



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

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

Shenstone Lodge School

Birmingham Road

Shenstone

Nr Lichfield

Staffs

WS14 0LB

3 & 4 December 2003

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

Shenstone Lodge School

Address

Birmingham Road, Shenstone, Nr Lichfield, Staffs, WS14 0LB

Tel No:

01543 480369

Fax No:01543481104

Email Address:

headteacher@shenstonelodge.Sandwell.sch.uk

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

Sandwell Local Education Authority

Name of Head

Mr S Butt

NCSC Classification

Residential Special School

Type of school

Residential Special school

Dec 4 and 5 2003

Date of last boarding welfare inspection:

Date of Inspection Visit		3 December 2003	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of NCSC Inspector	1	Christopher Garrett	105812
Name of NCSC Inspector	2	George Plant	075783
Name of NCSC Inspector	3		
Name of NCSC Inspector	4		
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection			

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Lead Inspector Chris Garrett

Signature *Chris Garrett*

Second Inspector _____

Signature _____

Locality Manager George Plant

Signature *George Plant*

Date 19 August 2004

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 Shenstone Lodge 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
- 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

Shenstone Lodge School is a residential special school catering for boys who are experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties and may display behaviour associated with the Autistic Spectrum. The school accepts boys who are in Key Stage one and Key Stage 2 age bands though the school will occasionally accept those pupils who are already in Year 6 .At the time of the Inspection all of the boys in residence at the school were aged between 10 –13 years of age.

The school currently provides residential care consisting of either 12 or 5-day packages for up to 13 boys. The school currently provides day provision for 9 pupils. A number of the day pupils remain until the early part of the evening to join in activities organised by the care team

The school is owned by Sandwell Local Education Authority and is situated in the village of Shenstone, which is within Staffordshire. The location of the school provides good access to local community services and facilities The school is set in its own extensive grounds which consists of play areas, animal enclosure, swimming pool and sports field. The residential provision is situated in a large country house and is spread over its three floors. The house provides a great deal of space all of which is used to great advantage for the young people. The building has been extended in the past to provide staff rooms, offices, medical room and resource areas. The School is detached from the residential facilities. The school is planning to build a gymnasium in the near future. With the exception of the Caretaker none of the staff are resident at the school.

The primary goal for young people attending the school is to help prepare them educationally and socially to be able to manage in a mainstream school. Although the school has been successful in achieving this goal for some, others will move on to either day special schools or on to other residential facilities.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

The Inspectors were able to identify a number of key features that contributed positively to the welfare of the young people at the school. The Head Teacher is very proactive in promoting good practises, provides good management and acts as a positive role model. The school has good contact with parents, other agencies and the local community. Staffing levels were good and the system in place for all staff working in both the education and care settings allows for a consistent approach to the management of the young people.

Accommodation is good and homely and well resourced. The administration of medication is undertaken in a responsible manner. Staff demonstrated a commitment and loyalty to their management and had good relationships with the young people. The school provides a wide range of activities that the young people identified as one of the best things about the school the school has a good system of recording incidents. All of the young people commented favourable on the meals provided for them

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

The school has a range of good practises in place but do not necessarily have policies and procedures in place to guide these and to inform parents, pupils and other interested agencies. The school has shown a reluctance to review health and safety issues raised in the previous inspection and noted again in this one. I.e. den building, individual risk assessments and access to the main kitchen it is essential that the school discuss these issues with the appropriate agencies so that the risk to young people is appropriately managed. The school needs to extend its risk assessments to cover all activities undertaken by the young people as well as completing individual ones addressing the young peoples behaviours. Currently a number of the care shifts are lead by members of the education team. Care staff could be responsible for managing and leading their own teams and could be given the support necessary to help them develop the skills that they need to fulfil these roles The Head of care was not fulfilling duties as outlined in the job description. The school needs to address those points raised in the report that are aimed at promoting the profession development of the care team and ensuring that they have a greater contribution to the overall care package. The school needs to improve on its existing communication systems

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This is the second inspection that the school has received by the National Care Standards Commission. The Commission acknowledges that although it provided feedback on the day of the previous inspections and correspondence was sent to the school regarding urgent matters, that there was a delay in supplying the school with a copy of its final report. Subsequently the school has been unable to address all of recommendations made in the last inspection.

The overall impression was of a positive approach by the Head Teacher of the school to promote good practice, positive relationships and achievement of the creditable aims of the school. The Inspectors were able to identify structure and practices, which had been put in place that served the aims of the school. The school had produced a action plan responding to many of the recommendations in last years report The school has already gone some way to carry out the plan and had made notable changes in the area of child protection. The school needs to review the current care management and the role of the care team and the education staff that help in the care setting. Although some health and safety issues have been identified in the report the Inspectors felt that the commitment and enthusiasm showed by the staff and the good leadership from the head ensured that the young people at the school were safe and that their welfare was being catered for.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION

Recommended Actions from the last Inspection visit fully implemented?

NO

If No, the findings of this inspection on any Recommended Actions not implemented are listed below:

No	Standard	Recommended actions	
8	RS22	To put in place suitable arrangements to independent visitor contacts.	31/03/2004
9	RS24	To review the fire retardant standards of furniture in young people's dormitory areas.	31/03/2004
10	RS25	To fit water temperature regulators to bathing facilities and to provide suitable heating in a shower room.	31/03/2004
11	RS26	To ensure that the young people's adventure play area is made safe.	31/03/2004
13	RS26	To ensure safe practices regarding access to the kitchen	31/03/2004
14	RS26	To put in place individual risk assessment practices relating to young people.	31/03/2004
17	RS29	To review the levels of staff training/qualifications in relation to their applicability to current standards in child care practice and make suitable arrangements for future training.	31/03/2004
18	RS30	To put in place suitable arrangements for the supervision of staff.	31/03/2004
19	RS32	To put in place suitable arrangements for monitoring of the school by internal management/senior staff.	31/03/2004
20	RS33	To put in place suitable arrangements for visiting of the school by the board of governors and reporting on the conduct of the school.	31/03/2004
22	RS26	To provide a safety rail to a flat roof area accessible to young people.	31/03/2004

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	RS1	It is recommended School Prospectus includes the name of the designated person for child protection.	30/09/2004
2	RS3	It is recommended that the school produce a confidentiality policy raised in this report	31/07/2004
3	RS3	It is` recommended that the school produces guidelines on searching children's possessions	31/07/2004
4	RS4	It is recommended that the school review its complaints policy inline with requirements of Standard 4.3 and that this guidance is made accessible to all staff	30/06/2004
5	RS4	It is recommended the parents receive advice on how they can make contact with the independent visitor and to make compliant directly to the National Care Standards Commission	30/09/2004
6	RS4	It is recommended that the school provides staff with training on the management of complaints	30/09/2004
7	RS4	The school is recommended to keep a separate record of any complaint made so that senior staff can conduct trend analysis.	30/07/2004
8	RS5	It is recommended that information concerning child protection is revised to provide information in line with local ACPC guidelines	31/05/2004
9	RS5	It is recommended that the school review its child protection guidance to ensure that it complies with advice found in appendix 1 NMCS Residential\Special schools	31/05/2004

10	RS5	It is recommended that child protection training is extended to all ancillary staff at the school	30/10/2004
11	RS5	It is recommended that child protection is included in the staff induction training.	31/07/2004
12	RS7	It is recommended that the school develop a system of notifying the National Minimum Care standards about serious events and that staff are made aware of this.	31/07/2004
13	RS8	It is recommended that the school review its unauthorised absence policy (absconding) to include the recording debrief sessions with young people	30/07/2004
14	RS10	It is recommended that the school introduce a separate records of sanction that will be kept in a bound and numbered book	31/07/2004
15	RS11	It is recommended that the Care Team take an active part of the referral process	31/05/2004
16	RS12	It is recommended that the care staff rota is revised allow care staff to regularly attend annual reviews	30/09/2004
17	RS12	It is recommended that consideration should be given to the review format so that the care team can make a greater contribution	31/09/2004
18	RS15	It is recommended that the menus reflect the choices and range of food that is regularly being prepared	31/07/2004
19	RS17	It is recommended that targets are set that address the issues identified in the statement of Educational needs and the pupil Profile as well as observed behaviour	31/07/2004
20	RS18	It is recommended that the school review the contents of the children's files in line with Standard 18 .2	31/07/2004
21	RS18	It is recommend that the school implements a policy providing guidance about access to files by young people	31/07/2004
22	RS25	It is recommended that the ventilations systems to bathroom and toilets s are checked	31/04/2004
23	RS26	It is recommended that the school devise a back up system to ensure that weekly fire alarm checks are undertaken in the absence of the caretaker.	31/05/2004
24	RS26	It is recommended that the school devise a back up system to ensure that weekly vehicle checks are undertaken in the absence of the caretaker	31/05/2004

25	RS26	It is recommended that the school extend risk assessment to cover all of the activities that a young person can participate in	30/09/2004
26	RS26	It is recommended that that the school consult with the Health and Safety Department within the LEA about the den building activity and comply with any recommendation	31/03/2004
27	RS26	It is recommended that risk assessments are made about the exposed hot water pipes	31/05/2004
28	RS26	It is recommended that the school consult with the Health and Safety department about access to kitchens and comply with any recommendations	31/03/2004
29	RS26	It is recommended that the school remove the hap and staple from those rooms that no longer require locking	31/03/2004
30	RS26	It is recommended that the school put in place suitable risk assessment about risks incurred by any activity at the school.	31/03/2004
31	RS15	It is recommended that the menu should be reviewed by a dietician to ensure it nutritional content NMS?	31/07/2004
32	RS28	It is recommended that day care staffing levels should be reviewed to take account of those factors identified in the report NMS.	31/07/2004
33	RS28	It is recommended that the need for waking night staff should be subject to risk assessment of the young people needs during the night	30/09/2004
34	RS29	It is recommended that the school review training in relation to those area identified in National Minimum Standards appendix 2	31/05/2004
35	RS29	It is recommended that the school seek advice form TOPPS regarding the applicability of the Head of Care qualifications and make arrangements for any further training to be provided	31/05/2004
36	RS29	It is recommended that the school put in place suitable systems for the supervision and support of staff	31/09/2004
37	RS14	It is recommended that the school seek advice from the pharmacist regarding arrangements for the administration and recording of controlled drugs	01/5/2004
38	RS14	It is recommended that school store any controlled drugs in an inner cabinet.	31/05/2004
39	RS31	It is recommended that the school put in place effective care management arrangements	31/03/2004

40	RS31	It is recommended that that effective communication systems are established	30/06/2004
41	RS31	It is recommended that the Head of Care fulfils their role as defined in their job description	31/06/2004
42	RS31	It is recommended that the school put in place care plans which reflect areas as outlined in NMS	31/01/2005
43	RS31	It is recommended that risk assessment practices account for any area of identified risk associated with the care of young people	31/07/2004
44	RS32	It is recommended that the school establish a suitable system for monitoring operational matters as outlined in National Minimum Stand 32	31/03/2004
45	RS33	It is recommended that the school put in place suitable arrangements whereby the Governing body provides for the monitoring of the school	30/09/2004
46	RS27	It is recommended that enhanced CRB clearances be obtained for all existing employees with day-to-day contact with young people.	31/03/2004
47	RS27	It is recommended that the school seek CRB clearance relating to persons over the age of 16 living on site and with access to young people	31/03/2004
48	RS3	It is recommended that the staff and young people be provided with guidance subject to school policy on the access to personal files	31/07/2004
49	RS15	It is recommended that the kitchen is made secure when it is not in use by kitchen staff.	31/03/2004
50	RS1515	It is recommended that staff and pupils are advised not to enter the kitchen when food is being prepared	31/05/2004

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	RS5	It is recommended that the designated person maintain a separate record of child protection concerns. These records should be comprehensive
2	RS6	It is recommended that when the bullying policy is reviewed, a statement should be included indicating that bullying by staff can take place and that there should be appropriate risk assessments in place for perpetrators and victims of bullying
3	RS15	It is recommended that the catering staff distribute termly questionnaires about the contents of the menus
4	RS25	It is recommended that small toilets bowls are replaced

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	NO
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• 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	NA
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Individual interview with pupil(s)	NA
Answer-phone line for pupil/staff comments	NA

Date of Inspection	03/12/03
Time of Inspection	0900
Duration Of Inspection (hrs.)	38
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	2

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) |

"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?	2
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The school provides the information required for a statement of purpose in the schools prospectus. The inspectors were advised that this document is provided to parents and significant others during the referral process. Following a recommendation from the last inspection the current prospectus now provides information on staff qualifications. An examination of the school prospectus shows that it does not provide the name of the designated person for child protection as required by Standard 1.3 However the inspectors were made aware from responses from parent questionnaires and from discussions with staff that there was a clear understanding that all such concerns would be passed to the Head Teacher. It is recommended that when the School Prospectus is reviewed that the name of the designated person is included .The school has produced a good children's guide titled" Welcome to Shenstone Lodge". This consist of photographs identifying members of staff and photographs of different activities in and out of school as well as providing basic information about the routines in the school and in the residential area. The guide has been produced in a format and uses language that is designed to make it accessible to the young people at the school. The inspectors were advised that this guide is made available to the young people during the referral process.

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
<p>The Inspectors were able to find evidence of and were advised about a numbers of features that the school has to promote the involvement of pupils, their families and significant others in key decision-making. The school staff and care staff work closely together to monitor the behaviour of the young people. A part of this process is the setting up of Guidance and Support Groups (GAS). Education and Care Staff meet regularly with a small groups of the young people to review their behaviour during the past week and to set targets for the following week .The young people are encouraged to participate in this review and to decide what targets that want to be set. All of the young people indicated in their questionnaires that their opinions about the school are sought. The care staff hold regular weekly meetings with the young people where they are provided with an opportunity to talk about issues an affect changes .The young people advised the Inspectors that they can use these meetings to ask for changes in activities and to move into another bedroom. There are nightly meetings held after tea where the young people are given the opportunity to choose what activities they want to participate in. The Catering Staff advised the Inspector that they have used a questionnaires with the pupils to help devise the menus and that they give consideration to any requests made directly to them by the young people. The Inspectors found evidence in the young peoples files that they are routinely asked to either contribute and or attend their annual reviews. Parents indicated in their questionnaires that they were routinely asked to attend reviews and that during these meeting that their views were listened to.</p> <p>The Inspectors were advised that at present the school does not have any young people for whom any special arrangements have to be made on cultural or religious grounds. The Head of Care advised the Inspectors that the school was in the process of identifying different cultural festivals and celebrations that will be included in the school calendar.</p>		

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?**

2

The school places a great deal of emphasis in developing good relationships between adults and pupils based on mutual respect and trust. The Inspectors became aware of many practises that were child centred and respected the need to provide privacy and confidentiality. However a number of these practises did not have policies or written procedural guidance in place that could be used to inform staff or parents. For example the staff handbook does not have an extensive procedural guidance to staff on privacy and confidentiality covering all of areas identified in Standard 3.2 It is recommended that the school produce a confidentiality policy covering those points raised in this report. The Staff Handbook does have a section on access to children's files and advising staff that these are confidential. School Files and Medical Files are kept in secure places. The school currently does not have a policy or guidance on the access by young people to their files. It is recommended that the school produce policy and procedures on the access to files by the young people. The Inspectors were not provided with any documentation that provided advice to staff on how to manage information that is given to them in confidence but constitutes a child protection matter. The school did not provide the Inspectors with written guidance to staff about entering pupil's rooms or bathrooms. However staff were observed knocking and waiting before they entered these rooms. The Inspectors were advised that there is not a policy in place advising parents about those occasions when staff may need to search their young people possessions. The inspectors were advised of the practise for room searches that is in place and it was appropriate. However the Head Teacher confirmed that there is currently no written guidance to staff or pupils on how searches should be conducted or recorded. It is recommended that the school produce guidelines on Searching young people's Possessions. The school has provided the young people with a payphone and incoming calls can be taken on a remote office phone allowing the young people to move into a quiet space if they wish. The school provides a meeting room for parents and others to meet with young people privately.

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

Both parents and the young people had indicated in their questionnaires that they were aware of who they could make a complaint to. Throughout the school there are colourful notices advising the young people to talk to staff if they have any concerns. Childline numbers and other children's help lines numbers were displayed by the young persons pay phone. Parents are advised about how to make a complaint in the school prospectus. This advice needs to be expanded to include advice to parents on how they can make contact with an independent visitor and to make complaints directly to the National Care Standards Commission. The Inspectors were not provided with a copy of the school complaints policy and were noted that this had been omitted from the school handbook and staff induction package. It is recommended that the school review its complaints policy inline with

requirements of Standard 4.3 and that this guidance is made accessible to all staff. The school needs to provide training to staff on its handling of complaints. The school is recommended to keep a separate record of any complaint made so that senior staff can conduct trend analysis.

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?

2

The Head Teacher is the designated person for child protection matters within the school. Following observations and recommendations in last years report the school has extensively reviewed its child protection policies and guidance. The Head Teacher has sought advice from the Principal Child Protection officer for Staffordshire on how to bring the schools policies in line with Staffordshire's ACPC guidance. Following this discussion and agreement from Sandwell it has now been agreed that the school will now refer all school based child protection matters to the local Staffordshire Social Services Department. This is in accordance with both ACPC guidance and that of the National Minimum Standards. This new advice is being presented to the Governing Body for ratification. There will be a need for the school to replace the procedural guidance currently found in the Staff Handbook and this will provide it with an opportunity to ensure that the revised policy and procedures covers all of the points outlined in Appendix I of the National Minimum Standards for Residential special schools. The Inspectors are aware that all of the teaching and care staff have recently received an update on child protection based on Staffordshire child protection procedures. It is recommended that this level of training is extended to all ancillary staff at the school. The Inspectors asked staff and the Head of Care about the procedures they would adopt following a disclosure made about a child against a member of staff or the Designated persons. Their responses were good and in line with local procedures. The Chair of governors has a special responsibility for child protection matters. The Inspectors were advised that there were not any current child protection issues, although there has been a couple of occasions that the designated person has consulted with external agencies about possible child protection concerns. The Inspectors noted that these consultations have been recorded on file notes and placed on the young people files. The Inspector felt that the file notes were brief and that they would benefit from some more details explaining the advice given being recorded. The Inspectors advised that the designated person might consider keeping separate child protection files. The Head Teacher advised the Inspectors that he is planning to attend an appropriate child protection training course for designated persons. The school holds copies of both Staffordshire's and Sandwell's ACPC guidance. The Inspectors noted that there was not a section on child protection included in the induction training pack provided to Staff and Governors. It was not made clear to the Inspectors how new staff are informed about child protection. It is recommended that child protection is included in the staff induction training.

Number of recorded child protection enquiries initiated by the social services department during the past 12 months:	0
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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
<p>The school has recently introduced a bullying policy. The policy has a definition of bullying which describes the different ways that bullying can occur and provides guidance to staff on how to tackle and combat it. Throughout the school there are colourful notices advising young people to talk to adults if they have any difficulties. Incidents when bullying may have been observed are recorded on file notes and in the daily log book. These matters may be addressed in assemblies, Guidance and Support Meetings (GAS) and on an individual basis. A number of the younger boys have stated in their questionnaires and in discussion with the Inspectors that they have been subjected to some form of bullying. However they were all very clear that if they had difficulties that they could speak to staff and said that the matter would be dealt with.</p> <p>When the new policy is reviewed, a statement should be included indicating that bullying by staff can take place and that there should be appropriate risk assessments in place for perpetrators and victims of bullying</p>		
Percentage of pupils reporting never or hardly ever being bullied	50	%

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?	1
<p>The Head Teacher advised the Inspector of two occasions that he had consulted with the Social Services Department concerning child protection matters. Brief file notes had been made of these occasions. The Inspectors noted on one young persons file that he had expressed concerns about going home. Given the information recorded, the Inspectors felt that this may have required discussion with the social services team. The Head Teacher explained to the Inspectors why he had not done so. The Head Teacher accepted the need to make fuller reports so that the decision making process could be followed by those not familiar with a particular child and his background. An examination of the Staff Handbook indicated that there is no advice given about the need to notify the National Care Standards Commission about serious events as detailed in this Standard. It is recommended that an appropriate system is put in place and details of this is included in the Staff Handbook</p>		

NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING NOTIFIED TO NCSC DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS:

• conduct by member of staff indicating unsuitability to work with children	0
• serious harm to a child	0
• serious illness or accident of a child	0
• serious incident requiring police to be called	0

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?
<p>The School uses the term unauthorised absence to indicate when a child is away from school and parents have not advised the school as to the reason why. The School has a response to a child absconding from the school, the details of which are found in a document titled Missing Pupil procedure dated Nov 2002. This document is not included in the Staff Handbook or the Staff Induction Pack and the Inspectors were unclear how staff would be made aware of the procedure and how to access it. The procedure advises staff what action to take in the case of a missing child and states that if necessary the Police should be contacted. The Procedure needs to be reviewed to include the need to discuss with the child the reasons why he had left the school and what further actions the school will take following this information. The Inspectors noted that on one of the Young people's Files examined by them that the Pupil profile indicated that the child was a known absconder. However staff and the Head Teacher reported that there had not been any abscontions during the past 12 months.</p>	2
<p>Number of recorded incidents of a child running away from the school over the past 12 months:</p>	0

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

The School places considerable emphasis on building a good relationship between staff and the pupils of the school. Guidance on this can be found in both the Staff Induction Pack and the Staff Handbook. Staff are encouraged to praise the young people for any success or achievements and appropriate rewards are given. The Inspectors observed interaction between staff and the pupils, which was good. Staff spoke about the young people with interest and enthusiasm, emphasising the young peoples strengths. Staff were observed engaging with the young people in appropriate ways and treating the young people with respect. A number of the young people stated in their questionnaires that one of the best things about the school was “the staff “ The young people are given the chance to express themselves and the opportunity to make choices. Comments in the schools recent OfSTED Report (Sept 24-25 2003) included the comment that “Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and friendly“

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?

2

The emphasis of the school was upon control by development of mutual respect between young people and staff. Staff are provided with guidance on appropriate measures of control in the staff handbook and in the Staff Induction Pack. With the exception of the newest member of care staff all of the care team have been provided with training and guidance on the use of restraint using the Team Teach approach. This training is updated on an annual basis .The Head teacher advised the Inspectors that staff who had not yet received Team Teach training would not be expected to assist with a restraint. Team Teach places an emphasis on trying to de-escalate a situation before going on to use a Positive Handling Technique. Incidents of restraint are recorded on an Incident Log sheet, in the Childs Main File and then logged in a separate hardbound book. The Inspectors noted that entries made in the Restraint Book are not as detailed as required by the National Minimum Standards. However they felt that the amount of information retrievable from the Incident Log Sheets and the Restraint Log Book exceeded what is required and felt the system was good. The entries to the Restraint book are only made by the Head teacher which means that he is able to constantly monitor the use of restraint The young people indicated in their questionnaires

and in discussion with the Inspectors that the use of restraint was fair. Staff are given guidance on permitted and prohibited sanctions in the staff handbook. The school places great emphasis on rewarding good behaviour. A weekly review of a pupil's behaviour is the focus of the Guidance and Support groups. Pupils are given marks at key times of the day and these can add up to rewards such as later bedtimes. The approved sanctions include reparation in the form of doing small jobs around the school, the loss of privileges, removal from activities and trips and the use of restitution when a child may pay up to two thirds of their pocket money to pay for any damage they may have caused. Currently sanctions are only recorded in the daily logbook and or the Guidance and Support Logbook. The Inspectors were concerned that this system does not provide a comprehensive record that could be used to identify trends and to ensure that a young person was not receiving a multiple number of sanctions at anyone time. The Inspectors felt that the current procedures did not provide a good system of recording that could be monitored by the Head teacher. It is recommended that the school introduce a separate records of sanction that will be kept in a bound and numbered book.

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?	2
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The admission process is outlined in the School Prospectus. Referrals are made directly to the school either by the LEA, the educational psychologist or a Social worker. If the young person is considered to be a likely candidate a member of the school staff normally a learning support person will undertake a home visit. During this visit the member of staff will complete a pupil Profile which collates information on the pupils family and his health, emotional and social needs. This is then followed up with a visit to the school, where the young person will receive a copy of the Children's Guide. An examination of a number of the pupil's files showed that the system had been adhered to. The Inspectors also noted that the Head teacher had been proactive in ensuring that previous education records were submitted to the school. The Inspectors were concerned that the Care Team did not take an active part in the referral process and were advised that it was possible that a new pupil might not meet with a member of the care team until he had been admitted. It is recommended that the Care Team take an active part of the referral process and their views are sought about the suitability of individual referrals. The Head of Care advised the inspectors that the school does not take emergency admissions.

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?

2

One of the main features of the school is that part of the care teams role is to offer support on a rotated basis during the school day and for teaching staff to help in the care setting. The Guidance and Support Groups can consist of teachers, learning support staff and care staff. Each group monitors the behavioural targets of a small number of young people. Both of these arrangements help to ensure that both teams are in regular communication and are familiar with issues in both areas.

The Head of Care advised the Inspectors that Care Staff contribute to the Annual Reviews and will if the opportunity arises attend the review meetings. The Inspectors read a sample of Children files and could not identify one occasion that a member of care staff had attended a review but noted that they were normally attended by a teacher and often in the company of a learning support worker. An examination of the annual reviews showed that the care teams contribution was considerable less that that of the education team. The Head of Care stated that he rarely attended annual reviews. Given the amount of time that some of the young people are in residence and that each of their educational statements carry some social objectives the care teams role in reviewing a young persons placement appears disproportionately low. It is recommended that the care staff rota is revised allow care staff to regularly attend annual reviews. It is recommended that consideration should be given to the review format so that the care team can make a greater contribution.

The young people have easy access to age appropriate books, games, toys and videos that are on display throughout the residential unit.

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?

2

A range of activities was provided for the young people both within the school and outside in the local community. The inspectors saw this as strength of the school. The activities were designed around the interests of the young people and took place under the joint supervision of care and teaching staff. The activities include routine swimming trips, summer camps, use of local leisure faculties, provision of play equipment in outside areas, and a range of indoor play equipment. On the day of the inspection inspectors noted the positive and relaxed leisure time, which was provided. This was clearly planned and coordinated with choice available to young people in relation to activities. The Head Teacher was part of the team of staff supporting young people during the evening and was actively engaged with them. The overall impression was of suitable structure in planning and positive outcomes for young people. The inspectors only concerns related to the lack of suitable risk assessments for individual activities which needs to be addressed by the school

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?

2

During the inspection account was taken of information from medical records, medication records, policy / procedures. Discussion with the head of care, speech and language therapist, and parents.

The school had in place a policy dated January 2003 relating to health care, which outlined the needs of young people accommodated at the school. The policy included the responsibilities of the school and staff, administration of medication and arrangements for the safekeeping of medication, the role of parents, emergency procedures and school trips.

All the young people were registered with a General Practitioner. The GP had written to the NCSC as part of preparation for the inspection. There were no outstanding issues related to the governance of health care at the school. The health records showed routine auditory and visual tests. Records relating to immunisation were maintained; Specific health care needs were referred via the GP to a suitable consultant. The records showed attendance by children at such appointments that were escorted by staff. The young people attended the GP for annual health checks and saw the GP following admission. From a sample of children records there were no medical consent forms on the files of two young people. This was brought to the attention of the school for clarification.

Health Care plans were held securely in the medical room. Young people received access to a childcare specialist nurse who was employed by 'Premier Health'.

Medication was stored securely in a lockable cabinet within the medical room. The records for the administration of medication showed that medication had been given as prescribed. On one occasion the records had been signed in advance. This was brought to the attention of the Head of Care who agreed to address this with the staff member concerned. An inner lockable cabinet was provided which was used for the storage of surplus medication. Controlled drugs were stored in a loose metal cash box. It was recommended that the inner cabinet be used or the metal cash box be secured inside the cabinet for the storage of controlled drugs. Two signatures were provided for the administration of medication although there were occasions when one staff had signed. Discussion took place regarding the recording of the quantity of controlled drugs remaining following administration. The school had addressed the previous inspection recommendations. The overall finding of this part of the inspection was that the administration of medication was being addressed responsibly but that the above matters should be reviewed.

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 Inspectors joined the young people for three meals. These were well-ordered and social occasions. Meals were good, varied, substantial and accompanied by fresh vegetables and fruit and quantities were satisfactory. All of the young people completing the food question in the questionnaire stated that the food was good to very good

The cook and the assistant cook advised the Inspectors that they had devised a four week winter and summer menu based on the information that they had received from a questionnaire that they had distributed amongst the pupils some 12 months ago. They advised the Inspector that they hope to repeat this exercise on a termly basis. Currently the menus do not show a choice but the Inspector was advised that the cooks are routinely providing a vegetarian alternative to one of the pupils. The cooks also explained that they regularly provide fruit at break times and as an alternative to dessert. It is recommended that the menus reflect the choices and range of food that is regularly being prepared. Whilst inspectors had no concerns about the suitability of the meals provided it was recommended that the menu should be reviewed in consultation with a dietician. It was noted that a paediatrician had reviewed a menu, which had since changed, some two years ago.

The School has recently been inspected by the Environmental Health Officer who did not need to make any recommendations. The Inspector spoke with the Health Officer as a follow up to the recommendations made in the last report. The Environmental Health office stated that his department did not have any concerns with the school using eggs from its own poultry. The Inspector expressed his concern that he had witnessed young people and staff going into the kitchen at a time that food was being prepared. During a follow up discussion with the Environmental Health office the Head Teacher advised him that he would be giving out a directive to all staff and young people that they should not be going into the kitchen when food is being prepared.

Both the cooks and care staff have current Food Handling Certificates.

The cooks advised the Inspector that they would be participating in the new cultural calendar that the school is implementing. They will be offering special meals to celebrate special days and festivals.

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

There was evidence of young people's personal preferences being addressed throughout the inspection. This was evident from observations of inspectors', discussion with young people responses in the pupil's questionnaires. Children's personal preferences were reflected in personalisation of dormitory areas, choice of activities and structure of activity proving for access/use of community services/facilities. Guidance about clothing can be found in the school prospectus.

Both the school uniform and the pupils play clothes are provided by the school all items of clothing are clearly marked with the young persons name. The Head of Care advised the Inspector that the young people could bring their own clothes and personal belongings back to the school if they wished

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?

2

Each of the young persons files examined by the Inspector had a current Statement of Educational needs specifying both educational and social objectives. Prior to admission a pupil profile is compiled in which a number of major concerns may have been identified. Some previously recorded concerns included self-harming, running away and fire setting. Each of the young people has a PSHE checklist completed identifying life skills that need to be developed. The Guidance and Support Groups regularly monitor the behaviour of the young people and set weekly targets. The Inspectors noted that many of the targets set indicated desired outcomes and did not provide details on how these might be achieved. The targets reflected observed behaviour and were not necessarily addressing the social objectives found in the educational statements or the concerns identified in the pupil profiles. Targets need to be set that address the issues identified in the statement of Educational needs and the pupil Profile as well as observed behaviour.

The Inspectors saw evidence that placement reviews annual reviews and other statutory reviews were regularly taking place and that the young people were asked to contribute to them and attend part of the meetings

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?

2

A sample of the pupil's records was inspected. General files are kept in the administrators office and information on health matters are kept by the Head of Care. An examination of both of these files for each of the young people sampled showed that they did not routinely include all of the information that is required in Standard 18.2 of the National minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools. All files were stored in secure locations. It is recommended that the school review the contents of the young people's files in line with Standard 18 .2

The school does not have a policy or guidance concerning the access of young people to their files. It is recommend that the school implements a policy providing guidance about the level of access that a young person can have to information stored in their personal school files.

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 maintain appropriate records relating to young people, staff, accidents, staff deployment, visitors and menus. The extent of time which records were stored was not inspected

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 Inspectors were advised that there are currently no restrictions on the contact that young people could have with their parents or significant others. The Head Teacher explained that the school is very proactive in encouraging parents to have regular contact with the school. As many of the parents have some distance to travel, the school will provide transport to enable them to attend important events like the open days and annual reviews. The Care Team provide the escort duties for a number of the young people. This allows them to have regular contact with the pupil's parents. Currently there is a system that requires staff to complete a file note if the parents pass on any significant information. The Inspectors felt that the system of recording could be extended so that a better impression

concerning the level of contact between parents and the school could be gained. All of the parents who completed a questionnaire commented favourably about being encouraged to visit the school. The school send home weekly diaries that provide parents with information about their child's progress. Parents are encouraged to add their own comments. The recent OfSTED Report commented that "Links with parents are good overall."

The young people have access to a pay phone and can receive incoming calls on a cordless phone that allows them to move to a private space if they wish. The school provides a private visitors room to be used by visiting parents. During the Inspection the Inspector met with some parents who regularly visited their son during the week. They explained that they were always made welcome and were allowed to join in the activities that their son was participating in.

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?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion

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?

2

The Inspectors noted that individual support for young people was provided for. This was reflected in systems of care provided by the school e.g. Guidance and Support Groups and in the staffing levels.

An examination of a sample of the young people's file showed that the school arranged for support from external agencies for those pupils that needs had been identified. These agencies included referrals to CAHMS. Paediatric services, psychological services. During the Inspection the Inspectors were introduced to a Speech and Language Therapist who was providing therapy to some of the pupils. The school has identified that a number of its pupils would benefit from being seen by an Occupational Therapist to assist in the development of fine motor control. However the Inspectors were made aware that this is proving difficult to arrange.

The young people advised the Inspectors through discussion and in their questionnaires that they felt able to approach all staff and in particular the Head Teacher if they had any concerns.

The school does not currently have an independent visitor. During the Inspection the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors shared some correspondence they had received from the LEA advising them that the LEA was aware of this issue and were taking steps to address it

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 school is situated in the village of Shenstone, which is within Staffordshire. The location of the school provides good access to local community services and facilities. The school is set in its own extensive grounds which consists of play areas, animal enclosure, swimming pool and sports field. The residential provision is situated in a large country house and is spread over its three floors. The house provides a great deal of space all of which is used to great advantage for the young people. The building has been extended in the past to provide staff rooms, offices, medical room and resource areas. The School is detached from the residential facilities. The school is planning to build a gymnasium in the near future.

The Head Teacher and the Head of Care advised the Inspectors that they do not provide currently for any children with disabilities on roll. The Inspectors formed the view that the residential part of the school would not be able to safely provide accommodation for children with disabilities. There are no outstanding requirements or recommendations from other statutory agencies relating to the premises. Arrangements were in place to ensure the security of the site including coded doors the fitting of alarms to exits and the provision of CCTV cameras covering the entrances to the school. The Inspector was advised that these tapes are not normally viewed and are kept for two weeks before they are then reused. The school is very proactive in maintaining appropriate links with the local community. Pupils attend local groups like the Beavers and Cubs and hold coffee mornings and open days. The recently installed play area was provided with support from local charities.

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 quality of provision for the residential pupils is good and is well maintained. The Staff are very proactive in ensuring that all damage or needs for repairs or replacement are promptly made to the Head Teacher. This ensures that the standard of accommodation is sustained. The school has a ten year rolling programme of internal redecoration that is normally undertaken by the schools Caretaker. External decoration and repairs are normally undertaken by the LEA maintenance department. Staff have made good use of all of the space available in the residential unit. A number of different well-equipped playrooms have been created. Several sitting rooms /TV rooms are provided on the bottom middle and top floors. Although the school currently has 13 residential young people it has the facility and beds to cater for up to 20. Bedrooms have between 2 – 4 beds but currently there are normally only two young people to a room The bedrooms had been provided good quality furnishings/fittings, A number of the bedrooms have been provided with wash hand basin and one has en suite facilities of a toilet and shower. All of the bedrooms have been nicely decorated and are festooned with age appropriate toys books and games. Children's work and photographs of past activities are displayed throughout the whole of the building. A number of the bedrooms have been provided with sitting areas. The Inspectors were advised that following a recommendation made in the last report that the school is mid way through changing furniture that does not have the right fire retardation qualities. All bedrooms were fitted with a speaker linked to a tape system; this was used to play bedtime stories. With the exception of the shower and bathroom areas adequate heating and lighting was provided throughout the accommodation

A visitor's room was provided. The young people have access to a payphone situated on the bottom floor. Incoming calls can be received on the schools cordless phone. Staff 'sleeping in' areas were situated adjacent to children's bedrooms. The school provides a separate single room called the "TLC Room" for when young people are ill.

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?**

2

There were adequate bathing, showering and toilet facilities provided throughout the residential unit. A number of the bedrooms have been provided with wash hand basins and one bedroom had an ensuite shower room. Toilets have been provided with locks that allow staff to open them from the outside if required. There was evidence that some of the toilet facilities have recently been refurbished. A number of the young people commented in their questionnaires and in discussion with the Inspector about the small size of some of the toilets and the Head Teacher has agreed to have these replaced. The school is currently in the process of installing a new boiler that will heat the water and the central heating system in the residential unit. The Inspectors were advised that a part of this contract was to provide water temperature regulators to the washing and bathing facilities and to provide heating to the shower and bathrooms. Separate toilet facilities were available for visitors. A number of the young people explained that it was necessary to open windows provided to get ventilation to the bathrooms and shower rooms. The Head Teacher stated that it was his understanding that all of the shower rooms had been fitted with mechanical means of ventilation. It is recommended that the ventilations systems to bathroom and toilets are checked.

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

The Head Teacher was the designated Health and Safety Officer for the school. The Health and Safety Committee meet two times a year. The Head Teacher advised the Inspector that this committee does not have any designated powers but refer back to the main Governing Body. On site the Caretaker provides maintenance and there is a Gardner who has responsibility for the grounds. There is a system that is in place for weekly fire tests to be undertaken by the Caretaker. An examination of the Fire Log Book showed that for a period of time earlier this year that the tests had not been routinely carried out. This coincided with a period of time that the Caretaker was on sick leave, and the responsibility for the weekly checks had been shared with others. It is recommended that the school devise a back up system to ensure that weekly fire alarm checks are undertaken in the absence of the caretaker. The Fire logbook showed that external maintenance staff from Sandwell had routinely checked the alarm system and emergency lighting. A contractor had checked the Fire Extinguishers in November of this year. Practise evacuations had been undertaken either when there has been a false alarm or at the instruction of the Head Teacher.

The Caretaker advised the Inspector that he was responsible for weekly checks on the school mini bus and that it as routinely serviced and maintained by Sandwell. An examination of the vehicle log books showed a similar lack of consistency in undertaking these checks during the time that the care taker was on sick leave. It is recommended that the school devise a back up system to ensure that weekly vehicle checks are undertaken in the absence of the caretaker.

The school is currently in the process of replacing the main boiler responsible for heating the

water and central heating in the main residential unit.

The Inspector was advised that a representative of Sandwell LEA Maintenance Team had recently undertaken PATS testing.

The Care take advised the Inspector that all glass panes below 900mm from ground /floor level had either been replaced with laminate or wired glass or covered with safety film.

The school has undertaken a number risk assessment focussing on subject areas, locations and some activities .It is recommended that the school extend risk assessment to cover all of the activities that a young person can participate in

The Inspectors were concerned that the school does not routinely conduct individual pupil risk assessments. Concerns that have been identified in the Pupil Profile completed prior to admission have been running away, fire setting and self-harming. A number of the young people have ADHD and can act impulsively without any consideration to the potential harm to themselves .It is recommended that the school complete individual risk assessments that addresses the individual behaviours displayed by the young people

The school has a paddock with sheep in it and a number of small animals and fowl. These are kept in a locked area away from the main school and young people are only allowed supervised access. The gardener has responsibility for this area

The grounds have a number of trees within it .The Gardener had arranged for a tree surgeon to submit a report on the safety of the trees and remedial action had taken place

There was some concern about Health and safety matters including:

Den Building.

A number of the young people advised the Inspector that this was their favourite activity. The Young people were provided with the materials hammers and nails to build dens in an area away from the main school play area. The Inspectors examined this area and noted that the materials being used consisted of broken pallets and an assortment of off cuts and carpet. A large number of pieces of wood had nails protruding from them and young people were using long nails to secure their constructions. These nails were passing through the wood and represented a serious health and safety risk. A number of the structures were unsafe. The school has completed a risk assessment stating that the area would be routinely cleared of dangerous objects or materials. The Inspectors have recommended that that the school consult with the Health and Safety Department within the LEA about this activity and comply with any recommendation

Hot Water Pipes

There are long runs of exposed wall mounted floor level central heating pipes throughout the residential unit. These pipes can get very hot and a young person could get their feet trapped behind a pipe. It is recommended that risk assessments are made and identified dangerous areas of piping are boxed in

Access to the Kitchen

As previously reported a number of staff was observed entering the main kitchen whilst food

was being prepared. The Inspectors were concerned about the possibility of young people touching hot surfaces and being scalded with hot liquids. Access by young people may also affect hygiene requirements in the kitchen. It is recommended that the school consult with the Health and Safety department about access to kitchens and comply with any recommendations.

Flat roof.

In the last report the Inspectors were concerned about access by the young people to a flat roof. The Inspectors were advised that a request has been made to the LEA to erect handrails and that the school is waiting for the LEA to respond.

Padlocked Cupboards.

Throughout the building the Inspectors noted a number of cupboards or rooms that have been secured with a padlock and hasp and staple. The padlocks from some of these areas had been removed and the Inspectors were concerned that a young person could be shut in a room and not able to open it if the hasp was placed over the staple. It is recommended that the school remove the hasp and staple from those rooms that no longer require locking.

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 records relating to the recruitment of a recent member of staff were inspected. CRB clearance and suitable references had been obtained. The Head Teacher received information from the personal department as to the outcome of the recruitment vetting process. There was evidence from inspection of the records and discussion with the management of the school of appropriate interview procedures. Discussion took place about the need to ensure that retrospect active CRB clearance was undertaken for existing staff. The Head Teacher informed inspectors that this matter was currently being undertaken by the LEA personnel department but had not been currently completed. The Head Teacher was advised that no new staff should be deployed until CRB clearance had been obtained. In one instance a member of staff had commenced employment but only after suitable references had been obtained. An initial check had been made under temporary procedure at the time of the appointment for the 'fast track' of applicants in accordance with CRB agreement at time when undue delays were experienced in the return of CRB clearance. This person had now received CRB enhanced clearance. Discussion took place regarding the need for CRB clearance of persons living on site who were not employed by the school.

The Inspectors were made aware that one of the schools staff lives on site and that he occasionally had people stay with him for periods of time.

Total number of care staff:

8

Number of care staff who left in last 12 months:

0

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 overall impression at the time of the inspection was of staffing levels which were adequate in meeting the young people needs and patterns of life, and sufficient to allow for anticipated staff sickness and training.

There were five staff deployed on the roster in the mornings and three in the evenings. At weekends when young people would return home there were four staff on duty throughout the day. At such times there would be five young people in the school. There were eight full time staff employed for care duties. This was sufficient to provide for cover of care duties outside of class time, in relation to term times and to provide for suitable staff ratios to reflect children's activities

The availability of staff numbers had been depleted by recent staff sickness. This shortfall was being managed from staff hours within the existing team. The overall impression was that sickness levels were not unusually high at the school over the year with around 40 days lost to sickness.

Although staffing level at the time of the inspection were sufficient and can also be seen to facilitate good levels of staff / children engagement there were factors related to staffing which should be considered by the school in a review of staffing levels/deployment. It was noted during the inspection that staff would not routinely attend staff meetings, care reviews and that team handovers were not a feature of the staff roster. The Head of care was rostered as part of the care team. Shortfalls in care management were noted during the inspection and the Head of Care referred to their lack of time to provide for some aspects of care management. Discussion also took place with teaching staff and a speech and language therapist regarding the needs of young people relating to the lack of Occupational Therapy input. This was combined with a need for additional staff time to follow through OT programmes designed for young people following assessment.

There were no agency staff employed at the home. There was evidence during the inspection from discussion with staff young people and parents of the good relationships within the school based upon continuity of care. This was supported by the staff roster.

There were no waking night staff deployed. Observation during the evening demonstrated that bedtimes were suitably supervised. It was noted during the inspection that some young people would have a disturbed sleep. Children spoke of the access to the sleeping in staff member should there be a need. It was previously recommended that the need for waking night staff be reviewed. The school had not yet put into place a risk assessment to address this matter.

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?

2

A suitable induction package was available for new staff starting employment at the school. Staff training records showed that five from the total staff team, including teaching staff had received training in first aid. Further training should be provided. Without further staff training the school will need to identify which of the staff on duty have received training as part of duty roster planning.

There were no staff personal development plans in place. However staff received annual appraisal. This should be built upon e.g. in providing for any identified developmental areas including formal training as part of personal development planning. This could be coordinated with the introduction of a system for formal staff supervision.

A record of staff training reflected that staff had received training in relation to their responsibilities. There were areas of consistency in training e.g. child protection and the use of physical intervention. A number of staff had received training in ADHD, Behaviour management although this training could be extend to further staff. The record of staff training did not account for those areas of training as identified in appendix 2 of National Minimum Standards.

The Head of Care had not completed any qualifying training in care. They had successfully completed degree studies in education. It was recommended that advice be sought form TOPPS regarding the applicability of their qualification.

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?

1

A system of staff appraisal was established. There were no system of staff supervision. The Head of care expressed their reservations about their ability to undertake supervision of staff. There was a need for them to receive guidance/training in any introduction of staff supervision system into the school. The Head of care could not inform the inspectors as to how they would know if care staff had the necessary knowledge about the care needs of children other than an understanding obtained as part of their daily duties and contact with staff. This does not support that staff are guided in their role of promoting the welfare of young people.

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?	1
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There was evidence of good management of the school by the head Teacher. This was supported by a number of areas of evidence noted in the course of the inspection. Children, parents, and staff all referred to the positive approach of the head Teacher, good communication about matters related to individual children and the running of the school. Formal systems were established for the organisation of the school e.g. meeting with parents, childcare reviews. Administrative systems were established and in the process of being further developed. There was evidence of how management tried to engineer the structures of the school to provide for a blend of provision, which met the children's educational and social care needs. An example of this was in the joint day to day working of teaching and social care staff. There was evidence of a management approach which provided for the support of staff which sought to delegate tasks but not responsibility. The head Teacher was clearly a figurehead at the school. Observations of the inspectors noted how leadership was demonstrated by example.

The Inspectors expressed concerns about the care management of the school. This was not in relation to outcomes for young people. The children social and health care needs were both being met in some areas to a good standard. The inspectors concerns related to the following areas of care management: -

-There was no system of supervision. The Head of Care showed a lack of knowledge about supervision to an extent to which inspectors would recommend training for t the head of care so that a system of staff supervision could be introduced with confidence

- The Head of care was not fulfilling duties as outlined in their job description.

-The Head of Care had no social care qualification. They had completed a B/ ED. It was recommended that TOPPS be approached to clarify the applicability of this in relation to the role of Head of Care and its status in relation to NMS.

-The Head of Care did not attend children's reviews, children meetings.

-Meetings with the staff team did not reflect routine

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discussion about young people. They were partially attended by the staff team and on some occasions no record was maintained of which staff attended.

- Care planning did not account for the development of programmes, which promote consistency in practice in meeting children's assessed, needs
- Communication systems were in place. Inspectors did not believe that they were sufficiently robust relating to the welfare of young people. The current system has strengths, which should be developed. There is a communication logbook which staff are directed to read on coming on duty. The book refers to 'see file note' which directs staff to incidents affecting young people. These file notes are held in children's individual files. Staff told inspectors how sensitive information would be held by the head of care/Head Teacher rather than in the children's file. There was a 'White board which was used to tell staff about relevant information. There were no routine staff handovers between teams of staff. Two serious matters affecting the welfare of young people i.e. self harm and harm towards another child were not made known to a staff member acting as team leader which were discussed at the time of the meeting as an example of how the current system was flawed and in need of review

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

0 %

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?

2

There were no receivership circumstances applicable to the school

The overall impression was of a stable and efficiently run school. Discussion took place with the school administrator who was recently appointed to the school. There was evidence of suitable administration of business matters relating to the operation of the school, including arrangements for the review of young people, petty cash, admission records; children care records and case files. It was intended that the office area be expanded and a further administrator was to be appointed to take on work previously done by teaching staff e.g. children pocket money.

There were no system in place as outlined in National Minimum Standards which provided for the specific monitoring of records by management of the school i.e. monitoring and signing of records as part of a system which notes and identifies any patterns or issues requiring remedial action. This matter as raised in the previous inspection.

A system was in place for the annual appraisal of staff and management

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?

1

Discussion took place with a member of the Governing body. It was acknowledge that there were no arrangements as per NMS for monitor the welfare of young people at the school. This matter was previously raised in the last in inspection. However arrangements were maintained to ensure that the governing body were made aware of events at the school e.g. joint meeting with the head Teacher visits by the governing body.

C.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 3 & 4 December 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

A copy of the Head's comments and action plan are available at the Area Office, where these have been submitted.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head's comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>

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.

C.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 2 April 2004, 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

C.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

C.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.