

# inspection report

Residential Special School (not registered as  
a Children's Home)

## **West Kirby Residential School**

Meols Drive

West Kirby

Wirral

CH48 5DH

28th February, 1st & 2nd March 2005

## **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**

West Kirby Residential School

**Address**

Meols Drive, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 5DH

**Tel No:**

0151 632 3201

**Fax No:**

**Email Address:**

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

Board of Governors

**Name of Principal**

Mr Gareth Wyn Williams

**CSCI Classification**

Residential Special School

**Type of school**

**Date of last boarding welfare inspection:**

24/02/04

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		28th February 2005	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:30 am	
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Nick Veysey	124124
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Name of CSCI Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> 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.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Mrs Yvonne Blackledge	

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## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (i.e. 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 Residential Special 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. Residential Special Schools are not registered as children's homes unless they accommodate, or arrange accommodation for, one or more children for more than 295 days a year.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of West Kirby Residential 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 SCHOOL AND RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

West Kirby Residential School is a non-maintained Special School, which provides primary and secondary education for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; medical conditions including aspergers syndrome; and speech, language and communication disorders. The majority of the boys and girls who attend the school are aged 5 to 16 years, and facilities may be extended up to the age of 19 years if it is considered to be in the pupils' best interests.

The school offers 30 residential places. There is a variety of boarding arrangements available depending on the needs of the child, ranging from one to four nights each week. The residential accommodation is divided into four separate groups, three for boys according to their age, and one for girls. All the bedrooms are single rooms. There are positive links and communication between the school and residential staff. The time after school is seen as an extension of the school day with the same high level of planning and communication that is seen during the day. Even with this being the case there is a clear distinction made between school time and after school. Children are able to use their free time constructively to pursue leisure and cultural activities and interests.

OfSTED inspected the school in January 2004. The OfSTED report was extremely positive about the school's performance and commented that *'This is an excellent school. The standards that pupils achieve are very high.'* The school was also inspected in 2004 by the Charity Commission, commented in the report that *'The Charity is clearly run by an effective and committed group of Trustees and staff.'*

During the academic year 2003/2004 the school gained accreditation for *Investors in People*. In addition it was awarded the 'Sportsmark' award and has gained with the 'Healthy School' (Silver award) and is being assessed for the gold award on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005. The school is also an authorised centre for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

## PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

### WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school has continued to show a commitment to the National Minimum Standards and has met all the recommendations made at the last inspection. The inspector found that the care practices in the school continued to be of an excellent standard. There were many areas where the school's performance was commendable and evidence of positive outcomes for the children who attend the school.

Pupils were generally very positive about the school and the care they received. One pupil said *'I think people look after me great at this school'*, and another said staff *'listen to you and take you seriously'*. Likewise, the feedback that the inspector received from parents about the school was extremely positive. Comments from parents included:

*'I feel that I can talk to the care staff about any problems and they will understand and help. My son is more independent, confident, has learned about personal life skills'*

*'The staff have never given up on my son, and have always been very supportive. The school has given him the chances and opportunities to enable him to come to terms with his problems and he has developed into a very positive young man'*

*'The staff are very caring and the pupils are treated with respect'*

*'The warm friendly atmosphere. I feel welcome whenever I visit or phone the school. My son is happy there'*

*'The excellent communication available to me from the staff. It is important for me to feel confident in them for my child'*

*'WKRS is a very caring school. The staff put the children first and nothing is too much trouble for them.'*

The school was particularly good in consulting children about the decisions affecting their daily lives and about the running of the school through mechanisms such as the complaints system, the school council and group meetings and on an individual basis through work with members of staff. In addition there was evidence that the school works particularly hard to develop good communication links with pupil's families and gathering their views.

The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child. Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school. There was evidence to show that the school has systems in place to identify and respond effectively to concerns about child protection. The school has used information technology systems to record and monitor pupils' attendance, and to monitor significant incidents involving pupils.

The inspector observed that relationships between staff and children were positive and based on respect and understanding. The atmosphere around the school was warm and friendly. The inspector saw many examples of staff maintaining safe, consistent and understandable boundaries for children in respect of acceptable behaviour. The inspector found that the school encourages pupils to develop acceptable behaviour through the positive and constructive management of inappropriate behaviour using an incentive scheme and a behavioural support team. The communication and relationship between the care and education staff was commendable. The work of the Behavioural Education Support Team

(BEST) in providing advice and guidance to pupils and staff was commendable.

The planning for children's care was comprehensive and thorough. There were many good examples of how the school provides support to individual children, and assist them prepare to leave the school. The children's files were up to date and well maintained.

The school was efficiently organised and managed. There was evidence of clear and effective leadership from the school's management team, and great emphasis on continuing to improve the standard of the services that the school provides. The staff group was skilled and knowledgeable, and well supported. There were opportunities for all staff to develop their skills through training programmes. The operation of the school and the welfare arrangements for the children were monitored.

#### **WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE**

There was evidence to show that the school was committed to continuing professional development and encouraging staff to complete NVQ Level 3. However, the school doesn't meet the requirements of NMS 31.4 that expects by 2005 a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff have completed NVQ Level 3 in caring for children and young people, or have qualifications that demonstrate the same competencies.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE**

This has been an extremely positive inspection. The school has demonstrated a clear commitment to meeting the National Minimum Standards and to continue to develop its services to meet the needs of the children who attend the school. The inspector observed a high standard of care practices and competence. The feedback about the school from pupils, parents and other professionals has been invariably complimentary. The inspector found many examples of positive outcomes for children.

The inspector would like to thank the principal, head of care, staff and in particular the children for their cooperation and assistance during the inspection.



## NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

**Local Education Authority  
Secretary of State**

NO

NO

<b>The grounds for any Notification to be made are:</b>

### IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

YES

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 actions are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.**

No	Standard*	Recommended Action
1	RS4	The principal and head of care should make sure that a written record is made of each complaint and includes the details of the person making the complaint, the date and nature of the complaint, and action taken, and the outcome of the complaint.
2	RS31	The principal should make sure that a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff have completed NVQ Level 3 in caring for children and young people, or have qualifications that demonstrate the same competencies. New care staff engaged from January 2004 hold such qualifications or begin working towards them within three months of joining the school.

## 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	RS14	The principal should make sure that the school keeps a separate record of controlled drugs receipt, administration, and disposal. These records must be kept in a bound book or register with numbered pages. It should include the balance remaining for each product with a separate page being kept for each child. The balance of controlled drugs should be checked at each administration, and also on a regular basis, for example, monthly.

Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. RS10 refers to standard 10.

**PART B****INSPECTION METHODS AND FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods were 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	
• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NA
• Chair of Governors	YES
Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Staff Survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Visit to Sanatorium / Sick Bay	YES
Parent Survey	YES
Placing authority survey	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	YES
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NA
Date of Inspection	28/02/05
Time of Inspection	09.20
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	28.10
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	3

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

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Age Range of Boarding Pupils**      **From**       **To**

### NUMBER OF BOARDERS AT TIME OF INSPECTION:

**BOYS**

**GIRLS**

**TOTAL**

**Number of separate Boarding Houses**

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 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 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.

## STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S PURPOSE

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- Children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils.

### Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.9)

The school has a written Statement of Purpose, which accurately describes what the school sets out to do for those children it accommodates, and the manner in which care is provided. The Statement can be made up of other documents, e.g., Letter of Approved Arrangements and school prospectus, which are required to include specific information.

### Key Findings and Evidence

### Standard met?

3

The school has a written statement of purpose outlined in the school prospectus and Principal's Introduction 2004/2005. This accurately reflects the overall objectives of the school and the services that it provides for pupils. It contains all the information required in NMS 1.3.

The inspector found that the school was able to meet the range of needs outlined in the statement of purpose and that the school only admits children whose needs can be met within the function of the school.

The statement of purpose and the school's written policies and procedures clearly apply to both the residential and educational aspects of the school, and identify how all the staff at the school create a continuum of care for the children.

The head of care informed the inspector that the school are in the process of developing a children's guide for the whole school, however, in the meantime there are children's information leaflets for each of the residential groups. These were detailed and informative, and included helpful information about the facilities available in the group, the daily routine, the school code of conduct, and what to do 'if you have a problem', as well as contact numbers for Child Line, the Commission, an Independent Listener, and the school's Help Line for weekends and holidays.

## **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

**The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:**

- **Children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way that the school is run. No child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views.**
- **Children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled.**
- **Children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration.**

**Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.9)**

Children's opinions, and those of their families or significant others, are sought over key decisions which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. Feedback is given following consultations.

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****4**

The responses from pupils to the questionnaires showed that they felt that staff asked their opinions about the school. One young person said that staff *'listen to you and take you seriously'*. They referred to the school council and group meetings as formal structures where consultation takes place and where pupils are able to raise issues and make decisions about the running of the school. The pupils were able to give a number of examples of where their opinions have made a difference to how the school is run including the provision of water machines around the school, the development for facilities for car maintenance, the opportunities for boys and girls to socialise in each other's groups on an evening, and the provision of different activities.

The school has a number of mechanisms to find out pupils opinions, including school council, a complaints book in the dining room, a suggestions box, being involved in school assemblies, and there was written evidence that pupil's views were sought following any significant incident. The inspector met with the Chair of the school council and read the minutes to the school council. This meets each month with two elected representatives from each class. Pupils are elected to the post of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The minutes showed that the council discussed all aspects of school life.

Meetings take place weekly for each residential group and are documented. The inspector observed the immediate boys group meeting. A young person chaired the meeting. The meeting provided an opportunity for both young people and staff to raise and discuss issues; and decide which activities they wanted to do the following week. Staff encouraged all the young people present to contribute and express their views.

There was written evidence in pupil's files that they participate in decisions about their daily lives on an individual basis through work with their key workers, and make a significant contribution to their annual reviews. Young people were also involved in developing school policies including the key worker and behavioural policy.

There was evidence that the school works particularly hard to develop good links with pupil's families through home/school agreements and diaries, half termly bulletins giving details of school events, parent's evening and annual reviews, and to include them in decisions about the school and their children's progress. Responses to the parent's questionnaire showed that parents felt that their opinions were asked their opinions decisions affecting their child, that they were encouraged to visit the school and made to feel welcomed.

**Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.11)**

**The school and staff respect a child's wish for privacy and confidentiality so far as is consistent with good parenting and the need to protect the child.**

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

All the pupils that responded to the questionnaires stated that they had enough privacy when using toilets and bathrooms.

The school has procedural guidelines for staff on privacy and confidentiality in line with NMS 3.2. The pupil's records are safely and securely stored, and remain confidential. The inspector found that staff know how to deal with and share information which they are given in confidence when necessary for child protection. The school has a Code of Practice for Employees When Dealing With Young People covering issues such as private meetings with pupils, performing personal care tasks, physical contact with young people, working with young people of the opposite sex, maintaining appropriate relationships, and dealing with 'crushes'.

Pupils are able to make telephone calls in private and the school provides space for children to meet privately with parents and others. There was evidence on the pupil's files of where restrictions of communication had been agreed with the placing authority.

Since the last inspection the school has introduced guidance for pupils and staff on when it may be necessary to search a child's possessions. This is now in accordance with NMS 3.11.



**Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.8)**

**Children know how and feel able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of living in the school, and feel confident that any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay.**

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

The pupils who responded to the questionnaires indicated that they knew how to make a complaint if they needed to, and the majority of them said that staff had told them about the complaints procedure.

The school has a written complaints policy and procedural guidelines in line with NMS 4.3. The head of care informed the inspector that staff have received training on dealing with complaints in staff meetings and supervision and had training on 'listening to children'. The contact telephone numbers for Child Line, the school's Helpline, and the Commission are displayed around the school. In addition, children have been given information about the Commission's children's rights website. The school has produced an information leaflet and comment form for pupils providing advice about making a complaint or suggestion, and what may happen next.

The school's complaints record shows that there had been seven complaints made by pupils in the last twelve months. All of them were dealt with at the informal stage of the procedure. The school hasn't received any complaints from parents, placing authorities or members of the public. The records showed that each of the complaint was investigated and actions were taken to address the issues. Staff are expected to complete a complaints monitoring form to show the details and nature and what action was taken to deal with the complaint. The inspector found that this document hadn't been completed in every case. In addition the complaints record and the complaints monitoring form didn't clearly outline the outcome of the complaint investigation in line with NMS 4.3. The principal and head of care should make sure that a written record is made of each complaint and includes the details of the person making the complaint, the date and nature of the complaint, and action taken, and the outcome of the complaint.

**Number of complaints about care at the school recorded over last 12 months:**

7

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

1

**Number of complaints received by CSCI about the school over last 12 months:**

X

**Number of above complaints substantiated:**

X

## CHILD PROTECTION

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Children are protected from bullying by others.
- All significant events relating to the protection of children accommodated in the school are notified by the Head of the school to the appropriate authorities.
- Children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded positively to on return.

### Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.12)

There are systems in place in the school which aim to prevent abuse of children and suspicions or allegations of abuse are properly responded to. These are known and understood by all staff (including junior, ancillary, volunteer and agency staff).

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

There was evidence that the school has systems in place to identify and respond to concerns about child protection. Discussions with staff and their responses to questionnaires showed that staff were aware of the school's child protection procedure and were knowledgeable about child protection issues. There was evidence from incident reports and key work records that staff were offering advice and support to children about keeping themselves safe and were aware of potential risks to children's welfare. All of the children who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that they had received advice from staff about keeping themselves safe.

Child protection training is provided for staff on a rolling programme. The next training event was planned for 11<sup>th</sup> March 2005.

Copies of the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures are kept in the school and available to staff. The head of care has made efforts to obtain copies of the ACPC procedures from each of the placing authorities. The school's child protection procedures are consistent with the local ACPC guidelines and include all the requirements set out in Appendix 1 of the National Minimum Standards. In addition the school has written guidance for staff who are subject to allegations against them.

There was evidence from incident reports and from placing authority questionnaires that the school work closely with social workers and other relevant professionals in this area.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:

X

**Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.5)**

The school has, and follows, an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar and which is effective in practice. Where possible children in the school contribute to the development of the policy.

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

3

The school has an anti-bullying policy and this meets the requirements of NMS 6.2. The head of care informed the inspector that the policy was currently being further developed. There was no evidence to suggest that bullying was a significant issue for the school. Nevertheless, the staff and pupils were aware of bullying as an issue and a topic of discussion. All incidents of bullying are recorded on the BEST database to monitor trends and patterns, and appropriate action is taken to support and work with the children involved. Bullying is an issue that is frequently discussed in school assemblies and as part of the national curriculum.

There was evidence from the written records and from discussions with staff and pupils that any incidents of bullying were taken seriously and promptly dealt with. A good level of supervision throughout the school helps to develop positive relationships between pupils. The inspector found a number of examples where staff were encouraging children to accept and understand each others needs and difficulties. The inspector observed a great deal of understanding and tolerance between children.

Staff have attended training events in counter-bullying.

**Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied**

90 %

**Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)**

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.

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

3

The school has a system in place to notify the appropriate authorities including the Commission of the significant events outlined in NMS 7.2. The school has written guidance for staff on the notification of significant events and this meets the requirements of this standard.

The notifications that have been sent to the Commission have been appropriate and provided details of the incident and what action was taken. These reports and the written records show that staff promptly notify the child's parent or carers of any serious incident involving the child.

**NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO CSCI DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:**

- **conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children**
- **serious harm to a child**
- **serious illness or accident of a child**
- **serious incident requiring police to be called**

X

X

9

1

<b>Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9)</b> <b>The school takes steps to ensure that children who are absent from the school without consent are protected in line with written policy and guidance.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>4</b>
<p>The school has a thorough system in place to record and monitor pupils' attendance, and to monitor pupils where non-attendance may become an issue. They use a database to record and manage this information.</p> <p>The school has written procedures outlining what action needs to be taken when a child is absent without authority and this covers the requirements in NMS 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5.</p> <p>The written records have been kept of all the incidents where pupils have been absent without authority detailing the action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, and the reasons given by the child for going missing. All the reports were thorough and detailed.</p>		
<b>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</b>		<b>13</b>

## CARE AND CONTROL

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect.
- Children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff response to inappropriate behaviour.

### Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

**Relationships between staff and children are based on mutual respect and understanding and clear professional and personal boundaries which are effective for both the individuals and the group.**

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	4
<p>The inspector observed that relationships between staff and children were positive and based on respect and understanding. The atmosphere around the school was warm and friendly. Staff were able to demonstrate clear personal and professional boundaries with children. Communication between staff and children was positive and any disagreements were managed reasonably. The inspector saw staff encouraging children to reflect on their behaviour, and to use negotiating skills.</p> <p>The school's Code of Practice for Employees When Dealing With Young People and Code of Practice for pupils clearly outlines the expectations for behaviour. The inspector saw many examples of staff maintaining safe, consistent and understandable boundaries for children in respect of acceptable behaviour. The emphasis was on building young people's self-esteem by praising positive behaviour and achievements.</p> <p>The deputy head of care told the inspector that they were developing the school's behaviour policy and that young people were involved in this.</p> <p>Staff have received training in positive care and control. The school uses Protecting Rights in Care Environment (PRICE) techniques. The school has approved PRICE trainers and each member of staff undergoes refresher training annually. Some staff have recently had training in the use of de-escalation techniques with young people and the inspector understands that further training was planned for the rest of the staff.</p> <p>There was evidence that pupils trusted staff and had some choice of which staff offered them support. Young people told the inspector that they feel able to approach members of staff for help and support.</p>		

**Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.26)**

**Staff respond positively to acceptable behaviour, and where the behaviour of children is regarded as unacceptable by staff, it is responded to by constructive disciplinary measures which are approved by the Head of Care.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****4**

The inspector found that the school encourages pupils to develop acceptable behaviour through the positive and constructive management of inappropriate behaviour. The school's written guidance on care and control clearly outlines the circumstances under which physical intervention measures may be used in accordance with NMS 10.10, and is consistent with government guidance on approved methods of physical intervention. The policy lists prohibited measures of control in line with NMS 10.6. It also emphasises the need to positively reinforce children's achievements and acceptable behaviour.

The inspector received responses to inspection questionnaires from 19 out of 31 residential pupils, of these only 7 said that staff had physically restrained them; almost all said this was to break up a fight with another pupil; and almost all said staff had restrained them properly.

The school has a Behavioural Education Support Team (BEST) to monitor pupils' behaviour and offer support to pupils who may be experiencing some difficulties, and to provide advice and guidance for staff in the managements of difficult behaviour. The BEST team is made up of members of the education and care staff, supported by the school's educational psychologist, and is involved in the development of the school's care and control policy. The team use information technology to record all incidents of difficult or challenging behaviour involving pupils, including incidents of bullying, and where staff have used physical intervention. The inspector examined the records. Detailed information was gathered about each incident in line with NMS 10.14 and including name of the child, what had happened, how staff dealt with the situation, the nature and duration of the physical intervention used, and some evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention and what could be learned from the incident. In addition, a written record of the use of intervention on young people was kept in a bound and numbered book including all the information required in NMS 10.14.

The BEST team told the inspector about how they clarify, interpret, and share the information from the incident reports to develop behaviour management plans for individual pupils. Following each incident the team write a risk assessment and individual support plan. This includes information about any triggers and warning signs observed before the incident, how the behaviour could be understood, and how best to help the young person manage the behaviour in the future. The information technology is used to help identify and review patterns of pupil behaviour, responses from staff, the use of different techniques of physical interventions. Information may be presented, for example, in terms of individual pupils and staff, and the location and time of incidents. The evaluation, for instance of staff's responses and use of care and control techniques has been used to inform staff training needs.

The BEST team provides support for staff throughout the school in the management of behaviour by offering advice and guidance about how to support individual pupils, discussions with staff following incidents, and sharing information. They provide training for staff in safe and appropriate physical intervention techniques, the circumstances when they can be used, and training in reducing or avoiding the need to use physical intervention. Two of the team are accredited PRICE instructors and provide training for staff in these techniques including de-escalation skills. Also, the team have provided training in behavioural management for other schools, and have offered to train other people working

with pupils such as drivers and escorts who bring them to school.

The team offers support to pupils who are finding it difficult to cope in class or assisting pupils settle into the school. The school has a room where pupils can go to receive support from the educational support mentor. The room was decorated in a way to provide a relaxed and calm environment. These sessions are usually timetabled and provide the opportunity for pupils to carry on with their education in a quiet environment and preventing them from falling behind. In addition it provides the opportunity for pupils to discuss any concerns or issues that may be troubling them. The behaviour management mentor told the inspector that pupils are reducing their use of this facility and are more generally being maintained in class.

The introduction of the BEST team has been a positive development and there was evidence that the team were achieving some pleasing results. One young person told the inspector that it was a good school because *'staff understand me and try to help me'*.

The school has adopted an incentive scheme. This is known as the 'E' system, where 'E' stands for effort or excellence, and pupils are able to earn 'Es' related to academic, social and behavioural targets. The total number of 'Es' gained over a week determines their choice of activities on 'options' afternoons and evenings. The inspector examined the recording of the system and spoke to staff and children about it. The system sets clear and achievable targets for individual children depending on their age, needs and level of understanding. Staff told the inspector that clear explanations are given to children about why they were awarded an 'E' and likewise why they didn't receive one. The children were aware of how the system worked and what they needed to do to get an 'E'. They felt that the system was fair and told the inspector if they didn't get enough 'E's for an 'option' they are able to do another activity.

The inspector examined the sanction records for each of the residential groups. These were all kept in a bound and numbered book containing a list of permitted sanctions. These records were kept in line with NMS 10.9. Generally the record of each sanction was documented in detail showing why a sanction was given. There was some evidence that staff were monitoring the effectiveness of imposing sanctions. The inspector found that the sanctions used by staff were reasonable and proportionate. The responses to the pupil questionnaires showed that 27% of children felt that the punishments used in the school were very fair; 66% felt they were usually ok; and 18% felt they were unfair.

## QUALITY OF CARE

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes.
- The school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school.
- Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within school and in the local community.
- Children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted.
- Children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs.
- Children 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.

### Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

Admission and leaving processes are planned and agreed with the child – and as appropriate, with parents and carers and placing authorities – as far as possible and handled with sensitivity and care by those concerned.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

4

The school has a clear procedure for introducing children to the school in accordance with this standard. The inspector examined the information that the school provides for children and their parents before they start at the school, and the information that the school requires from the parents. This was comprehensive and thorough. The children's files show that the school gathers a great deal of information child relevant to the care and education of the child in line with NMS 11.3. The school reviews how a child is settling after starting at the school and assess whether the school will be able to meet the child's needs. In addition, the BEST team and the school's educational psychologist may become involved to assist a child settle into school if necessary. This may be in cases where children are finding it difficult to adjust to their new environment, for example, where a child comes to the school following periods when they have been out of education.

There was evidence that children leave the school in a planned and structured way. Children receive support and guidance to assist them in moving on, and the school works closely with parents, placing authorities and other agencies in this process. The inspector attended a young person's annual education review where plans for their future were starting to be made. A Connexions advisor attended and provided information about their discussions with the young person about their interests and ideas about what they would like to do in the future.



**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.7)**

Care staff and the school's residential provision and activities actively contribute to individual children's educational progress, and care staff actively support children's education, ensuring regular attendance, punctuality and a minimum of interruption during the school day.

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

4

The communication and relationship between the care and education staff was commendable. Information about pupil's progress and needs was shared appropriately and effectively to ensure their needs are met. Discussions with care staff showed that they were familiar with children's educational needs and progress, including the targets in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and that they inform teaching staff of any information that would assist supporting the child during school time.

The inspector observed care staff contributing to the annual review of the statement and how they participate in the implementation of the IEP. The written records showed how care staff used individual key worker sessions with children to work on targets in their IEP. This, for example, included issues around personal hygiene, social skills, road safety, and assisting children in their preparation for independent living.

The inspector saw care staff supporting and encouraging children complete their homework. The daily routines in the residential groups are conducive to study. Children have access to books and educational materials that are appropriate to their age and educational needs, and they were able to gain access to school facilities such as the library out of school hours.

**Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.9)**

Children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities both within the school and in the local community.

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

4

There was evidence to show that children had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities both in the school and in the local community. This included sporting activities, cooking, going shopping, swimming, attending local youth clubs, and cultural events including trips to the theatres. The children have a choice of activities appropriate to their age and needs, and there were many examples of children being able to pursue particular interests and talents. The inspector observed the immediate boys using their group meeting to plan the organised activities for the following week. There was a suitable balance between organised activities and free time during the evening.

74% of pupils who completed inspection questionnaires said that they able to do the hobbies and interests they most enjoy.

The school has risk assessments for all the activities they offer, both inside the school and out in the community including for school trips. There were particularly detailed individual risk assessments for each child going swimming, and the school has written guidelines for staff who supervise this activity.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.25)**  
The school actively promotes the health care of each child and meets any intimate care needs.

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**



**Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.15)**

**Children are provided with adequate quantities of suitably prepared wholesome and nutritious food, having regard to their needs and wishes, and have the opportunity to learn to prepare their own meals. Where appropriate special dietary needs due to health, religious persuasion, racial origin or cultural background are met, including the choice of a vegetarian meal for children who wish it.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The majority of the children who responded to the pupil questionnaires talked positively about the food. Although some young people felt that the portions were too small and said they didn't like not being able to have sandwiches every day at lunchtime. The inspector discussed this issue with the head of care, and was informed that sandwiches had been taken off the lunchtime menu two days a week to encourage young people to have a hot meal during the day as part of the healthy schools initiative. The inspector was satisfied that the issues raised by young people about food were being listened to, and addressed through the mechanisms in the school monitoring meals and the food provided.

A record of the menus served was kept. The inspector observed breakfast, lunch, teatime, and supper, and found that all the meals were well-managed, orderly and social occasions. The meals were healthy, varied and nutritious. Meals with drinks were provided at reasonable set times.

Children have a choice of main course at each meal, and there was evidence from the children that they are consulted over the planning of menus, and children are encouraged to state their preferences for food and drink, and these are taken into account. In addition, a comments book was kept in the dining room and children are encouraged to express their views about the food. Advice had also been taken from a dietician on the nutritional value of the meals, and the school was developing a healthy eating project. This included the provision of fresh fruit and dried fruit at break times instead of sweets and biscuits. There was evidence that staff try to encourage children to try different things through theme days where they prepare meals from different cultures and involve children in the planning and advertising of these meals. The school also celebrates cultural events such as Chinese New Year.

The dining rooms and their furnishings are suitable for the numbers and needs of children and staff using them. All the staff involved in preparing food have received training in safe food handling and hygiene. The Environmental Health Officer on 15/12/04 inspected the catering practices, facilities and equipment and commented in their report that '*the premises were generally of a high standard at the time of the inspection*'.

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.7)**

Children are provided for adequately on an individual basis and encouraged to exercise their own preferences in the choice of clothing and personal requisites. Children who require assistance to choose what they wear and/or how they spend their money are provided with the assistance they need, in a way which maximises their choice.

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

3

The inspector observed that children were able to wear their own clothing outside school time. They were able to purchase personal requisites and toiletries for their exclusive use.

There was evidence in key worker reports that staff provide children with advice on personal hygiene, the use of toiletries, and sanitary protection based on their age, understanding and needs.

Children bring in pocket money from home and this can be held in safekeeping for them. The responses from the pupils' questionnaires showed that all the children who replied were able to choose how to spend their own money.

## **CARE PLANNING AND PLACEMENT PLAN**

**The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:**

- **Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school.**
- **Children's needs, development and progress is recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions.**
- **There are adequate records of both the staff and child groups of the school.**
- **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.**
- **Children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living.**
- **Children receive individual support when they need it.**

**Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)**

There is a written placement plan specifying how the school will care for each boarding pupil in accordance with his or her assessed needs, the school cares for that child in accordance with that plan, monitors progress in relation to that plan, and updates that plan as necessary.

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

3

The inspector examined a sample of pupil's files. All of the files contained the child's statement of special educational needs, annual reviews of the statement, individual care plans, and individual educational plans. These documents contained all the relevant information required in NMS 17.1, 17.2 & 17.5. The residential care plans were very detailed based on a thorough assessment of needs, and including information gathered from parents and carers, and children. The files contained pupil pen pictures completed by the children about themselves.

Evidence from the pupil questionnaires showed that the majority of them knew the contents of their placement plan and agreed with it. Also, the majority felt that staff were following their placement plan.

Each child has a key worker within the residence that provides individual guidance and support to the child. There was evidence of a great deal of positive work being carried out with the children, and this was documented in key worker reports. Since the last inspection there had been a general improvement in the quality of these reports varied. Many of them very extremely thorough in detailing the work undertaken with the child, and how this related to the plan, and included some evaluation of the child's progress. Training for staff in recording skills had taken place and written guidance was available for staff.

There was evidence from the children's files to show that staff attend annual reviews and statutory reviews and produce reports on children's progress. The inspector attended an annual review and observed the staff contributing effectively to the meeting. The member of staff had prepared a detailed written report and presented this verbally. They contributed effectively to the review of the child's plan and in identifying the plan of work with the child in the longer-term.

**Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.5)**

Each child has a permanent private and secure record of their history and progress which can, in compliance with legal requirements for safeguards, be seen by the child.

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

3

The inspector found that pupils have a permanent record of their development and progress. They are securely stored and on the whole well maintained, and included all the information outlined in NMS 18.2. Written entries on the young people's files were signed and dated and the name of the signatory was clearly defined.

**Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.3)**

The school maintains clear and accurate records on the staff and child groups of the school, and major events affecting the school and children resident there.

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

The inspector examined the school's records and found that it keeps appropriate records including a children's and staff register, the menus served, a log of all the accidents occurring to children, staff duty rosters, and a log of daily events, including the names of visitors to the school and the reasons for the visit.

The inspector examined a sample of staff personnel files and found that they contained all the information required under this standard.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.6)**

Subject to their wishes, children are positively encouraged and enabled by the school to maintain contact with their parents and other family members (unless there are welfare concerns) while living at school.

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

The written records showed that staff were in regular contact with parents by telephone and by letter, and that staff contact parents about any welfare issues relating to their children. Almost all the parents and carers who completed a questionnaire confirmed this.

However, a parent in their questionnaire said they experienced difficulties in contacting their children on an evening. The head of care said that they were looking at ways to make sure improve the means of making telephone contact with the residential groups in the evening.

Children were able to have telephone contact with their parents. There are facilities for children to meet parents or other visitors in private and comfortable surroundings.

Any restrictions on contact with parents or other persons imposed by the placing authority or court were implemented and accurately documented in the pupil's records.



**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.2)**

Where a pupil is in care and will be leaving care on leaving the school, the school agrees with the young person's responsible authority what contribution it should make to implement any Pathway or other plan for the pupil before the pupil leaves school. These arrangements are in line with that young person's needs, and the school implements its contribution where feasible from at least a year before the pupil is expected to leave care or move to independent living. The school works with any Personal Advisor for the child.

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

There was evidence from the care plans, individual care plans and annual reviews that the school was actively involved in developing pupils living skills and preparing them for moving on to a college placement, and more independent living.

The inspector attended the annual review of a Year 9 pupil and observed a transition plan was formally set up for them. The transition plan included assessment and action plans for the pupils needs in the following areas: health, practical skills, accommodation, financial support, emotional and life skills, and education, training and employment.

Following Year 9 the plan is reviewed at the annual review. The process includes care and teaching staff, and workers from Connexions, health, and social services, as well as the child and their parents or carers. This planning process was evident from the minutes from annual review meetings and key worker reports on pupils' files. The files also showed that the school worked with social services in the development of pathway plans for looked after children at the school.

The inspector found from the records, observations, and discussions with staff and children that children had opportunities to develop knowledge and skills needed for their likely future living arrangements. This included developing budgeting skills through shopping, socialisation in the local community, and the development of personal care, organisational and living skills such as making snacks, preparing meals and using laundry facilities.

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.13)**

**All children are given individualised support in line with their needs and wishes, and children identified as having particular support needs, or particular problems, receive help, guidance and support when needed or requested.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****4**

There was evidence in the written records, in discussions with staff and pupils, and observed during the inspection, of children receiving individual support appropriate to their needs and wishes and feelings. The school works hard on developing the social skills of all the pupils and encouraging their involvement in social groups, both within the school and in the local community. There were particularly good examples of staff putting systems in place to encourage pupils to take turns in activities and developing negotiation skills.

Children told the inspector that they are able to approach any member of staff with personal concerns. There was evidence from discussions with staff and from the written records that children undergoing times of personal stress are supported. The key worker reports provided many examples of good practice such as working with a young person to help them use more socially acceptable behaviour, working with a child to reflect on certain behaviours and the consequences of them, and to develop living and social skills.

The inspector found a good level of communication between teaching and care staff and as a result there was evidence of a continuity of care in supporting pupils appropriate to their needs. The pupils also receive support from learning mentors on specific issues and needs. There was evidence of staff cooperating in implementing programmes associated with specialist services including speech therapy and physiotherapy. Such therapeutic techniques are only used with children if specified in the child's care plan and agreed by the parents and placing authority, and are only carried out by suitably qualified persons or on their direction or supervision.

The inspector found evidence that there were opportunities for children to receive support on issues such as identity, racial and cultural background, as well as appropriate personal, health, social and sex education.

Children in the school have access to people who they may contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the school. They have access to advocates, national help lines, the school's own help line, and are able to meet with the school governors who regularly visit the school on behalf of the governing body.

## PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Children live in well designed, pleasant premises, providing sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs.
- Children live in accommodation that is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use.
- Children are able to carry out their ablutions in privacy and with dignity.
- Children live in schools that provide physical safety and security.

### Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The school is located, designed and of a size and layout that is in keeping with its Statement of Purpose. It serves the needs of the children and provides the sort of environment most helpful to each child's development, and is sufficient for the number of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The location, design, and size of the school were appropriate to meet the needs of the pupils and in accordance with its statement of purpose. The residence and the grounds provide a pleasant environment for young people. There were no outstanding requirements or recommendations relating to the school from the fire service and environmental health authority.

The school's premises are not also used for activities that compromise or have an adverse effect on the care and privacy of the pupils. There was evidence from the records and from observation that the school was taking effective precautions to maintain the security to the school. During the last twelve months the school has undertaken building work. There was a plan in place to make sure that this work didn't impact adversely on the welfare of any of the children, and a procedure for the supervision of contractors when they needed to work near any of the children.

The school uses an electronic monitoring system in the residential accommodation at night to alert staff if children need support or assistance. This system has been agreed with placing authorities and parents.

The school maintains appropriate links with the local community, and makes good use of local recreational facilities, youth clubs, and amenities. For example, some young people attended a youth club at Hoylake Community Centre each week, and other young people attended a local Red Cross group.

**Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.19)**

The school provides adequate good quality and well-maintained accommodation for boarding pupils, which is consistent with their needs.

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

3

The school provides good quality and well-maintained accommodation for the children and was appropriate to their needs. The residential accommodation and facilities were homely and were decorated and furnished to a high standard. They were tidy and standard of cleanliness was excellent. The interior and exterior of the school was in a good state of structural repair. Damage to the premises was repaired promptly. The grounds and play areas were well maintained and safe.

The sleeping arrangements for pupils were in keeping with NMS 24.5. All pupils are encouraged to personalise their rooms. Each child had sufficient storage for clothes and belongings. There was space for private study and lockable facilities for pupils to store personal possessions depending on the needs of each pupil.

Staff have designated sleep-in rooms and bathrooms, which are located close to children's rooms to respond to children's night time needs.

**Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.7)**

The school has sufficient baths, showers and toilets, all of good standard and suitable to meet the needs of the children. The school has appropriate changing and washing facilities for incontinent children where necessary.

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

3

The bathroom and lavatory facilities in the residential accommodation were of a high standard, and suitable to meet the needs of the children and enable them to carry out their personal care in privacy with dignity. Almost all of the young people who returned questionnaires felt that there was enough privacy when using toilets and bathrooms.

There was sufficient numbers of baths, showers and toilets in each group to more than meet the minimum standard. Staff and adult visitors use separate toilets and bathroom to those used by the children.

**Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.10)**

**Positive steps are taken to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risk from fire and other hazards, in accordance with Health and Safety and Fire legislation and guidance.**

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

There was evidence from the written records that the school takes positive steps to keep children, staff and visitors safe from risks and hazards in accordance with health and safety and fire legislation. There was no unnecessary hazard apparent in the school and grounds. Gas installations, electrical equipment and installations and boilers were appropriately inspected and serviced and certificates were available for inspection.

The school has excellent guidance on risk assessments. Generic risk assessments have been carried out in relation to the premises, the residential accommodation, activities both inside the school and in the community, the use of the multi-gym, transport, playground, the use of the school minibus, library, and bathroom and toilets. There was evidence of risk assessments being reviewed and adapted as necessary.

The fire precaution records show that fire drills and the regular testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms, and fire fighting equipment take place as required by the Fire Authority. The school has involved the Fire Authority and building control in all the building alterations taking place in the school.

## STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There are careful selection and vetting of all staff, volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers
- Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.
- Children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs.
- Children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare.

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.9)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those employed on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with the children in the school includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (at Standard or Enhanced level as appropriate to their role in the school), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The school has a thorough system for recruiting staff and volunteers, and clear recruitment and Criminal Record Bureau policies. The inspector examined a sample of staff personnel files. There was evidence on the files that the school had followed its recruitment procedures and that all the information outlined in NMS 27.2 was present.

The school has a robust system for vetting visitors to the school. All visitors have to sign in at reception and carry visitor identification.

Total number of care staff:

34

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

3

**Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.13)**

The school is staffed at all times of the day and night, at or above the minimum level specified under standard 28.2. Records of staff actually working in the school demonstrate achievement of this staffing level.

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

3

The inspector examined the staff rosters. There was sufficient staff in place to meet the minimum staffing requirements during day and night appropriate to fulfil the school's statement of purpose and the needs of individual children. There was evidence in the records that the staffing levels were adjusted to meet the specific needs and numbers of children. There was a written record of which children and adults are sleeping in the residence each night available for both children and staff.

The school has developed and formalised a written staffing policy in accordance with NMS 28.2.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)**

Staff receive training and development opportunities that equip them with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and the purpose of the school.

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

3

The inspector met the school's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) co-ordinator, who has responsibility for training and staff development. They were extremely positive about the care staff's commitment to training and developing their skills and knowledge. Programmes of training are available covering the issues outlined in Appendix 2 for all staff throughout the school year.

The CPD co-ordinator informed the inspector that staff have personal development plans. The inspector examined a member of staff's CDP portfolio. It was well-organised and provided evidence of their qualifications, training, supervision, appraisals and development plan. Also, the inspector looked at an example and the range of training opportunities available to staff. This included issues relating to the specific needs of the children in the school, such as autism spectrum disorders, aspergers syndrome, relationships and sexuality, care and control, managing conflict, and communication techniques.

New member of staff have clear and structured induction programmes that meet the requirements of NMS 29.2. Other staff informed the inspector that they had a lot of opportunities for training both internally and externally, and had the opportunity to pursue training programmes in areas they were interested in as well as relating specifically to their jobs. This was also evident in the responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires. All of them said that they had received in-service training, and almost all of them said they had been supported to undertake professional training.

**Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.13)**

**All staff, including domestic staff and the Head of the school, are properly accountable and supported.**

**Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****4**

The inspector found that the school had a clear organisational structure and the staff were accountable and said that they felt were supported. Staff supervision was taking place in accordance with NMS 30.2, 30.3 and 30.4, and there were suitable arrangements for the supervision of the head of care. In addition to formal supervision, the inspector observed that staff received a lot of informal guidance and support from their managers and colleagues. The staff questionnaires showed that all the respondents felt well supported. Also, in discussions with the inspector the staff said that they could count on support, advice and guidance from throughout the school, from teaching staff, the BEST team, the school nurses, and therapists, and their colleagues in the care team.

Staff have annual appraisals and the school has introduced a performance management system with teaching staff. This will be introduced throughout the school in the future.

Each member of staff has a copy of Employees Handbook Procedures and Policies, and have access to written guidance as outlined in Appendix 3. In addition staff have received a written job description relating to the school statement of purpose. The staffing rosters were organised to provide opportunities for staff to meet together on a daily basis, and for regular monthly team meetings. These meetings are documented and records kept.



## **ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:**

- **Children receive the care and services they need from competent staff.**
- **Children enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools.**
- **The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school.**

<b>Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)</b> <b>The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>2</b>
<p>The inspector found that the school is managed in an efficient and effective manner, with evidence of excellent organisational skill and competence. There was a clear management structure and delegated lines of responsibility and accountability. Both the head and deputy of care are part of the school's leadership team alongside the principal, head of education, and head of support services. The inspector found many examples where the senior managers provided effective leadership in developing the performance of the school as a whole, and specifically the residential provision.</p> <p>The head of care has considerable experience at a senior level in a childcare setting, being in post since 1997, and a professional qualification relevant to working with children. In addition they have obtained a qualification in Advanced Care Management. Likewise the deputy head of care has a professional qualification relevant to children and substantial experience of working in the school. Since the last inspection the school has developed the role of house leader. Each residential group has a house leader, an experienced member of staff, who takes responsibility for the day-to-day running and management of the group. Their responsibilities include the supervision of the care staff working in the group. In the inspector's view this is an effective arrangement for the management of the residential provision.</p> <p>The care team consists of 35 staff including the head and deputy of care, three professionally trained nurses, one professionally trained physiotherapist, one person with HND in social care, one person currently completing the Diploma in Social Work, ten people with NVQ Level 3 in caring for children and young people or equivalent, four people currently completing NVQ Level 3, and two due to start the course in March 2005. There was compelling evidence to show that the school was committed to continuing professional development and encouraging staff to complete NVQ Level 3. However, the school doesn't meet the requirements of NMS 31.4 that expects by 2005 a minimum ratio of 80% of care staff have completed NVQ Level 3 in caring for children and young people, or have qualifications that demonstrate the same competencies. New care staff engaged from January 2004 hold such qualifications or begin working towards them within three months of joining the school.</p> <p>Staff rotas have time schedules to ensure there is time for staff to complete tasks such as supervision, staff meetings, recording, spending time with young people, attend annual review meetings without compromising the overall care of young people.</p> <p>The school provides information to the parents and carers of young people about the schools policies and procedures in line with NMS 31.10. All of the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire stated that they been given a leaflet or other written information telling them what they need to know about the school.</p>		
<b>Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:</b>		<b>47    %</b>

**Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)**

The Commission for Social Care Inspection is informed within 24 hours if a receiver, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy becomes responsible for the school. Such persons on becoming responsible for the school have ensured that the school continues to be managed on a day to day basis by a Head who meets recruitment and qualification requirements for a Head under these Standards. Such a temporary Head must make sure that the operation of the school meets the requirements of these standards in relation to the day to day running of the school.

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

3

The inspector found evidence in the written records, the weekly overview reports, and the minutes from the governors meetings and from speaking to staff and members of the management team that the performance of the school was monitored in line with this standard.

**Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.7)**

The governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body receive a written report on the conduct of the school from a person visiting the school on their behalf every half term.

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

4

The governing body have nominated two governors to visit the school at least once every half term to complete a written report on the conduct of the school. The inspector read copies of the reports that they have completed. These governors have visited the school regularly in line with NMS 33.2 unannounced and at different times of day. The reports were thorough and detailed and showed evidence that they were examining the records outlined in NMS 33.3, inspecting the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment, and meeting staff and pupils, and offering pupils the opportunity to talk privately to them. The reports also made recommendations for actions to remedy any identified deficiencies.

The inspector met with the governor visitors, and was pleased to find that they were making a commitment to visit the school frequently, and to spend time with the children to find out their views and any concerns. This included having meals with the children and joining in with activities.

**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 28<sup>th</sup> February 2005 of West Kirby Residential School and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

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.

**D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 13<sup>th</sup> April 2005, which indicates how recommended actions and advisory recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

**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 statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

Provider 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 Mr Gareth Wyn Williams of West Kirby Residential 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 Mr Gareth Wyn Williams of West Kirby Residential 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:**

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## Print Name

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## 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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