



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Radlett Lodge Schools

Harper Lane
Radlett
Hertfordshire
WD7 9HW

Lead Inspector
Julia Bradshaw

Announced Inspection
14th September 2005 and 9th November 2005 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

Those outcomes are:

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

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

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

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of school	Radlett Lodge Schools
Address	Harper Lane Radlett Hertfordshire WD7 9HW
Telephone number	01923 854922
Fax number	91923 859922
Email address	radlett.lodge@nas.org.uk
Provider Web address	Vanessahalfacre@nas.org.uk
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	National Autistic Society
Name of Head	Mrs Lynda Tucker
Name of Head of Care	Frances Power.
Age range of residential pupils	4 - 11
Date of last welfare inspection	23 rd February 2005

Brief Description of the School:

Radlett Lodge is a purpose built school and residential facility for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and is owned by the National Autistic Society. The home is located just outside the village of Radlett and approximately 2 miles from the city of St Albans. Both facilities are located on the same site and are integral to each other. The School and Lodge provide a service for 38 weeks of the year.

The Lodge is a two-storey house, which accommodates up to a maximum of 14 pupils at any time. The lounge and dining areas of the home are light and airy. There are televisions, videos and play stations available for all pupils to use, as well as a large selection of outdoor equipment for use in the garden area. There are also computers that can be used for homework or leisure.

The Principal is Mrs Lynda Tucker, who has overall responsibility for both the school and the Lodge. The Head of Care manages the residential care provision. The staff group are contracted to work in both the school and the Lodge.

SUMMARY

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

This was another very positive Inspection, which was carried out over two separate days. The first part was conducted by three Inspectors and covered standards relating to the children's rights, child protection, care and control, planning, premises, staffing and organisation and management. The second day of the Inspection was carried out during the teatime/evening period and involved joining the children for tea and taking part in the evening activities.

All the standards were met and several were exceeded. The care of the children continues to be of a high quality and the organisation of Radlett Lodge is both clear and comprehensive with staff commenting on how professional and supportive the senior staff team are within the home. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging children to reach their full potential, within the framework of the risk assessment process. The children communicated positively through various forms of communication and service user feedback forms about the service they receive at the home and appeared to be comfortable and proud to show the inspectors around their home. Everyone working with the children at Radlett Lodge appeared to treat the children with dignity, respect and ensure they have the best quality of life despite the severity of their special needs. Once again the inspector would like to thank the children and staff for their hospitality during this inspection, with special thanks to the pupil who took the trouble to show the inspector around their home.

What the school does well:

The whole school has an ethos of integrity rather than expediency. It both empowers and listens to the children and recognises that each has a valuable contribution to make. Radlett Lodge offers a safe environment that, paradoxically also offers each boarder challenges that promote his or her confidence and skills. Staff were observed to be interacting with the pupils in a caring and professional manner. One of the greatest achievements at Radlett Lodge is the care it provides for the children, which is excellent. Each child is seen as a whole person and is given the experiences, within their abilities that other youngsters would have. While health and personal care needs are met, these do not dominate, and the atmosphere in this residential school is both happy and relaxed. Mutual affection and concern is very evident. The home achieves the goal of its mission statement by integrating education, care and therapy, thereby promoting the self-esteem and personal autonomy of the child. Everyone living at Radlett Lodge is treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. The environment that has been created by the staff team within the home, has helped develop an atmosphere where children and students live in a calm, controlled and where possible, relaxed environment. Care starts from the needs of the individual. All are given the opportunity to make a wide range of choices. Each person is encouraged to do as much as he or she can

to facilitate independence. The admissions procedure and care planning process is excellent. This excellent care setting has been created by using the philosophy of " low arousal", to ensure pupils live in a calm, controlled and where possible, relaxed environment. Care starts from the needs of the individual.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The school continues to perform to a high standard meeting the entire national minimum whilst exceeding a number of standards.

Relationships with parents and carers continues to improve whilst the general standards of the school and all of its internal communication systems only strengthen the standards and the school ongoing ability to meet them.

What they could do better:

There is little that Radlett Lodge staff need to do in terms of improving the current standard of residential care as there is wealth of evidence that demonstrates the high standards that staff and pupils continue to achieve during the past year and since the last inspection took place. There were no recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

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

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

14 & 15

All health care needs are managed effectively and professionally.

The home has effective and detailed policies.

Meals provided are both nutritional and varied.

EVIDENCE:

The home has detailed and comprehensive policies in relation to intimate care of children and all care staff receive this information as part of their induction programme. Currently, care staff are not called upon to meet any intimate needs. They are sensitive to individual emotional and physical needs and actively support individuals (each child has a care plan that includes a health section). There are specific plans drawn up to cover individual needs and these include protocols and emergency procedures. The School has a Health Education programme that is promoted by all care staff as appropriate. Staff receive first aid training and will assist with or oversee the use of prescribed medication. Issues of personal hygiene are dealt with sensitively. Parents deal with routine medical, optical and dental appointments, although a number of children are registered with a local G.P. and with the family G.P. on a visitor basis. Staff will accompany a child to an appointment as is appropriate to their age, wishes and the circumstances.

At the time of this inspection there was a vacancy for a full time cook. However an agency cook was covering this post effectively. The Inspectors were invited to join the children for tea, which is served in two separate settings. There was a choice of two main courses, which were sampled and found to be flavoursome and nutritional. Meals are chosen using pictorial aids with the children and menu's drawn up on a weekly basis. Staff were observed to interact both appropriately and professionally and were seen to be very skilful in managing potentially challenging situations. There food offered was plentiful

and children were seen to be making informed choices of the food they wished to eat and were supported to do this with the help of the staff.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

3,4,5,6,7,8,10,26 & 27.

Staff respect children's privacy.

Systems are in place to assist children in making informed choices and in supporting decisions about their lives.

The home has robust policies in place in relation to child protection and anti-bullying.

The environment created is both safe and homely.

The home provides an effective pictorial complaints policy.

The welfare of the children is promoted.

EVIDENCE:

The home has an effective and robust policy in place in relation to child protection and the Head of Care is the designated Child Protection Officer and is responsible for implementing the "in-house" training for new and existing staff. The National Autistic Society has its own in-house policy in conjunction with the Hertfordshire County Council's Child protection procedure and policy. All staff are fully inducted into these policies as part of their overall induction and foundation training. There is a key worker system in place that also acts as an advocate for each child. Risk assessments are updated annually or sooner if required and examples of these were inspected and found to be of an excellent standard.

Each child has his/her individual plan for personal care plan and new staff work alongside established members of staff as part of their induction to ensure they learn the best way to meet each child's individual needs. Contact between parents and children is positively encouraged with the use of school/home contact book and there are private areas with the lodge where children can receive phone calls or visitors.

The Principal and staff should be congratulated on creating an excellent pictorial complaints procedure for the children to use and the National Autistic Society provides a comprehensive procedure, which encourages parents and others to address complaints to the Principal. The Lodge also supports the use of an outside Advocate on a regular basis. Staff spoken to on the two-day inspection confirmed that they were aware of the complaints procedure as part of their induction and knew the procedure to follow if they had cause for concern or complaint.

The School/Lodge should be congratulated on producing an excellent pictorial aid in relation to the anti-bullying policy. There was evidence of this procedure in both the School and the Lodge on the day of the inspection. Staff interviewed confirmed that they were inducted into this policy as part of their overall induction and appeared to have a clear understanding of how to recognise factors of bullying and how to pre-empt these situations occurring by identifying two key trigger factors" in particular group mixes. High staffing levels allow children to be supervised at all times and on occasions a ratio of two staff to one child is provided in order to ensure the child themselves is kept safe and also that their peers are kept a safe and within a secure environment.

The School and Lodge are fully aware of significant events that must be notified to parents and other relevant others, CSCI and Social Services. The Head of Care demonstrated a good understanding of the procedure to follow in relation to unsuitable staff and the Protection of Children Act. There have been

no serious incidents reported to the Commission since the last inspection took place.

The School and Lodge have comprehensive procedures covering absences and if a child goes missing. This issue would be identified as part of a child's behaviour support plan. There are strict guidelines and policies on physical restraint and these would be agreed as part of the package of care prior to a child joining the School/Lodge or drawn up as part of an on going issue in the individuals care plan.

The School/Lodge have comprehensive policies and procedures relating to the management of a child's behaviour, which is drawn up as part of an individual support plan. Due to the complex needs of children with Autism it is essential that all staff work consistently with each child. There were several examples of how staff have developed their expertise and skills in managing difficult situations on the two days of the inspection. Behavioural support plans are discussed and shared with parents to assist with consistency of approach. Staff spoken to confirmed that physical intervention was used as an absolute last resort. Daily records inspected also confirmed this. All staff receive training on physical intervention as part of the rolling programme of eight training modules based on the behaviour guidance document.

The school's caretaker is responsible for carrying out several of the health and safety checks within the lodge and attends to general maintenance, including checking the water temperatures and testing the fire alarms. All staff are inducted into fire procedures as part of their induction. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place covering key areas of risk, including the school's premises, activities within the Lodge and risks identified regarding outings/trips. There is also a comprehensive Health and Safety policy in place and this updated on an annual basis. Electronically controlled front gates protect the lodge and boundary fences are high enough to ensure a safe environment is maintained.

The majority of staff employed at Radlett Lodge are contracted to work in both the School and the Lodge. The principal and her senior team carry out these appointments. All information relating to staff appointments is maintained securely within the main office. Five staff files were inspected on the day of the inspection and all contained the relevant information required by this standard, including three references, induction programme contract/job description application form, letter of offer of appointment and confirmation of CRB checks.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

12,13 & 22.

Communication systems within the school and the lodge are excellent.

There is a wealth of meaningful activities provided.

Staffing levels provided are appropriate to meet the complex needs of the children.

EVIDENCE:

Staff employed are contracted to work in both the School and within the Lodge this assists with the consistency of approach. There are several systems of communication between the School and the Lodge, including a 24 Hour handover book and a daily verbal handover between the care staff and the teachers. Care staff attends the IEP (Individual Education Programme) meetings. Care staff carry out the PHSE curriculum jointly with the teachers. Independent living skills are supported and encouraged throughout the Lodge. Recreation and free times are structured to encourage participation and achieve maximum benefit from the activity. A wide range of leisure activities is arranged for the children including outdoors and community trips. The Lodge holds theme nights when food is brought and pupils engage in painting, decorations, dressing up and listening to different music to promote awareness of diverse cultures. Significant events such as birthdays are celebrated with a party, bouncy castles are also used for evening parties and pupils go out for meals, Bowling etc. Although the evenings are structured, pupils can chose to play and engage in other activities as they wish. They are provided with appropriate magazines, toys, games and music facilities. Cinema Nights are held at the Lodge and children also have the opportunity to visit the local cinema. The Lodge has the use of a mini bus to enable pupils to visit local

attractions such as 'Activity World', local parks, bowling alleys, shops and cafes. Pupils have the opportunity to use the school gymnasium and the garden apparatus. Individual and generic risk assessments are carried out and personal interests and hobbies are recorded in care files. The Inspectors had the opportunity to join an evenings activity within the School gym where various "parachute" games were played as well staff providing one to one support to specific children whilst they took part in various activities, including ball games and riding bicycles.

All children receive individualised support as detailed in their care plans. Children are encouraged to participate in social groups and isolation is minimised by the school using strict admission criteria by only admitting children who are diagnosed within the "autistic spectrum". Communication is facilitated through a variety of aids including Makaton and Symbols. Staff are skilled in identifying potentially challenging situations and there are clear and comprehensive guidelines in place to pre-empt these situations escalating.

Psychologist, speech and language therapy are provided within the school. No therapeutic techniques are employed other than those under the instruction of the qualified Psychologist and speech and language therapists. Referrals are made for other specialist support as required. While personal, health, social education commences in the classroom, it is reported to carry over into the residential unit. The staffing levels provided within the Lodge are suitable to meet the individual needs of the children, which can, in some cases be two staff to one child for specific activities or trigger points in the day.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

2,9,11,17 & 20.

Children's involvement is encouraged and supported.

Children's Individual support plans are produced to a high standard.

Parental contact is clearly encouraged and evidenced.

The admission process is comprehensive and detailed.

EVIDENCE:

The staff should be congratulated on the systems that have been created to encourage and support child involvement. The opinions of children are sought in a variety of ways through various systems of communication. The home provides a range of pictorial aids to assist with communicating their request, issues and concerns about the service they receive. This appears to be an effective system of communication. There is a system of contact books between home and school. Children are, as far as possible, at the centre of decision-making and 'house rules'. Children follow a variety of religions and although staff are sensitive to their needs, religious beliefs appear to be kept private and followed at home. Consultation uses the child's preferred means of communication, which is well documented in care plans. During the

inspection, there were many examples of pupils being offered choices, whether in terms of drinks, meals or activities.

Relationships between staff and children were observed to be very positive and appropriate. At all times, staff spoke to pupils (using appropriate communication methods) explaining what they were doing and why. Choices were offered at every opportunity. Due to the complex needs of the children living at the Lodge there are very comprehensive guidelines in place that need to be adhered to and these are used as part of the behavioural support plans for each child. The Lodge uses various systems to recognise and reward positive behaviour and achievement, including "star charts" and certificates of achievement. Also displayed in the home were choice boards. There was no sign of favouritism. The home operates a key worker system, which provides that essential role of advocate for each child. Prospective pupils are able to visit and view the Lodge prior to admission. Parents are involved in the planning process for admission. This is done on a gradual basis, starting with the child joining others at teatime and then staying overnight. The school has devised a pupil's 'Welcome to our Lodge' information pack which is provided to each prospective pupil prior to admission. This is in written, pictorial and sign format so that all pupils can understand it. Detailed recording of the pupil settling in is made in the home/school diary.

Handover, between the School and the Lodge takes place on a regular basis and a group evaluation is also carried out. Feedback to parents is given on how the child is settling in. The Lodge has a 'Look after Children' (LAC) review programme. An initial review is held during the first six weeks of admission. Four children's files were inspected. Each has a profile information sheet, parents contact form, medical consent form, Social Services report, annual review minutes and a behaviour support plan. Each pupil has a Development Learning Outcomes (DLO) programme, which includes self-help skills, daily living skills. A psychologist carries out a baseline assessment of achievement after admission and an individual educational care plan with objectives is devised in conjunction with the educational needs. Individual educational targets are set by a multi disciplinary team with the involvement of the child (where appropriate) and the parents. All children's departures are planned over a 12-month period and they are given appropriate information and guidance to assist in the process of transition.

There are excellent systems of recording and the Lodge should be congratulated in providing comprehensive and detailed individual care plans for the children living at Radlett Lodge. All children have very detailed care plans and IEPs (Individual Education Programmes). All placements are voluntary and parents are very involved with the devising of care plans, from providing information to attending review meetings. There are annual reviews of IEPs and parents and children are invited to attend these. Local Authorities are

responsible for 6 monthly reviews of the placements, while care plans are reviewed every term within the school. Each child has a key worker. Four care plans were inspected were found to contain all the required information, with sufficient detail to enable staff to meet assessed needs Children are positively encouraged and enabled by the Lodge to maintain contact with their parents and other family members. The Statement of Purpose states that 'any restrictions on contact between the child and those significant to them will be detailed in the placement plan and must be strictly adhered to. It is the right of the child to remain in contact with those significant to them, and due to differences in communication, social understanding of children with autism, staff will usually need to provide encouragement and facilitate this'. During the week, staff contact parents regarding any welfare concerns. There are several area within the Lodge where children can meet in private with their parents. Staff do receive some training, as part of the induction programme, develop their skill to work with the children and their parents.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- Children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money.(NMS 16)
- Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.(NMS 21)
- Children live in well designed and pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.(NMS 23)
- Children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.(NMS 24)
- Children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity.(NMS 25)

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

16,23,24 & 25.

There is a comprehensive transition plan in place for school leavers.

The premises are well maintained and offer a creative and homely environment

Personal respect and privacy are evidenced.

EVIDENCE:

Children are able to bring and keep their own clothes for the duration of their stay. The school Bursar keeps £2 per pupil per week and parents are asked to contribute to this if they are able. Children are taken shopping to spend their pocket money by care staff. Children do not manage their own money.

The Lodge continues to be maintained to a high standard and the staff and children have worked hard to enhance their environment with examples of their creative work and individual interests displayed throughout the home. Colour schemes are devised with " a low arousal theme" and advice sought from a colour expert. Radlett Lodge is situated in the village of Radlett, which has open spaces and pleasant countryside. It is purpose built and is within the

grounds of the school. The main entrance has electronically controlled security gates and the boundaries are fenced providing a safe and secure environment.

Radlett Lodge is a two-storey building. On the ground floor there are three separate lounges, three toilets for children and two for adults. There is also a kitchen, dining room and a small quiet/relaxation room. The first floor has nine bedrooms, two bathrooms with toilets and four other bathrooms. There are a further four toilets, a staff shower room, two staff sleeping in rooms, a laundry room and a linen room. None of the children accommodated have disabilities and therefore aids and adaptations are not required. There are adequate numbers of toilets and bathrooms facilities for the number of pupils in the Lodge. Privacy of children is ensured, although several children require staff assistance.

Management

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

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

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

1, 18, 19, 28, 29, 31 & 33.

There is an excellent Statement of purpose in place.

Records are maintained to a high standard.

Staff are skilled and experienced in the field of Autism.

The School and Lodge are managed effectively and efficiently.

Training needs are met.

EVIDENCE:

The school has produced an excellent Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes the purpose and function of both the school and its residential unit and contains all of the information required by this standard. The Principal,

head of care and staff should be congratulated on producing a superb “user friendly” document which has been devised in a manner that is easy to understand and describes the speech/oral approach to education and care provided. There is a good working link between the School and the Lodge that creates a continuum of care for weekly and respite boarders. Read in conjunction with the school prospectus, the Statement of Purpose provides a full picture of the range of services on offer. The Lodge can only accommodate children who meet the stated criteria and provision of service and are within the autistic spectrum, and only then if there is a peer group for the new child to join. On the day of the inspection four care plans were examined. The care plans were found to be written in a clear accessible style. Changes in behaviour were carefully noted, and generally the recording was undertaken in a positive style, noting progress and development. Children are involved in reviewing their own progress and there was evidence of involvement with children’s comments, likes and dislikes being included in the plans. Staff stated that any requests for access to the records are supported, subject to the Data Protection Act. The Head of Care is fully aware that these records must be kept for a period of 21 years, or passed on to the next school. Several records were sampled during the Inspection and those for both staff and children contained all the elements required by this standard. Recruitment procedures were thorough and the Head of Care is fully aware of the need to keep details of anyone living or working on the schools premises. Some records are kept in the school building; such as staff records (personnel). Records relating to menus, risk assessments, and child health care needs are kept within the Lodge. Each child has their own independence checklist record, as skills are attained so they are recorded as being met. This checklist is clearly presented and provides a quick reference point to a child’s attainment.

The Head of Care was aware of the need to keep these records for a period of five years and menu’s for one year.

The Lodge is managed by the Head of Care who is supported by a Senior Team Leader. The staffing is divided into two teams led by a team leader and the team is made up of 3 staff. The Lodge provides adequate staffing for the needs of the current group of children. There are 9 members of staff on duty from 7.30 a.m. to 3.30p.m with the Head of Care supernumerary to these numbers. This provides three members of staff per group of children. The evening staff arrive at 2.45 p.m. and work until 9.45p.m. During the night there are two staff sleeping in and two waking night carers on duty. The home currently has no vacancies. There is a full time cook in the residential unit. (Although this post is currently vacant) The assistant caretaker carries out domestic and routine maintenance jobs within the home.

The newly appointed Head of Care has been in post for a period of three months. The current staff team within the Lodge have a wealth of experience and knowledge within the field of Autism are currently receiving support from the senior management team with the school. The Lodge has good systems of communication, with three handover shifts per day to ensure the consistency of approach is maintained. The School and Lodge have planned responses to

all foreseeable crises. The Lodge provides adequate staffing levels for the needs of the children, currently using the service. On occasions additional staffing is provided where a risk assessment has dictated that a child requires additional support, in order to ensure the safety of the child, and other children living at the Lodge and staff. The staff team appeared both knowledgeable and professional in their approach with the children and should be congratulated on providing a safe, stimulating and homely environment for everyone using this service. The Head of Care and support staff have worked extremely hard in creating a professional, creative and enjoyable environment in which to work and should be congratulated on their commitment throughout the year and in preparing and producing some excellent documentation and delivering a truly excellent service to children with the Autistic spectrum. The respite service remains in place and has been utilised by several families since its creation in 2005. All staff receive induction training within the first six weeks of appointment. A schedule of training needs is identified as part of the supervision process.

The home provides an excellent training programme both internally from senior staff members and through the NAS rolling programme and also through external professional trainers. Staff spoken to during this inspection stated that they had the opportunity to attend a range of courses. Courses attended include behaviour management, child protection, SCIP-1, first aid, manual handling, food hygiene and spell-2. There are several staff who are currently working towards achieving either NVQ level 3 in Caring for Children and Young people and NVQ level 4 in management. The Lodge is expected to achieve its target of 80% of staff with NVQ level 3.

A representative from the National Autistic Society visits the home on a monthly basis and written reports following this visit are sent to the school. Copies of the reports were available for inspection. The school has a comprehensive policy detailing the role of the Appointed Visitor. This policy also details staff responsibilities and states that 'any member of staff within the residential setting may be required to host an inspection and will be expected to understand and support the process'. Further guidance in the policy includes the role of the Appointed Visitor, an example of an official National Autistic Society Identity Card, Interviews with children, representatives, parents and staff, issues to consider and guidelines for making a complaint. The school and residential unit also have a Service Support Committee who monitor and review care practices, the welfare of the children and current policies and procedures. The membership of this committee includes, professional involved in the school, professionals from other educational establishments, a representative of the local council, parents and staff representatives. Communication links are clear and policies and procedures are both comprehensive and detailed regarding the health and welfare of the children living at the Lodge. The home continues to work hard in establishing positive and open communication links with families, carers and relevant professionals.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

“N/A” in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

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

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

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3
9	3
11	3
17	4
20	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	3
21	x
23	4
24	3
25	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	4
18	3
19	3
28	3
29	4
30	3
31	4
32	4
33	3

NO

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

No.	Standard	Recommendation	Timescale for action (Serious welfare concerns only)
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Commission for Social Care Inspection

Hertfordshire Area Office

Mercury House

1 Broadwater Road

Welwyn Garden City

Hertfordshire

AL7 3BQ

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

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