this will be developed in future years. The house parent spoken to identified that all new boarders are allocated older boarders and that they are supported by the gaps, house parents, tutors and prefects when they arrive at the school.

No structured programme of induction is currently in place at the school and it was felt that such a programme could be developed to assist new boarders to settle in, particularly those who were also having to deal with information in a foreign language.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4)

Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****9**

This standard does not apply to Adams House and was, therefore, not reviewed at this inspection.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4)

The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****1**

Records are monitored by the Head and by the Head of Boarding but, as yet, this is not happening on a regular basis and in a manner which indicates that monitoring is happening and that issues requiring action are being identified. No record is kept that such monitoring is taking place and no signatures were found on records to indicate that they had been reviewed by a senior member of staff.

It was acknowledged during the inspection that a system needed to be developed and put in place for the monitoring of the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents.

From discussion with senior staff it was evident that issues are identified and action is taken but, as in the case of welfare plans, the recording and evidence of monitoring which would assist in decision making and forward planning, are not yet in place.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.

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

At lunch time, boarders eat in the Thomas Adams School dining hall. Their other meals are provided in the sixth form college dining room. Meals are provided by the Company which is contracted to the Local Education Authority. It is understood that no qualified chef is employed and it was felt that the expectations on the catering staff were, therefore, greater than they should be.

Responses to the boarders' and parents' questionnaires indicated that the quality and quantity of meals was a major concern. 80% of boarders reported that the meals were average or below average and comments received during the inspection confirmed these reports.

Boarders indicated that they provided positive comments in the 'Food Book' in order to assist Catering Staff in determining which meals were most successful and popular. They did feel, however, that they rarely received responses to less positive comments and were not sure that their positive comments were noted.

Provision is made for special dietary needs if the catering manager is informed and four choices (two hot and two cold) of meals are available in the evening. However, concerns were expressed about the nutritional value and the balance of meals. Boarders felt that they were high in carbohydrate content, often oily and greasy and that there were not enough fresh vegetables.

A vegetarian option is available and meals on Mondays and Tuesdays included foods which took into account the tastes of overseas boarders. Special meals were said to be provided for special occasions, for example, Chinese New Year.

Boarders are able to have a cooked breakfast on Saturday, which serves as brunch and allows boarders a 'lie in'. This brunch was, however, one of two meals on a Saturday, rather than three on other days.

Those boarders who spoke to the inspectors did variously report that they often did not feel full after the evening meal, that they found the meals repetitive and that they found having to choose their meals a week in advance restrictive.

The standard of meals provided for boarders is similar to the standard provided for pupils at the Thomas Adams School, the catering contractor being one and the same. However, it was felt that boarders were disadvantaged in comparison with pupils of the school as all their meals are all provided from the same source.

Boarders reported that they wait until everyone has finished their meals before notices are read out. They indicated that they would prefer it if the notices were read out at the start of the evening meal so that they could leave the dining hall when they had finished their meal.

It was noted that the last Environmental Health inspection took place in 2002 and that an inspection is overdue.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5) Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Drinking water is accessible in the houses, main house, dining hall and school.</p> <p>Crisps, chocolate, biscuits, fruit and toast is accessible outside of meal times from vending machines in the Ruscoe centre, the 'tuck' shop which is sited in the Main House common room and which boarders commented on positively, or the local town.</p> <p>Boarders do have the facility to store appropriate foods but the kitchens accessible by the boarders require checking by the Environmental Health Officer.</p>		

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5) Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>All boarders and gaps spoken to were able to identify that fire evacuation procedures are carried out at least once every term and at varying times of the day or night. Boarders who spoke to inspectors also confirmed that they knew where fire escapes and muster points were.</p> <p>There was evidence of weekly tests for the fire alarm system, of the regular checks of emergency light and of regular testing of fire fighting equipment. These records are kept in the Adams House office and the Bursar's office in the Thomas Adams School. Risk assessments were not seen and it is not clear that these are in place.</p> <p>Adams House is disputing two of the current recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer, one in relation to a fire door and the other in relation to door lining which had been raised as an urgent matter in the Fire Officer's letter of 16.03.04.</p> <p>Several issues were noted during the inspection, which were felt to require clarification with the Fire Officer. These included the safety of the room within a room on the ground floor of the Upper Boys' House and the condition of the escape stairs from the Lower Boys' House. The propping open of some fire doors should be discontinued as should the storage of combustible material in a cupboard in the Main House. The fire claxon, which is sited in one of the Upper Boys' bedrooms was felt to be inappropriate.</p>		

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3) Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>No unusual or especially onerous demands are made on boarders at Adams House and no boarders reported that they did not have a reasonable amount of free time each day.</p>		

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2) The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Adams House does provide accommodation overnight for visiting children and young people, on occasions, such as when potential boarders visit the school.</p> <p>These children and young people are appropriately noted in the staff duty book and are signed in as visitors. Their welfare is protected in line with the procedures in place for boarders.</p>		

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6) Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	1
<p>At no point during this inspection did the inspector find any risk assessments having been completed enabling boarders to use and participate in various activities both in house and externally.</p> <p>There were no guidelines available to suggest the number of staff who should accompany students outside of the house.</p> <p>No written consent was seen in boarders' files on Adams House identifying that they could or could not participate in activities held by the house. There may have been assessments in place at the Thomas Adams School, but it is felt that this is an area where the separation between the Boarding School and the Thomas Adams School should be clearly distinguished.</p> <p>This was acknowledged by Adams House during the inspection and, as the transfer of the House to the school has now been effected, there is potential to develop the separation of systems where needed.</p>		

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5)

Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.

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

Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school and can access local facilities which are appropriate to their age. Their attendance at the Thomas Adams School means that they are in contact with pupils who are involved in local activities and who have different experiences from their own. It was noted and reported that boarders establish and maintain friendships with pupils from the school.

Daily newspapers were seen in the main house, televisions were sited in all common rooms and the Main House was connected to Sky. Boarders have Internet access which potentially provides access to reports of world events. The sixth form boys indicated that they would like Sky to be accessible in their common room in order to be able to watch sport more frequently. There is an argument that keeping up with international sporting events extends a young person's 'world view'.

Boarders are not allowed to access the local town alone. They must go out in two's or in groups. They are supervised when they use local facilities or when they are taken to Shrewsbury for outings.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

During the period of this inspection Adams House one of the three Houseparents was on sick leave and one was suspended pending the outcome of a disciplinary investigation. While additional staff from the school were covering for these absences and the four gap students were providing excellent support, no formal rota of staff on duty was on view.

A record was seen of weekend working, but boarders spoken to did not know who was on duty on the night in question after school.

It was recognised that the staffing difficulties at the time of the inspection were likely to be resolved in the near future. However, it was also felt that duty rotas needed to be published in future, for the benefit of both boarders and staff.

The boarding staff group in day to day contact with boarders did include two male staff members and two male gap students and efforts to maintain this gender balance on the staff group would be in the best interests of the boarders.

Houseparents are supported in their role by gap students. Several teaching staff from the Thomas Adams School are also available to undertake occasional boarding duties.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Adams House has clear signing in and out procedures for boarders who are temporarily away from the school site. Because of the relatively small number of boarders, staff on duty are aware of the whereabouts of each boarder and alert to their safety.

There is a policy relating to the safety of students, but it is brief and does not cover transport matters. These are clearly covered for the Thomas Adams School but need to be stated for Adams House separately.

Gap students were not seen to be left alone in charge of boarders without a supervising member of staff contactable on site or accompanying them when away from the school.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5)

Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

Staff are present and available to sixth form girls and boys at night. Houseparent accommodation is situated between the accommodation for these boarders with interconnecting doors. At the time of the inspection, one Houseparent also had accommodation in a room on the upper floor of the sixth form girls accommodation.

Lower School Girls, who are accommodated in the Main House, are able to call on the Head of Boarding at night, as her family accommodation is on the ground floor of this building. The Head of Boarding's husband, who is also Head of PE at the Thomas Adams School, also has boarding responsibilities.

The Lower School Boys accommodation was covered, at the time of the inspection, by two male gap students, each of whom had a room on one floor of this house. Although the gap students were aware that they could and should call on either the Head of Boarding or her husband in the event of a boarder requiring assistance at night, this arrangement was not felt to meet Minimum Standards as gap students are not full members of staff.

This matter was discussed with Adams House both at and after the inspection and it was agreed that the situation would be reviewed.

Boarders have access to staff mobile numbers and indicated that they would know who to contact in the event of an emergency.

Although signing in books are present on houses it was felt that there was no clear and easily accessible list of boarders on each house which could be used in the event of an emergency, for example, if there were a fire at night.

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7)

All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****1**

All staff files were sampled during this inspection and no relevant and up to date job descriptions were found.

The role of the spouses within the House was not clear within their personal files or in the policies of Handbook for Adams House, although it was clearly understood within the School.

Only the Head of Boarding and her spouse had received training in boarding practise. There were no records of supervision for staff, including ancillary staff and no appraisal system regarding boarding responsibilities.

This is an area in which development is clearly needed, now that the transfer of the Boarding School has been effected. As with other areas, there need to be clear policies and procedures for Adams House which distinguish between LEA policies and procedures for schools and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

It was clear from discussions with the Head Teacher and the Head of Boarding that the need for clear definitions of roles and responsibilities was recognised and that actions had already been taken in some areas to formalise arrangements. It is acknowledged that the recent transfer of management of the school is providing the opportunity for Adams House to develop its systems and practise, not just in this area.

Newly appointed staff receive training from the Head of Boarding, as do the gap students. Gaps students are usually provided with BSA training also, but this had not been made available for the most recent group of 'gaps'. Child protection training has also been provided 'in-house; and has been referred to in standard 3.

There were no records of recent training on staff files and no records of appraisals.

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4)

All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.

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

All staff are provided with a copy of the Adams House handbook and Adams House policies are kept in a locked cupboard in the Main House, for reference by staff. As noted throughout this report, Adams House are aware of the need to update the Handbook and the policies to ensure that they reflect actual practice at the School and cover all the elements of the relevant standards.

There is a staff disciplinary policy, which refers to Shropshire County Council's policy, but it is felt that this needs to be included, in detail, in the Adams House policies and clearly defined as the process which would be in place for staff at Adams House.

The policy in the Adams House policy document does not state that there is provision for the support and guidance of staff during any suspension, although this is included in the County policy.

Those staff who were spoken to were clear about basic procedures and practises and about their roles and responsibilities.

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)

There are sound staff/boarder relationships.

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

Boarders reported that they felt they were well looked after by staff and that all staff were approachable. Communications between staff and boarders were seen to be appropriate and respectful, on both sides.

Some comments were received about different standards being applied by different members of staff, but it was acknowledged during the inspection, that this situation was recognised and being addressed by senior staff.

No inappropriate favouritism or antipathy of staff towards any individual or group was noted during the inspection.

There were many positive comments about the commitment and involvement of both the Head of Boarding and the Head Teacher and these comments were received from staff, gap students, ancillary staff and boarders.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.

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

Boarders privacy was seen to be being observed throughout this inspection. Staff were not seen to enter boarders sleeping accommodation without making their presence known first.

There were no examples of any actions by staff which might embarrass boarders at sensitive times such as dressing, changing, bathing or showering and no reports were received to indicate that this was a problem for boarders.

Staff were seen to be available in the Main House common room during social times, but not to be imposing on boarders activities. Supervision was available but not oppressive.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****1**

The staff files examined did not contain all of the required elements as identified in Standard 38.2. The files themselves were not indexed, did not have front check sheets on which to record the presence of information and were not well organised.

A complete staff list for Adams House was not in place. Some staff who work in the School are teachers from the Thomas Adams School and their records had not been copied to the system on Adams House. This made it very difficult to establish the roles and checks required by each person. Records were still in place for some members of staff no longer working at the School.

As in other areas, the system for staff recruitment Adams House is currently in line with the system for the Thomas Adams School. It was acknowledged that this system did not meet the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and that action would be taken to enhance the process appropriately. The policy on appointing staff does not cover all the elements required under the National Minimum Standards.

Copies of Birth Certificates and other proofs of identity were not uniformly held.

Records of interviews were not, generally, held on file.

Records of proof of qualifications were not, generally, held on file.

Job descriptions were not, generally, held on file.

Gaps in employment records were not evidenced as having been investigated on file and there was a lack of evidence to indicate that direct contact had been made with referees by the School.

Not all files contained Health Declarations as required by Shropshire County Council.

It was not clear that all referees had been asked to state any know reason why a person should not be employed to work with children.

The gap students files were the most comprehensive and contained the relevant elements.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

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

CRB checks were not recorded for some teaching members of staff in the Adams House system, although it is acknowledged that they may have been held in the School system. However, acceptable practise for schools differs from that for Boarding Schools, where clear CRB checks are required before any individual starts work.

One recently appointed member of staff had started work without a satisfactory CRB check being completed before employment at the School.

Adams House has not yet started to look at instigating retrospective CRB checks for current members of staff.

Gap students, however, all had completed CRB checks in place.

A policy is in place regarding access to boarders by all non-staff adults, although this could do with expanding and clarifying for staff guidance.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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There are five separate areas of boarding accommodation at Adams House. Lower Girls and Boys have dormitory accommodation while older pupils either have single or shared rooms. There is communal provision in the Main House and the Upper Boys House, with a small 'lounge' in the Upper Girls House.

Standards of provision across and within the five boarding houses at Adams House were found to be variable and it was acknowledged by the school that work needs to be undertaken to improve certain elements of the accommodation.

Since September, some redecoration of areas of the boarding accommodation has been undertaken which has improved its appearance.

It was evident that boarders had personalised their personal space and that there was a 'homely' feel to the boarding houses.

The ventilation in all houses was adequate. Some bedrooms were noted and reported not to be very warm, with some draughty windows in places.

There were areas, in all houses, where lighting was not felt to be adequate. This was particularly noted in some bedrooms in the Upper Boys' House and in some areas of the Main House accommodation.

All bedrooms and communal rooms which were seen were found to be clean. Bathrooms throughout, however, required attention to both cleanliness and maintenance and the school

are aware of this as a matter requiring action.

Furnishings varied in quality from room to room, and house to house, but many chairs, bedside cabinets, wardrobes and chests of drawers required attention for repair or replacement.

There were reports from boarders that some areas of their accommodation were noisy and this was apparent in the Lower Sixth Girls' House. Boarders indicated that they could hear other boarders conversations between floors and that the constant shutting and opening of doors was audible and distracting. It was noted that this was the case during the visit to this house.

The Main House Common Room, which is open plan, became noisy in the evenings when there were competing demands between activities.

Adams House does not currently provide accommodation for any boarder with physical disabilities. The Head of Boarding indicated that any pupil requiring ground floor accommodation would be provided with this if it were available and if the school felt that it could make necessary provision for particular needs.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Boarders have their own accommodation, which is protected from public intrusion by the use of key pads and locks. Staff indicated that they felt it was highly unlikely that anyone who was not known to boarders would be allowed to enter the school without a member of staff being informed. There is no key pad on the sixth form, Ruscoe Centre, but staff felt that risks there were minimal as there was always a staff presence in this area.

Comment was received that some boarders would be happy to have locks on their bedroom doors, particularly in the Upper Sixth Girls' House, for back up in the event of the front door security being breached.

Some, but not all, windows were secure from outside access.

Boarders' sleeping areas were found to be for the exclusive use of boarders and other pupils sharing study/bedroom provision, other than by the reasonable invitation of the pupils designated to use those areas, with the exception of the Upper Boys' accommodation. Upper Girls have access to the Upper Boys' Common Room, which is on the ground floor of their accommodation.

The school does not use CCTV or any alarm system.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14)

Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.

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

Sleeping accommodation was, generally, found to be suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.

It is understood that requests to change sleeping accommodation are considered by staff and actioned if a request is seen as reasonable.

Bunk beds are not used at Adams House. Boarders reported that their bedding is washed fortnightly, but that they have access to a washing machine should they wish to use it.

Lower School Boys were seen to have arranged the furniture in their dormitory to suit their requirement for privacy or otherwise and each area had been decorated with personal possessions and posters. Lower School Girls had similarly personalised the cubicles in one dormitory and their sleeping areas in the other. On the Upper School houses, shared and single rooms felt homely and contained personal possessions and decoration.

There were some areas, in each house, where minimum standards were not met.

In the Lower Boys' dormitory two of the beds were reported to be very narrow and uncomfortable. Some study tables appeared too small. It was acknowledged that the school has been replacing beds and mattresses and that this programme is continuing.

It was noted that there was nowhere to put wet towels to dry apart from on small radiators. There was evidence of a shortage of chairs on this house and some broken or ill-fitting furniture.

Two of the Lower Girls' cubicles did not have windows, but did have 'borrowed light' and lamps.

Some boarders reported that storage space was a problem and that there was a limited amount of shelving for books, CDs and other materials. Some boarders were storing their clothes on the top of their wardrobes.

Two wardrobes for lower school girls were kept outside a bedroom in order to allow enough space for beds in this room. It was acknowledged that Adams House boarding accommodation is different from one house to another and that disadvantages and advantages should be balanced as fairly as possible between boarders and houses.

On the Upper Boys house, it was noted that the lighting in some rooms was dim. There was a certain amount of damage to furniture evident and radiators appeared to be temperamental. A engineer was, however, called to the house during the period of the inspection as the boiler appeared not to be working.

It was noted that in Room 11 there was access to an airing cupboard, in which boys were storing potentially combustible materials.

On the Upper Girls house, one ground floor window did not have adequate net curtaining

and the girls in Room 17 were aware that visitors to staff accommodation might pass that window.

No blind was available between Room 16 and the atrium area, again presenting a potential privacy problem.

As on other houses, comments were received about the inadequate size of some desks, the lack of some cupboard space and the variability of the heating system.

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2)

Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

All boarders were seen to have access to an area for study but the provision of light was not found to be good overall. There were also areas where noise was reported to be a problem, for instance in the Lower Sixth Girls accommodation.

Some desks were seen, and reported, to be too small to work on effectively. It was acknowledged that, in some cases, personal preferences about the age and style of furniture played a part in the comments received.

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10)

Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

Boarders have access to toilet and washing facilities and, in general, these are easily accessible and appropriately accessible.

The standard of provision does not meet minimum standards in all cases and the school is aware of this.

In some areas, such as the Lower Boys' accommodation, privacy is compromised by the arrangement of the facilities and the lack of locks on bathroom doors. This was found also to be the case in the Lower Girls dormitory area. Privacy is more apparent as boarders move to 'older' accommodation.

In several areas, it was noted that bathroom windows were plain glass, or that there were no blinds or curtains available to provide privacy.

There was considerable evidence that bathrooms, toilets and shower areas throughout require maintenance, cleaning and refurbishment. Mildew was apparent on some ceilings and around shower bases. Some shower heads were broken and some shower trays were leaking onto bathroom floors. Some extractor fans were not of sufficient quality to remove damp air.

On the Upper Boys' house one shower was leaking and causing rust on a radiator and shower rail.

Other observations included broken toilet roll holders, insufficient shaver points for the number of boys using the bathrooms, a broken toilet seat and a lack of space to hang clothes to dry.

Boarders also reported that the hot water could also be either too hot or too cold and in places the water was too hot to hold a hand under.

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3)

Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

Boarders use the changing facilities at the Thomas Adams School during the day and when changing for sports and games.

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6)

Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.

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

The lower school girls and boys have access to the Main House Common Room. The upper school girls and boys have the use of a common room situated by the main office in the upper school boys' house and the upper school girls have a very small area with a TV and telephone within their house. Most boarders, however, use the Main House Common Room at some point during the day or evening. The positive aspect of this arrangement is that all boarders mix with each other, but the negative aspect is that younger boarders have no area which is solely their own.

Outdoor areas available to the borders on Adams House site are quite limited and restrictive. In the summer months they have access to lawned areas to the rear of the home but generally, if they are allowed, the boarders walk into town, take part in the sports twice a week or use the basket ball courts. Boarders do have access to the Thomas Adams School outside areas during the week, after school, and as activities are arranged.

The school is currently converting a small room in the Main House as a quiet room, as there is an acknowledgement that there are few, if any, areas where boarders can be alone if they wish. Many boarders share dormitories or bedrooms and thus are unlikely to find themselves which much solitude. The IT suite and the Library are quiet and can be used by boarders in the evenings.

Access to the boarding Houses outside school time presents no problems. There are restrictions to access during school time.

Access to staff accommodation is strictly forbidden unless the house parents have invited them as part of an organised event, i.e. a party or a meeting.

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9)

Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.

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

The boarders' sleeping and living areas appeared to be free from any significant hazards, although trailing flexes were seen in one or two rooms. Many rooms contained multi-socket extension leads to facilitate the use of electrical equipment. A risk assessment report was seen, identifying that this had been looked at, but the hazard analysis documents were not available for inspection. Boarders confirmed that they were required to have electrical items tested for safety.

Windows above the ground floor were not fitted with suitable opening restrictors. It was noted that some ground floor windows had been secured against access from outside.

Windows in vulnerable areas had been treated with safety film or were made with suitable toughened glass.

The area between the upper boys' accommodation and the Main House was felt to be poorly lit and the lighting in the area between the boarding accommodation and the Ruscoe building was not fully functioning. Both these areas are accessible to the public during early, but dare, evenings.

The school has a health and safety policy in place, but this needs to be updated to include the correct contact details for the Head of Boarding. No risk assessments were seen to be in place for any of the areas identified in this standard.

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4)

Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.

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

The school does not have a sick bay or sanatorium, but there is a 'sick room' on the top floor of the Head of Boarding's house, which is within the Main House. This is a large room, with adequate space for visitors. The adjoining bathroom has a toilet, handbasin, bathrooms and shower. The location of this room was not felt to be ideal, in terms of access.

Sick boarders are usually cared for in their own rooms. This room is potentially for use by a boarder with a contagious illness or, presumably, where a sick boarder is accommodated in a dormitory and where it would be more appropriate to move one sick boarder than 5 well boarders.

Those staff and boarders who spoke to the inspectors about arrangements for sick boarders did not, however, appear to be aware of this room or its potential for use.

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The laundry is taken on a daily basis to the local laundrette for a service wash and in addition the home provides two washing machines, two tumble driers, an iron and ironing board.</p> <p>Access to the homes facility is on a rota basis from Mon to Thurs, with free access from Friday to Sunday.</p> <p>Laundry is reported to be returned appropriately to its owner, provided it is named.</p>		

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2) Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Families of boarders are requested to send a float of £250 at the start of term to cover the cost of school trips, stationery, books and personal items.</p> <p>The boarders who are above 1* status are allowed to access the local shops for toiletries and stationery.</p>		

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11) Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
<p>This standard does not apply to Adams House and was not, therefore, reviewed at this inspection.</p>		

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8) Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
<p>This standard does not apply to Adams House and was not, therefore, reviewed at this inspection.</p>		

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 8th November 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

We are working on the best way to include Provider responses in the published report. In the meantime responses received are available on request.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the Head

YES

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.

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 recommended actions in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion

Head 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 Thomas Adams School confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Or

**D.3.2 I _____ of Thomas Adams School
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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