

inspection report

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

Royal School For The Deaf Derby

Ashbourne Road

Derby

Derbyshire

DE22 3BH

29th to 31st March & 1st April 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Royal School For The Deaf Derby

Address

Ashbourne Road, Derby, Derbyshire, DE22 3BH

Tel No:

01332 362512

Fax No:

01332 299708

Email Address:

Admin.rsdd@virgin.net

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

Royal School for the Deaf Trust

Name of Head

Mr T Silvester

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Non-Maintained Special

School for deaf children

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

17 /3/03

Date of Inspection Visit		29th March 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Anthony Barker	083293
Name of NCSC Inspector	2		
Name of NCSC Inspector	3		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		Ms E Walker/Mr J Emery/Ms M Walters	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mr T Silvester	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Residential Special Schools are subject to inspection by the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of Royal School For The Deaf Derby

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

The Royal School for the Deaf Derby was founded over 100 years ago and is based on a large campus on the outskirts of Derby. It shares this campus with Derby College for Deaf People. It is a non-maintained special school providing primary and secondary education to, in the academic year 2003/2004, 91 deaf children of whom 50 are boarding pupils. The School has a bilingual policy giving equal status to British Sign Language and English.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The School was meeting children's need for good standards of care including health needs and staff had a good grasp of professional care practices. Catering practices and food hygiene were very good as was the range of activities for children. The Inspector received consistent messages from children of feeling safe and of recognising, and using, the School's policy of openness, good communication and procedures that addressed child protection matters, including bullying. There was evidence of the School empowering children and staff – their views and contributions were encouraged and valued. The School was making continuing improvements to material standards in the boarding houses. Excellent progress had been made on individual and environmental risk assessments and matters of Health and Safety continued to be given high priority.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Some degree of continuity of care had been lost through staff turnover and sickness and the use of relief staff. This should be addressed. The Inspector recognised the problems that deaf staff, whose first language is BSL, may have with completing records. The School should continue to address the need for deaf staff to access policies and procedures through video tapes signed in British sign Language. The Inspector felt that the School's quality of boarding provision was somewhat constrained by Lodge House and Student House both of which were less homely and domestic in nature than the other houses.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This had been another year of improvements - the School had met the majority of the recommended actions and advisory recommendations made at the last inspection. This creditable level of motivation to raise standards was further evidenced during this inspection when an immediate improvement was made to a set of records in order to meet the National Minimum Standards. There was evidence of good procedures being followed at the School and there was a good range of written procedures. Overall, the School continued to provide a commendable and professional service to its boarding pupils.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

The grounds for any Notification to be made are:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

NO

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
1	RS24	Items of maintenance, repair and decoration itemised in this Standard should be carried out. All items undertaken except the front porch and some redecoration in Lodge House.	1 October 2004
2	RS24	The carpet in House 26 should be repaired or replaced.	1 October 2004
3	RS24	The School should continue to replace the low wooden beds in boarding houses. Beds have been replaced in Lodge House and House 26.	1 January 2005
4	RS26	The School should continue to provide, in areas used by vulnerable children, thermostatically controlled mixer taps fitted near to baths and wash hand basins in order to maintain temperatures to no more than 43°C, following risk assessments.	1 January 2005

5	RS33	Governors should visit the School once every half term and complete a written report on the conduct of the School, based on this visit. The Report should refer to checks made on the School's records of complaints, sanctions and use of physical intervention.	1 September 2004
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RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The Head is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how recommended action and any advisory recommendations are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Identified below are the actions recommended on issues addressed in the main body of the report in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders adequately in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. The references below are to the relevant Standards. Non-implementation of recommended action can lead to future statutory notification of failure to safeguard and promote welfare.

No	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	RS24	Items of maintenance, repair and decoration itemised in this Standard should be carried out.	1 January 2005
2	RS24	Every child should be provided with a wardrobe.	1 September 2004
3	RS26	Six-monthly fire training sessions should be provided for night staff. This training should be located in each boarding house and should include a simulated fire exercise. It could be provided by a competent member of school staff.	1 November 2004
4	RS27	Interview Assessment Forms should be fully completed in respect of applicants' previous work linked to children and any gaps in previous employment.	1 July 2004
5	RS33	The majority of Governors' inspections should be unannounced. A telephone call immediately beforehand would ensure the availability of staff and children in the House.	1 September 2004

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	RS4	Funding authorities should receive information on the School's Complaints Procedure.
2	RS10	The School's record of sanctions applied should include a record of the effectiveness and any consequences of each sanction.
3	RS10	Staff should be provided with more training to work with challenging children.
4	RS14	Guidance for staff should be written to cover the issue of 'Exercise and Rest'.
5	RS15	All care staff should be provided with Basic Food Hygiene training.
6	RS24	All boarding houses should have domestic style facilities for children to learn to wash and dry their clothes. Houses for older children should be prioritised.
7	RS24	The carpet in the first floor double bedroom in House 18 should be replaced.
8	RS24	The widespread use of flooring vinyl in Student House should be reviewed.
9	RS24	The School should continue to review the use of bedrooms accommodating three children and those five single bedrooms which had an area of 5.3 sq metres or less.
10	RS24	Keys should be provided to the lockable boxes in bedrooms, with accommodation for older children being prioritised.
11	RS24	Seating and desks should be provided in all bedrooms sufficient for each child. Accommodation for older children should be prioritised.
12	RS30	The School should continue to expand its number of policies and procedures to include all those listed in appendix 3 to the National Minimum Standards. These policies and procedures should be placed on BSL signed video tapes.
13	RS30	Ancillary staff should attend at least part of the weekly staff meetings held in each boarding house.
14	RS10	The School should communicate to parents and funding authorities the sanctions used and not used on children.

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	NO
Pupil Guided Tour of Recreational Areas	NO

Checks with other Organisations

• Social Services	NO
• Fire Service	NO
• Environmental Health	NO
• DfES	NO
• School Doctor	NO
• Independent Person	NO
• Chair of Governors	NO

Tracking individual welfare arrangements	YES
Survey / individual discussions with boarders	YES
Group discussions with boarders	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	NO
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)	NO
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NO

Date of Inspection	29/03/04
Time of Inspection	09:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	33.5
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	4

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 NCSC 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) |

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"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 had a written Statement of Purpose comprising a 'Language and Communication Policy', 'Admissions Policy', 'Strategic planning Document' and 'Brochure'. The Statement included a description of the range of pupil needs for which the School catered, its admission criteria and the names and professional qualifications of staff. .

There was a British Sign Language (BSL) signed video tape of the statement for use by deaf parents.

The Statement of Purpose, and the policies and procedures established in accordance with it, clearly applied to both the boarding and teaching aspects of the life of a child resident at the School.

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?

3

The opinions and views of resident children were being actively sought and written guidance for staff was seen to positively support this policy. The School provided a range of appropriate means by which children could make their wishes and feelings known.

The School had provided a new 'Policy Statement on the Rights of Pupils at the Royal School for the Deaf, Derby'.

There was evidence of the School supporting children to follow the requirements of their religious persuasions through cultural dress codes, diet and involvement in elements of religious festivals. There were good links with cultural events in the City of Derby and with organisations representing cultural minority groups in the area.

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**

The School's Confidentiality Policy was seen. It addressed issues concerning confidentiality as well as guidelines about passing on information with child protection implications. The School followed good practice regarding the security and confidentiality of children's records.

Children could make minicom calls in private and without staff permission. All incoming telephone and minicom calls were being answered by staff, and logged, in order to minimise risk to children. Some children had received text messages on their mobile phones suggesting meeting with a stranger. Children were now being told they must show these messages to staff. The School had provided fax facilities in each boarding house although not all were connected at the time of this inspection.

The School provided space for children to meet privately with their parents. Visits from friends were supervised by staff. A system was in place whereby, at all times, all visitors to the School site were recorded and, out of hours, Heads of Houses would refer to the Head of Residence.

Staff had received clear and appropriate written guidelines on the provision of intimate care for those children requiring this and informed the Inspector that these were followed in practice. Staff had also received training in the use of hoists when this equipment was needed.

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?****4**

Children and parents were informed about how, and to whom, they could make a complaint. This included details on making a complaint to the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC). The Commission had received no complaints against the School or its staff.

There was a British Sign Language (BSL) signed video tape in each boarding house showing children how to make a complaint. Also, each house had a set of updated, readily available, 'Pupil Complaint Record' sheets provided at a height where they were accessible to wheelchair users. A completed sheet was seen and there was evidence of children submitting their own complaints and of staff submitting complaints on children's behalf.

The School's Complaints Procedure was appropriately worded. A record was kept of all complaints received and this was appropriately set out. The School's Deputy Principal was able to demonstrate that complainants are provided with details of the outcome of their complaints at the earliest opportunity. The School's Complaints Form referred to a five-day time limit for the written acknowledgement of complaints. The School's Deputy Principal was the nominated senior staff member with responsibility for reviewing the complaints records and action taken and for monitoring the operation of the Complaints Procedure. She was able to demonstrate that this system operated effectively.

The Inspector was informed that staff had received training in the School's Complaints Procedure. It was also explained that children are encouraged and empowered to complain and the Inspector found significant evidence to support this.

Three out of four of the funding authorities who responded to a pre-inspection questionnaire said that they had no information on the School's Complaints Procedure.

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

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

0

Number of above complaints substantiated:

0

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

A copy of the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures was kept in the School. The School's Deputy Principal was the designated person to hold these procedures and to oversee the operation of the School's child protection procedures, which were seen to be consistent with the ACPC procedures. The Deputy Principal's responsibilities included liaison with the local Social Services Department over child protection matters.

The Inspector was satisfied that the School followed appropriate procedures for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the National Minimum Standards. The Deputy Principal had cross-referenced all the School's new child protection procedures against the procedures detailed in Appendix 1.

Boarding houses had NSPCC telephone posters displayed and details of the National Care Standards Commission should children wish to communicate their concerns.

The School had provided training to all staff, including ancillary staff, in the prevention and recognition of abuse and the School's child protection procedures. Induction training for new staff included reference to 'whistle blowing' – there was a cultural expectation of openness. The School also had a comprehensive set of written guidelines for staff together with a BSL signed video tape. On appointment staff were expected to confirm by signature that they had read the School's list of 'Do's and Don'ts' and child protection policy and understood the School's expectation that they report to senior staff any concerns about a colleague's inappropriate behaviour.

Written guidance had been developed for staff who may be subject to allegations against them.

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

1

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?**

4

The School had an anti-bullying policy which was available and known to both staff and children. The Inspector heard from children that they were well aware of this policy and felt able to talk over any concerns they had with staff. They said that staff take matters relating to bullying very seriously. Some of the children spoken to by the Inspector, and some responding to the Pupils' Questionnaire, felt they had been bullied. However, on further examination this 'bullying' was in fact teasing by other children that was felt to be abusive by the 'victims'. The Deputy Principal later told the Inspector that the School was helping pupils to distinguish between bullying and teasing.

'No Bullying' notices were seen in boarding houses. Children who are bullied were supported, the Inspector was informed by children and staff. Children who may bully others were given appropriate guidance and the School's approach to racist and sexual behaviour was well considered.

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 had systems in place to

- notify the appropriate agencies of the notifiable events listed in Standard 7.2
- make the required notification under the Protection of Children Act of any dismissal or resignation of a member of staff in circumstances which suggest their unsuitability to work with children
- notify the NCSC of any serious incident necessitating the police being called to the School.

A written record was kept of such notifiable events and of the outcome of any action taken.

Children's parents and the relevant placing authority were notified of any serious incidents involving a child.

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC 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

0

0

1

2

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.9) 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.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The School had written procedures identifying action to be taken when a child is absent without authority. These procedures were seen to cover the items listed in Standard 8.3 and appropriate action to be taken on the child's return to the School.</p> <p>Written records were available on children's files of the circumstances and resultant action taken regarding all incidents of absence without authority. Parents and the child's placing authority were informed.</p> <p>A system was in place for monitoring children's absences without authority.</p>		
Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:		3

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?	3
<p>The School's written policies and procedures set out expectations of behaviour for both staff and children. Staff were provided with training in the positive care and control of children. The Inspector observed positive communication between staff and children and a caring approach. This was also reflected in parent's comments in the pre-inspection questionnaire. The Inspector concluded that School care staff were able to set and maintain safe, consistent and understandable boundaries for the children in relation to acceptable behaviour.</p> <p>The role of head of house within the School's boarding houses provided continuity of care for the children. The key worker system was flexible and allowed children to request a change of key worker. For example, a child may prefer a deaf member of staff as key worker.</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?****3**

The School had clear and appropriate written policies and procedures on the control, disciplinary and physical intervention measures which may be used at the School. In discussions with the Inspector staff showed an understanding of these policies. Examples were seen of children being positively reinforced for the achievement of acceptable behaviour. For instance, a useful token system was in place. Specific measures of control were selected to take account of children's needs and motivations. Children told the Inspector that sanctions were fairly applied and staff helped them to learn from these incidents. They also said that staff acted reasonably in incidents leading to restraint.

The School's written policy made explicit reference to all of the unacceptable sanctions highlighted in Standard 10.6. The Inspector was satisfied that only appropriate sanctions were used at the School. Some parents informed the Inspector, in a written questionnaire, that they were not aware of sanctions used and not used.

A record of all sanctions applied was kept in a bound and numbered book and included a list of acceptable sanctions. This recording system was of a good standard although the Inspector could find no record of the effectiveness and any consequences of the sanction in the sanctions book in House 10. However, the School's written sanctions policy did include an expectation that effectiveness and consequences be recorded. There was no mention in this policy of children being encouraged to record their views on the sanctions used. However, the Inspector was pleased to note that a new 'Views of Pupil Regarding Sanction' sheet, including a recorded example, was introduced during this inspection in response to the Inspector's recommendation.

The School had a written policy on the use of physical intervention. This policy referred to the SCIP guidance which emphasises how to prevent or minimise those situations that give rise to the need for physical intervention. All staff had been provided with SCIP training on the use and techniques of physical intervention. Staff said this training had given them increased confidence and they hoped to have regular refresher training. They felt, however, that they needed more training to work with challenging children. The Principal said he was considering staff training from an educational psychologist. A BSL signed video tape on 'Physical Intervention by Staff' was available in each boarding house.

Incidents of physical intervention were recorded in a 'Physical Intervention Record Book' with consecutively numbered pages. The information itemised in Standard 10.14 was being recorded in this book. There was a policy of children being encouraged to record their views on the physical interventions used. The School Nurse told the Inspector that she is asked by staff to check a child following an episode of restraint. The School Nurse had undertaken SCIP training.

The School's records of sanctions and physical intervention were reviewed and monitored regularly by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Head of Governors.

The 'Children's Guide' gave children information about rules they were expected to keep.

House meetings and the School Council gave children opportunity to discuss incidents and express their views on sanctions and physical intervention. The minutes of staff meetings showed that issues of control were discussed there too.

The Inspector considered that standards of children's behaviour at the School were good. The School had a clear written policy as to the circumstances and manner in which a child may be temporarily or permanently suspended from school and from discussion with the Principal there was evidence that the act of suspension is applied fairly and as a last resort.

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?

3

The School had a written 'Admissions Policy'. 'Prospective Pupil Information' forms were held at each boarding house and covered all of the information listed in Standard 11.3. A three-day assessment gives the School opportunity to gather information about a child prior to admission. The Inspector heard of proposals to draw up an admissions procedure and check lists regarding boarding pupils and an information pack for them, building on the existing 'Children's Guide'.

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?**

3

Good communication systems were in place between teachers and care staff including face-to-face contact and a daily school/residence book for secondary boarding pupils. Care staff were contributing to the annual review of a child's statement and participating in the implementation of the individual educational plan where social or independence skills development had been identified.

Children had access to books to assist with their education outside class time. They had access to the School and local library for both educational and recreational reading.

Where appropriate children were being assisted by both teaching and care staff in their preparation for independent living.

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?**

3

The School provided a very good range and choice of activities for boarding pupils outside class time. This view was reinforced by children and staff who completed pre-inspection questionnaires. Birthdays and cultural festivals were celebrated. It was clear that children had an appropriate balance between free time and organised activities after school.

Any high risk activity provided or arranged for children was supervised by persons holding a relevant qualification. The risks involved in such activities were fully considered and recorded. This included acquiring a copy of an activity service's own risk assessment, if available. Also, for use on outings, a 'Group Emergency Contact Details' sheet had been developed and was seen by the Inspector.

Children's views were regularly sought on activities. They had access to toys, music, games, newspapers, books and magazines appropriate to their ages and interests. Some boarding houses had computer games and children had access to the internet at an after-school computer club.

Links with the local hearing community had been increased by means of football matches, the Head of Residence said.

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**

There was ample evidence to suggest that the physical, emotional and mental health needs of each child were being identified and actively promoted at the School. Children with particular disabilities or health needs were provided with support and help through the School's full time registered nurse or external specialist health care professionals. The School Nurse had added a 'Health' section to children's care plans and was updating this section as necessary. On one diabetic child's file a separate four-page diabetes policy was set out. This included dietary needs and a risk assessment and risk management document.

There was written guidance on promoting certain aspects of children's health and all but one of the issues listed in Standard 14.4 had related policies. There was no written policy on 'Exercise and Rest'. The Inspector was satisfied that issues of personal hygiene were being dealt with sensitively.

Each child had a file covering the health needs and plans itemised in Standard 14.6. Risk assessments had been written on every child with a health need – the majority of children.

The School was providing a rolling programme of First Aid training for staff. There were adequate numbers of fully qualified First Aiders and First Aid Appointed Persons on site. The School Nurse inspected First Aid boxes once each term and maintained the contents as and when required.

Most of the School boarders were registered with a local GP practice where they could choose to see a doctor of either gender if they wished. The School Nurse said that 10% of boarders were in need of mental health services. A consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist, with a special interest in deaf children, was visiting the School every two months. There were plans to increase this resource.

Good practice was being followed regarding the administration, recording and safe storage of medicines. Medication Administration Record sheets and storage arrangements were sampled at this inspection and found to be satisfactory. Each boarding house had a copy of the School's 'Handling of Medicines Policy'. This document had been reviewed and the wording improved for staff to read.

Written records were kept of medication, treatment and First Aid given to children. Records were also kept of illnesses, accidents and injuries to children during their placement at the School.

The School contacted parents, by various means of communication, about their children's health problems and treatment – subject to medical confidentiality.

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 Inspector sampled an evening meal, together with children. He found it to be a well-managed relaxed and sociable occasion. Children were offered a choice of main courses including imaginative vegetarian alternatives. Lunch menus followed a four-week rolling system which was changed each term. Supper menus were reviewed each week. Daily menus were displayed on a whiteboard. The housekeeping service was liaising with the School Nurse regarding the dietary needs of children with specialist health needs. Children's cultural needs were being considered – for example, halal meat was available – and they were consulted over the planning of menus. Specific dietary needs were recorded and met.

Standards of food hygiene were high. The Environmental Health Officer inspected the School's catering services in March 2003 and gave a positive report. The recommendations made had all been undertaken at the time of this inspection. All Housekeeping staff (that is catering and domestic staff) had a Basic Food Hygiene certificate but a training matrix showed that only 5 of the Schools' 21 care staff had been provided with this training.

The School's dining room was suitable for the needs and numbers of children and staff dining in it. Wheel chair access to the dining room was provided. Water machines were available in the main school building and the sports hall.

Children were being offered opportunities to gain experience in the preparation and cooking of food in boarding houses. Food was ordered weekly by houses and delivered daily. Food was available to children outside set mealtimes.

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

Children were able to bring their own clothing to school and to wear their own reasonable choice of clothing outside class time. They were able to purchase personal requisites from a nearby shop and stationary from the School. They were able to keep their clothing and personal requisites and toiletries for their own exclusive use. Young women had their own supply of sanitary protection.

Staff provided guidance to children on the use of sanitary protection and toiletries.

Where necessary, money and valuables were being securely and appropriately kept for children in the boarding houses. Children said that they were encouraged and assisted to manage and budget 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

Children's records were seen in one boarding house. The School's care plan for children in residence was seen to contain three 'Aims for This Term' which were formulated, wherever possible, by the child. The School was following good practice by involving children in planning for their care in the boarding houses and the Head of House said that the children were most aware of their future and felt that these aims were very relevant. The School aimed to review care plans every half term and the children's three individual aims were also reviewed at annual educational reviews.

The Head of Residence showed the Inspector a draft care plan format which contained improvements over the existing one. This had already been partly introduced, she said. This new care plan format incorporated aims/plans that were reviewed termly.

Every child had a key worker who monitored the School's compliance with the care plan.

The care plan made reference to all items from Standard 17.5

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 School's files contained all the information listed in Standard 18.2.

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 School was keeping all the records listed in this Standard. They were retained for at least five years from the date of the last entry.

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

Staff were in contact with parents regarding any welfare concerns relating to children at the School. The Inspector was satisfied that when necessary staff implement the wishes of parents with legal custody, or other authorised persons, who may stipulated that a child has restricted or no contact with certain parties.

Children were able to meet parents and other visitors at the School in comfort and in private.

Staff were provided with guidance and training to develop skills to work with children and their families.

The majority of parents, in their written response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, referred to having good communication and involvement with the School, to feeling welcomed on their visits and to their children being well cared for.

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

The daily life of the School provided opportunities for the development of independent living skills and knowledge for all children accommodated at the School.

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?****3**

The School provided good levels of support to its boarding and day pupils all of whom had British Sign Language as his or her first language. More than half of the care staff were deaf. An increasing number of policies and information documents were being put on to BSL signed video tapes and the Inspector was told that the aim was to put all new policies and procedures on tape. The emphasis was on empowering children.

The School was seen to take a responsible and sensitive approach to the needs of any child who may be involved in abuse or prostitution or where there was suspicion of this.

A qualified Deaf Counsellor visited the School twice a week. The Head of Residence had not been told how many children were being seen by this Counsellor. Each child was given the telephone number of the Counsellor whom they could contact directly about personal problems or concerns at the School.

The School was ensuring the provision of individually appropriate personal, health, social and sex education for each boarding pupil, including children with disabilities. Staff were cooperating with specialist service providers such as speech, language and physiotherapists.

Weekly house meetings gave children the opportunity to make their views and wishes known to staff. Children had told the Inspector, at previous inspections, that they were able to express their feelings at these meetings and that they found staff supportive.

Where children were moving to Derby College for Deaf People some information which was considered important was passed to care staff there. The Head of Residence said she envisaged, in future, a report will be sent to a college when a child moves there.

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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A good range of facilities was provided for the deaf children at this school. Two children were wheel chair users and ramps, hand rails and other mobility aids were provided, including a bath hoist in Student House. Improvements had been made to accessing bedrooms for wheel chair users in Student House. Good levels of lighting in the grounds and paving with yellow guide lines were provided for those children with visual impairment.

There were no outstanding requirements or recommendations from the Fire Officer.

Effective precautions were taken to ensure the security of the School from access by unauthorised persons without compromising the care of the children.

The School maintained appropriate links with the local community. Children used local shops and recreational and dining facilities. School clubs were open to deaf children from local mainstream schools.

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?****2**

Boarding houses had a homely environment with good facilities and were well decorated and furnished. New facilities added since the last inspection included new, attractive bedside lights in Lodge House. The Inspector was told of a new 'Work Request' scheme that had been introduced. From its description this appeared to be a well- designed system, making it easier to monitor outcomes. Staff confirmed that there was now a good maintenance system.

The following matters were found to be outstanding from the last inspection...

- only a few boarding houses had a washing machine – there were no plans to address this matter,
- there was still a hole in the carpet in the largest bedroom of House 26. A rug had been covering this hole but had been moved at the time of this inspection,
- the carpet in the first floor double bedroom in House 18 was in need of replacement,
- the vinyl flooring in the hall, stairs and landing in Student House still looked somewhat institutional,
- the porch outside Lodge House still had flaking paint and rotten wood. There were plans to demolish this,
- parts of Lodge House were still in need of redecoration.

The following additional matters were found at this inspection...

- in House 30 the bathroom light pull ceiling rose was not secure on the ceiling,
- in House 30 there was a one inch step on the boundary of the entrance hall and the boiler room. This was a potential trip hazard,
- in House 26 there was a broken tile at the foot of the bath,
- wood boarding to the exterior of the top of Student House was in need of repainting,
- in Lodge House a corner of the first floor toilet had condensation damage to the wall and metal pipework,
- in the bathroom in House 18 the plywood door to the shower enclosure was damaged and there was a water damaged wooden chair.

There were no more than three children in a bedroom. At the time of this inspection, two bedrooms accommodated three children (one only temporarily) although the Inspector was informed that children were only placed in these rooms if they already knew each other and related well to each other. Children's bedrooms were not considered too small by either children or staff although five single bedrooms, in Student House and House 30, had an area of 5.3 sq metres or less. Bedrooms were generally well personalised and had suitable facilities except that

- a number of low wooden beds were still in use – just Lodge House and House 26 had had replacement beds,
- one room in House 18 had three beds in use but had only 2 wardrobes,
- most of the lockable boxes in bedrooms still did not have keys. A number of children told the Inspector that they would find a lockable facility of value for personal items,
- there were still no chairs or desks in a number of bedrooms.

Children did not share bedrooms with adults, with children of significantly different age, or

with children of the opposite gender. All children were able and encouraged to personalise their bedrooms within reason. Some bedrooms were particularly well personalised. Children were given opportunities to have a say in the décor and furnishings of the boarding houses.

There were suitable facilities for children to study outside teaching time although, at the time of this inspection the School's Homework Club had closed. There were plans for this to re-open after Easter 2004. There were suitable facilities for children to pursue personal hobbies at the School.

Staff had designated sleep-in rooms close to children's bedrooms or children knew where staff sleep.

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 School had sufficient baths, showers and toilets overall although House 18 had only two children's toilets but was accommodating ten children and had an additional assessment bed. Doors to these facilities were provided with suitable privacy locks.

A number of new facilities had been added since the last inspection, including three new showers in Student House and the conversion of a bedroom to a shower in House 26.

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?****2**

There were no significant unnecessary hazards to health and safety apparent in the School or grounds. A new Health and Safety BSL signed video tape had been produced.

Gas installations were inspected at least annually and boilers were maintained annually. A rolling programme of checking electrical installations and equipment was in place.

Health and safety risks to individual children had been comprehensively assessed. Thermostatically controlled mixer valves had been fitted near to hot water taps in House 30 and Student House where children were felt to be at most risk of scalding. Fitting of further mixer valves was progressing on a rolling programme, the Inspector was informed. The water in the bathroom in House 18 was found to be very hot. There were no covers on any radiators - the Head of Residence said that individual risk assessments had shown that no child was at risk of being scalded on a radiator.

Risk assessments were prepared in relation to maintenance tasks to be undertaken and to fire safety. These were seen by the Inspector. Also, recorded risk assessments of the school's premises and grounds had been undertaken, including the School's Health Centre and each boarding house. The latter was seen to be very comprehensive covering all areas of each house and issues relating to shared rooms, sexual activity, confidential information and the absence of waking staff. The three housekeepers had attended a three-day Risk Assessment course and use their skills gained within the Housekeeping area.

Fire drills were undertaken each term. The regular testing of emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment, was being performed in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Officer who last visited in 2001. There were no recommendations outstanding. Care staff were provided with fire training, approximately once a year, but night staff were still not receiving fire training twice a year. There were plans to provide housekeeping staff with fire training in the forthcoming Easter holiday period.

Care staff had received procedural guidance on working with materials considered hazardous under the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations. Individual Product Information sheets were maintained in a locked cleaning cupboard in each boarding house.

The School was taking a pro-active position on accident records by considering patterns and any Health and Safety implications.

There was a Health and Safety Committee that met twice a term.

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?

2

There was a satisfactory staff recruitment process recorded in writing. The School's system for recruiting staff who will work with children at the School was of a good standard and included all the elements in Standard 27.2.

Verification of this system was obtained from viewing personnel records. Documentation showed that job applicants were expected to give their reasons for leaving previous posts and any gaps in employment were explored. However, on two Interview Assessment Forms seen only one had a recorded 'No' to the question about previous work linked to children, the other was blank in this area. Neither Form had a recorded 'Yes' or 'No' to the question of gaps in employment.

Total number of care staff:

21

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

6

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 Principal said that levels of staff turnover and sickness had been higher than usual during the current academic year. During staff sickness and holidays two relief care staff and School teaching assistants covered evening duties.

Each of the six boarding houses had an establishment for a waking night staff member on duty each night from Monday to Thursday. In all houses the Head of House slept-in. Due to levels of staff sickness it has not always been possible to maintain a member of waking staff in each house, the Principal said. The Inspector saw a recorded risk assessment for those occasions when only a single member of sleep-in staff was on duty in a house.

Normally, two adults were on duty in each boarding house with the means to request backup from the Head of Residence, when necessary.

The Staff group in day to day contact with children included staff of both genders.

Two children had been identified as needing one-to-one staff and these had been provided.

The Inspector saw the School's new written staffing policy.

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 School had an induction training programme for all newly appointed staff and the Inspector saw one completed staff induction record. Care staff and ancillary staff confirmed that they had received guidance on child protection. A recently appointed member of care staff confirmed that the School had provided frequent supervision and made clear the procedures to be followed in relation to emergencies, Health and Safety and child protection.

Programmes of training were available that addressed the issues detailed in Appendix 2 to the National Minimum Standards. Staff training records were easily accessible through a central staff training matrix.

The Inspector considered that all staff had been provided with training appropriate to their role and addressing the needs of children accommodated at the School. Staff said that they were encouraged to attend training courses and the School will actively consider staff members' requests for funding a training course.

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?****3**

Care staff were receiving supervision twice a term from the Head of Residence and her schedule of supervision was seen. Ancillary staff were receiving supervision twice a year. New staff received more frequent supervision for the first two months of employment. The Deputy Principal was receiving regular supervision from the Principal. The Principal also received supervision, including the setting of targets by Governors.

A new supervision record sheet was seen which had been in use since September 2004. Action points were written on this sheet. An additional supervision report form was to be introduced from Easter 2004. From talking to care staff it was clear that they all receive a copy of the supervision record sheet.

Supervision at the School addressed all appropriate issues including discussion of individual boarding children's care plans. The Head of Residence said she was available at any time to provide care staff with support and staff confirmed this.

All staff were appraised annually and a well structured appraisal record was kept on employee's files.

At a meeting with care staff the Inspector was able to ascertain that staff were aware of the School's policies and procedures. A new set of policies and procedures covered most of those listed in Appendix 3 to the National Minimum Standards. A number of these were still to be approved by the School Trust. Many of the School's policies and procedures had been placed on BSL signed video tapes and this was an ongoing process.

All staff had received job descriptions and person specifications.

Weekly staff meetings were being held in each boarding house and these were minuted and followed a well-considered structure. Heads of boarding houses had weekly meetings and also met informally before school each day. The School had regular full care staff meetings. Ancillary staff did not attend these meetings although the Head of Residence had meetings with the Senior Housekeeper.

The Inspector discussed with the Principal and Deputy Principal the benefits of regular meetings between themselves and the Head of Residence so as to ensure the latter is kept fully informed of child protection issues relating to individual children.

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.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.17)

The school is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Head of Residence had a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in Management at Level 4 and was, at the time of this inspection, undertaking an NVQ in Caring of Children and Young People at Level 4. By 2005 she will have had more than three years in this senior post.

Work patterns were such that care staff were able to undertake supervision, staff meetings and other tasks listed in Standard 31.5 without compromising overall care of the children.

Children were not given responsibilities over other children in the school.

Discussion with the Deputy Principal confirmed that the School responded appropriately following any allegation or suspicion of abuse of a child by a staff member.

The Principal said that the School had planned responses to a range of foreseeable crises.

Percentage of care staff with relevant NVQ or equivalent child care qualification:

32 %

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

The National Care Standards Commission 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 Principal or senior members of staff monitor the ongoing work of the School at appropriate intervals.

The Inspector was satisfied that the School had effective quality assurance systems including the seeking of views of the children accommodated. The Inspector saw children's responses to a survey undertaken in March 2003 when they were asked to record the 'Things we like' and 'Improvements we would like'. The Principal spoke of plans to create an outside hard surface play area in response to children's views and is considering children's request for a common room. There were also plans to upgrade the Sports Hall which had been a requested improvement by a number of children.

Each boarding house had a copy of the National Minimum Standards and care staff were encouraged to record, with a date, evidence of ways in which individual Standards were being met.

The School Council has wide pupil representation with two pupils representing each Secondary year and a balanced gender input. The Council is chaired by a pupil. A Residential Sub Committee meets four times a year and there is a standing 'Residence' item on Governors' agendas.

The Principal carries out, once a year, a review of the operation and resourcing of the School's welfare provision for boarding pupils and incorporates this into the Annual Report which is submitted to the governing body and then becomes a public document. Items identified as requiring attention are incorporated into the School's 'Residence Development Plan'.

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?****2**

The Inspector was provided with four Governors' Inspection Reports for the period June 2003 to February 2004. The Principal said that a further Governors' inspection was carried out in mid-March 2004. Not all the boarding houses had received a recorded visit from a Governor and the Inspector suggested that each house is visited in turn over the academic year. The report forms did not cover all the records listed in standard 33.3. Visits to the boarding houses were announced with usually a day's notice, the Principal said.

The Principal said that copies of this Report were provided to each member of the Royal School for the Deaf Trust Board.

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 from 29th March to 1st April 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Action taken by the NCSC 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

YES

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 , 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

NO

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

NO

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

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

D.3 HEAD’S AGREEMENT

Head's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of _____
confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation
of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that
I agree with the recommended actions made and will seek to comply with
these.

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of _____
am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

--

Print Name _____

Signature

Designation

Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.