



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL SCHOOL

Penn Hall School

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

Lead Inspector
Mike Moloney

Key Announced Inspection
6th February 2007 11:00

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	Penn Hall School
Address	Vicarage Road Penn Wolverhampton West Midlands WV4 5HP
Telephone number	01902 558355
Fax number	01902 558363
Email address	admin@pennhall.biblio.net
Provider Web address	www.wolverhampton.gov.uk
Name of Governing body, Person or Authority responsible for the school	Wolverhampton City Council
Name of Head	Mr A. J. Stoll
Name of Head of Care	
Age range of residential pupils	
Date of last welfare inspection	

Brief Description of the School:

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

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

SUMMARY

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

A range of evidence was used to make judgements about this service. This includes: information from the school, records kept in the residence, medication records, discussions with the staff team, tour of the premises, previous inspection reports, questionnaires returned by parents and staff and observing the care experienced by the children.

The children using the residence on the day of the inspection were amongst the youngest to use the service. Although the inspector did attempt to talk to them about the facility it was clear that their interests were in more specific elements of the service such as table football and the other toys.

What the school does well:

The Residence in Penn Hall School continues to provide the pupils with a safe and structured environment that they can enjoy with their friends. The care and support is given in the same manner as it is given within the school so that the children and young people do not receive contradictory messages.

The parents of some of the children have commented,
"They make the child feel totally comfortable when being away from home. Lovely friendly atmosphere!"
"Its very supportive of the child and the family."

The standard of care is seen as,
"Excellent standard of care. ***** really enjoys her stays and all of the activities that they do".

In the questionnaire sent to parents there is the question, 'What do you think are the worst things about the School's residence. One parent has replied,
"Have yet to find anything except perhaps she loves staying there more than being at home."

Given what was seen during the inspection these comments come as no surprise.

What has improved since the last inspection?

No recommendations were made as a result of the last inspection, however, as this is a school that is always looking to improve its own performance a number have been made.

Since the last inspection the life skills area has been opened, the former 'sleep-in' room has been turned into the second bedroom, more nursing style beds have been obtained and automatic closers have been fitted to some of the doors. These changes have further increased the opportunities for the pupils to increase their independence without compromising their safety, privacy and dignity.

Risk assessments have been further developed to further enhance the safety of the children and young people using this facility.

What they could do better:

No recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection. However, as stated above, this is a school that is always looking to develop its own performance.

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. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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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)

The Commission considers Standard 14 the key standard to be inspected.

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

14

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The healthcare needs of the children and young people are met.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The records for three of the children who were staying at the residence that night were looked at and these contained all of the information that would be necessary to meet their needs. These records were in both hard copy as well as being accessible to the staff on the school computer intra-net.

Watching and listening to the staff from both the residence and the school talking to each other at the end of the school day it was clear that they were conscientious about keeping each other up to date with issues in the child's care and development. One of the classroom staff was seen to spend some time in the residence with one of her pupils making sure that he settled in. Talking with the staff it was clear that this practice, as well as that of classroom staff arriving early in the mornings to join in with breakfast to find out how the previous night went, was a regular but unofficial practice within the school which demonstrated the positive attitude of the staff team.

The staff also confirmed that they had received training in the safe handling of medicines from the school nurse.

The children's records also contained the contact details of GPs and families for contact in emergencies although the Head of Care did say that parents would

normally pick their child up if they became ill whilst at the residence. She went on to say that both families and the school nurse are usually available by telephone to give advice should the need arise.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

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

3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

Systems are in place to safeguard the welfare of the pupil

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

There have been no new staff recruited to work at the residence since the last inspection and therefore it was not possible to re-evaluate their recruitment procedures.

A number of policies and procedures for the guidance of staff were seen during the inspection.

Amongst these was the complaints procedure which clearly outlined the steps to be followed should a complaint be received. The head of care said that none had.

The child protection policies were also looked at and these were seen to have been reviewed recently in line with the local authority policies in such matters. The staff confirmed that they receive regular child protection training.

Issues around sanctions and restraints, although rare, were seen to have been accurately recorded and then reviewed by senior school staff. Talking with the head of care about such issues it was clear that the infrequency of such incidents would make the need for formal restraint training unnecessary. Talking not only with her but other staff as well and also observing the behaviour of the children it was no surprise to learn that the need for formal behaviour management programmes is extremely rare within the school. Other policies such as anti-bullying and those for if a child is missing were seen to be in place. The staff confirmed that the latter policy had not had to be followed as none of the children had ever gone missing from the residence. Looking at the records also showed that a comprehensive range of risk assessments relating to the care of each child was being developed. A whole range of policies were available to staff giving guidance on how the privacy and dignity of the children should be safeguarded.

Looking around the residence it was obvious that the building had been improved since the last inspection. One corner of the building had been developed as a life skills teaching facility and staff talked about how this has been used in the evenings by children and young people staying at the residence. This change has made it necessary to utilise other rooms in different ways as what was one of the bedrooms is now the access to this new facility and this has been overcome by moving the beds into what was one of the staff 'sleep-in' rooms. Of those beds only one is a standard divan whilst all the rest are nursing style beds with such things as bed rails built in.

The records of checks on the fire safety systems showed that these are monitored on a regular basis and looking at the building it was seen that the corridor doors are now linked to the alarm system so that they close

automatically in the case of fire. Being able to leave them open means that the children in wheelchairs are now able to move around more independently.

Records were also seen that showed that the hot water temperatures were regulated to avoid the risk of burns and scalds.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

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

12 and 22

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

The children and young people using the Residence enjoy working towards their identified goals in this environment. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The group of children staying at the residence on the day of the inspection were amongst the youngest of those using the service. The inspector did attempt to obtain their views of the service but they seemed to consider other activities much more interesting and so he was put to use as a table football opponent and a partner for ball games.

The overall ethos of the residence was outlined by the head teacher and he sees it as an extra resource in meeting the like skills goals of the pupils. Staff spoken to talked about how they communicate with classroom staff as much as possible so that the children and young people are handled in as consistent a way as possible. Feedback from a number of parents who were asked to complete questionnaires as part of this inspection has been very positive on this and all other issues. Comments like 'It gives the children the opportunity to spend leisure time with their friends and have time out from their parents!' and 'Helps children to become more independent-builds confidence' were amongst the replies received.

The children who were using the residence at the time of the inspection demonstrated very clearly what they expected from the service by going for the toys that they obviously knew were there. Some of them had gone to the after school club known as 'Penn Pals' and those that could were heard negotiating their attendance with the staff with one member of the staff staying with them until they needed to go back to the residence for tea.

Some of the young people were wheel-chair users and one good example, of many, of how their disabilities were catered for was simply by linking the corridor door self closing mechanisms into the fire alarm system so that the doors could be left open and were therefore less of a barrier to them. All of the children's needs were detailed in their care notes so that measures such as this could be identified and put into place. Assisted bathing facilities were available as was a shaft lift, hoists, slings and other manual handling equipment.

During the inspection there were conversations about theme days, many of these based on different cultures and photographs were seen of costumes and food cooked or brought in by families from a range of backgrounds as part of the events.

The head of care also explained how some families brought in pre-prepared meals to help meet the religious needs of their child. She did say, however, that the staff always make every effort to provide the children with food that meets their medical and cultural needs. Looking at the records of the food provided by the residence confirmed this.

Looking at the records of the activities undertaken also showed a good spread of ideas. The grounds provide good facilities for use by the children during the warmer evenings and the residence is equipped with a good range of toys, games etc. A variety of evening outings have also taken place with trips to burger bars or, for the older pupils, trips to foot-ball matches.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

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

2, 17 and 20

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Children have their needs assessed and plans are developed by the school and the staff of the Residence are aware of these and work within any guidelines that have been established by this process. This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

As outlined elsewhere in this report the staff of the residence attempt to ensure that the religious and cultural needs of the children staying there are met. These have been identified as part of their support packages. The head of care confirmed that these needs are reviewed at least annually and more frequently if necessary.

Although the children and young people only stay at the residence for short periods the manager confirmed that their families and carers are able to visit

at any time. The contact details for the families and carers were seen to be available in their records should the staff need to talk to them.

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):

EVIDENCE:

None of the standards in this section are considered key and therefore were not looked at.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

1, 28, 31 and 32

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This service is led by stable, respected and authoritative managers and leaders who promote clear vision and values. Staff and carers are trained, skilled and in sufficient numbers to provide a high quality service.

This Judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

EVIDENCE:

The school has a brochure entitled 'Welcome to Penn Hall School' in which there is information about the residence.

The information about the unit is gained first hand by the pupils. Given the nature of the disabilities and the age of the children using the service at the time of this inspection it is difficult to see how this can be otherwise. Young people spoken to on previous inspections confirm that they learn about the residence by first hand experience and for those who join the school later in their academic career they said that they find out by word of mouth through their friends.

The lifestyles area is now in use. Access is through what was a bedroom. That bedroom has now been relocated to the old staff 'sleep in' room. All beds but one are now of a 'nursing' style with built in rails.

The staffing rota was looked at and it showed that appropriate numbers of staff are available to look after the children staying at the residence and talking to the staff established that it was an accurate reflection of who was on duty. They also explained that staff from the children's own classrooms often come in early in the morning and help at breakfast time while having informal information handover about the success of the previous night.

The rota showed that the Deputy Head Teacher regularly works in the residence on Tuesday nights and gets an overview of its performance through that. Similarly the residence staff team meeting is held on a Friday morning and is chaired by the Head Teacher. The staff also explained that various School Governors visit the residence from time to time on an informal basis. The Head Teacher commented that he was considering asking the Board of Governors to make this a more formal arrangement as part of the schools quality assurance procedures.

The head of care talked about how she is progressing with her professional training. She is currently working towards an NVQ level 4 in Child Care Learning and Development which is an appropriate qualification for someone managing such a service.

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	x

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

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	4
13	x
22	4

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

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

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

no

Are there any outstanding recommendations from the last inspection?

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

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

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