

inspection report

Boarding School

Ellesmere College

Ellesmere

Shropshire

SY12 9AB

3rd May 2004

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of School

Ellesmere College

Address

Ellesmere, Shropshire, SY12 9AB

Tel No:

01691 622321

Fax No:

01691 623286

Email Address

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

Woodward Schools (Midlands Division)

Name of Head

Mr B J Wignall

CSCI Classification

Boarding School

Type of school

Independent Co-Educational

Boarding School

Date of last boarding welfare inspection

30
October
2001

Date of Inspection Visit		3rd May 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of CSCI Inspector	1	Vicki Cockcroft	072945
Name of CSCI Inspector	2	Sue Jordan	
Name of CSCI Inspector	3	Brian Lock, Regulation Manager	
Name of CSCI Inspector	4	Ian Henderson	
Name of Boarding Sector Specialist Inspector (if applicable):		N/A	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		N/A	
Was this inspection conducted alongside an ISI or OfSTED inspection as part of a Joint Whole School Inspection?			NO
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		MR BRENDAN WIGNALL, HEADMASTER/MR MIKE SAMPSON, DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL	

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

Brief Description of the school and Boarding Provision

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings

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What the school should do better in Boarding Welfare

Conclusions and overview of findings on Boarding Welfare

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Implementation of Recommended Actions from last inspection

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Part B: Inspection Methods Used & Findings

Inspection Methods Used

- 1. Welfare Policies and Procedures**
- 2. Organisation and Management**
- 3. Welfare Support to Boarders**
- 4. Staffing**
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Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Head's Response

D.1. Comments

D.2. Action Plan Status

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Boarding schools are subject to inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to determine whether the welfare of children (ie 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 Boarding 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.

Inspections are carried out by the CSCI, and in most cases the inspection team includes a specialist in boarding provision working, or with experience of working, in the boarding sector. Boarding welfare inspections by CSCI may also be carried out in conjunction with a full inspection of the school by the Independent Schools Inspectorate or OfSTED, so that the two inspections together constitute a Joint Whole School Inspection of the school. In such cases, a joint summary of main findings and recommendations from both inspections will also be available.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Ellesmere College.

The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Recommended Action by the school
- Advisory recommendations on boarding welfare
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the lay assessor (where relevant)
- The Head's response and proposed action plan to address findings

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections are undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989 as amended, with additional visits as required.

The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Ellesmere College is an Independent Co-educational school for pupils aged 8–18 years. Boarding is available for pupils aged 10 and above. Founded in 1879, it is part of the Woodard Corporation, a group of Church of England Schools. Pupils from all faiths attend and are welcomed at the school.

At the time of the inspection, 182 pupils were boarding at the school on a full-time or weekly basis. Some pupils are dyslexic and the school also provides for a number of pupils who have other special needs.

The school is set in grounds extending to some 70 acres, on the fringe of the market town of Ellesmere, in North Shropshire.

Boarding accommodation is mainly provided in the five separate areas of the school building, which is purpose-built in the traditional 'H' shape design adopted by the Woodard Corporation. Further accommodation, for older girls, is provided in a separate house outside the main school building. For a few older boys, boarding accommodation is provided in individual boarding rooms in 'Nanki' block, which is within the main school courtyard area.

Pastoral care and support are provided to boarders by house staff, by staff with teaching duties who also have boarding responsibilities, and by nursing staff. Other staff, who do not have direct pastoral care responsibilities, contribute to the welfare provision for boarders. There is a Head of Boarding at the school who is directly responsible to the Head Master.

Boarders are provided with 'out of school' activities and there are systems in place to monitor the safety of these activities.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL IN BOARDING WELFARE

Welfare Policies and Procedures

Ellesmere College has written policies in place in relation to most welfare issues. There are clear policies on child protection, bullying and behaviour and discipline and a complaint system is available to both boarders and their parents. There is a medical centre which provides 24 hour medical support to boarders and staff and where records are kept which help to safeguard and promote boarders' health and welfare.

Organisation and Management

Boarding at the school is under the clear leadership of the Deputy Head Pastoral, who reports to the Head Master. The school was able to indicate that it had effectively managed a crisis affecting boarders' welfare in the past. Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities. Prefects are supported and guided through the pastoral system and boarders reported that they received personal support from staff.

Welfare Support to Boarders

The provision of the medical centre enables the school to provide health care and support to those pupils who are ill. The school is adopting an equal opportunities policy and welcomes pupils from different faiths. New boarders are provided with support on their arrival at the school and are helped to settle in by mentors and house staff. While comments were received regarding the catering provision at the school, the general standard during the inspection was good and it is understood that ways of improving the catering provision are under discussion. The school takes the risk of fire seriously and has records in place which demonstrate this. There is a developing system of risk assessment for high risk activities and staff have received, and will be receiving, training in this field.

Staffing

Boarders are looked after by house parents and house mothers who are aware of their duties. Nursing staff, the Chaplain and the Counsellor all contribute to the welfare of pupils and it is noted that ancillary staff are also aware that they are able to make a contribution. Sound relationships were observed between staff and pupils.

Premises

The seven separate areas of accommodation for boarders are clearly separated, appropriately by gender and age. Boarding accommodation is protected by keypad access and the school is investigating further ways to increase security. Those boarders who are ill are suitably accommodated in the medical centre. Boarders have satisfactory provision to study and are, in general, provided with adequate sleeping and changing accommodation. The laundry system works for most pupils and there is a tuck shop which also provides

personal items.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO BETTER IN BOARDING WELFARE

Welfare Policies and Procedures

The school is aware of the need to produce a statement of its boarding principles and practice in forms appropriate for boarders and their parents. There is also an awareness that child protection training needs to be ongoing. A central log of complaints and their outcomes is not yet in place. The tension between 'need to know' and 'confidential' information has not yet been resolved. It is not clear that House Mothers, the nursing staff, the Chaplain and Counsellor are fully integrated into the system of meetings between staff with pastoral care responsibilities to ensure the dissemination of information and the monitoring of staff training needs.

Organisation and Management

There is no system of meetings for all pastoral care staff which would promote the integration of all staff with pastoral care responsibilities and enable supervision of practice to be monitored. This system could also monitor the equality of provision across boarding houses. Pupils' views are sought in a number of ways, but it is felt that regular house meetings and surveys would enable the school to receive comments from pupils, some of whom indicated that they felt their views were not always taken into account. The roles of the Chaplain and the Counsellor are not yet well integrated into the pastoral care system and the school is looking at how this can be achieved.

Welfare Support to Boarders

A number of recommendations have been made regarding processes in place in the medical centre and these were acknowledged by nursing staff. Those pupils who need them are not yet supported by 'welfare plans'. Some privacy issues were noted and related recommendations have been made. Some records are not yet monitored for trends and patterns. The standard of the catering provision was reported to be variable and the school is working on ways to improve this aspect of boarding welfare.

Staffing

Reports and observations indicated that there were times when the adequacy of staffing levels were low. Induction and continued training for pastoral care staff is not consistent. While the system for selecting and vetting pastoral care staff has improved since the last inspection, a number of recommendations have been made to ensure Minimum Standards are met. The current system for monitoring visitors needs enhancing.

Premises

Reports and observations indicated that there were problems with privacy in showers and toilets and that beds are sometimes too short for their occupants. These matters were

acknowledged by the school at the feedback after the inspection. Concerns about water temperatures in showers and the water flow timers were also raised and, again, were acknowledged by the school. The number of toilets available in some houses does not meet minimum standards.

CONCLUSIONS AND OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS ON BOARDING WELFARE

This report is the first by the Commission for Social Care Inspection under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, and therefore serves as an audit of the school against the new requirements, identifying developments needed to meet the new requirements within a reasonable period of time. Any more urgent issues are identified in the report.

Pastoral care staff at Ellesmere College are doing much good work to provide for the welfare needs of its pupils. The existence of the role of Deputy Head Pastoral is an indication of the school's commitment to boarders' welfare and a happy and open atmosphere prevailed during the inspection. Staff were seen, and reported, to be supportive and caring and were found to be aware of areas of policy and practice which could do with development.

There are three main areas in which the school is not currently meeting National Minimum Standards and where such development is needed.

Although there are policies and documentation relating to most welfare matters, the school needs to produce recording which will evidence the good work it is doing, or which will reveal where practice needs to be reviewed.

The school needs to provide, and record, relevant induction and ongoing training in pastoral care to all staff with pastoral care responsibilities.

There are areas in which the physical provision does not meet National Minimum Standards, particularly with regard to the numbers of toilets and handbasins in some areas and the privacy of showers. The provision in St John's house, where the Lower School boys live, needs to be reviewed.

These areas can be addressed by applying the same high standards to the provision of boarding as those which the school already applies to education. It is felt that the existence of the role of Deputy Head Pastoral provides a firm foundation for development of structures and systems which will address the recommendations made from this report.

The Inspection Team would like to thank all boarders and parents and all staff who contributed to the inspection of Ellesmere College.

NOTIFICATIONS TO LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY OR SECRETARY OF STATE

NO

NO

NO

No notification is to be made.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM LAST INSPECTION					

NO

No	Standard*	Recommended Actions	
1	BS3	That written evidence be provided that all staff have received and understood relevant documentation and training in Child Protection Procedures	
2	BS3	A rolling programme of training should be maintained, re-enforcing procedures and indicators within Area Child Protection Committee guidelines	
3	BS5	Notwithstanding the fact that records of complaints investigated are kept on individual files by the headmaster, a 'central' record of complaints should be maintained to include how each was investigated and resolved	

4	BS34	That all staff including non-teaching staff receive full induction training which is recorded to indicate that they have received and understood the training	
5	BS38	There should be evidence of references for all staff including non-teaching staff, at least one of which should be from the most recent employer	

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 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 Boarding 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.

N o	Standard*	Recommended Action	
1	BS1	Ellesmere College should produce a statement of school's boarding principles and practice in forms which makes it available to parents, boarders and staff	31/10/04
2	BS2	The school should ensure that all staff are receiving training on bullying and that the pastoral system encourages the reporting of bullying and a co-ordinated response to dealing with it	31/1/05
3	BS3	That written evidence be provided that all staff have received and understood relevant documentation and training in Child Protection Procedures	31/10/04
4	BS3	A rolling programme of training should be maintained, re-enforcing procedures and indicators within Area Child Protection Committee guidelines	31/10/04
5	BS3	The school's child protection policy must be amended and forwarded to the Local Area Child Protection Committee for consideration and comment.	31/10/04
6	BS3	The school should ensure that child protection training is made available to all staff who have not received recent, relevant training	31/10/04
7	BS3	A record should be kept to indicate which staff have received child protection documentation and training	31/10/04
8	BS3	The school should produce a 'Missing Boarder' policy and keep a log of any incidents involving a boarder going missing from the school	31/10/04

9	BS4	The administration of punishments should be seen to be fair across houses and not to discriminate between boys and girls	31/10/04
10	BS4	The central log of punishments for 'serious' misdemeanours should be signed off in order to indicate that the record is being monitored for trends or patterns	31/8/04
11	BS5	Notwithstanding the fact that records of complaints investigated are kept on individual files by the headmaster, a 'central' record of complaints should be maintained to include how each was investigated and resolved	31/10/04
12	BS5	The complaints policy for parents and boarders should be amended to include reference to the Commission for Social Care Inspection	31/10/04
13	BS5	A central log of complaints should be cross-referenced to records of any complaint investigations held on individual pupils files. This log should include the complaint made, a summary of the investigation undertaken and the resolution achieved	31/10/04
14	BS5	The conclusions reached by any complaint investigation should indicate which elements have been upheld, which have been partially upheld and which have not been upheld	31/10/04
15	BS7	Medical Forms which are sent out to parents should include a statement which indicates that the school may not be able to offer treatment unless the form is completed and returned to the school	31/10/04
16	BS7	The school should ensure that those staff who 'need to know' are provided with confidential information regarding pupils' health or special provision needs	31/10/04
17	BS7	The school should institute a system which ensures that all staff with pastoral care responsibilities for a pupil are involved in discussions about, and co-ordination of, any health or special needs they may have	31/1/05
18	BS8	All staff with boarding responsibilities should be given the opportunity to receive training as well as induction by more experienced members of staff	31/10/04
19	BS8	The school should consider instituting a system of regular meetings involving all boarding staff, in order to promote the integration of all staff with boarding responsibilities and to enable supervision of practice to be monitored	31/10/04

20	BS9	Planned responses to a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises should be recorded in order to illustrate the School's past good practice and future thinking	31/10/04
21	BS10	There should be a system to monitor the equality of provision across boarding houses, with particular reference to gender	31/10/04
22	BS11	The school should continue to seek pupils' views on week-end activities and free time	31/7/05
23	BS12	The school should seek ways of promoting the effectiveness of the School Council and other pupil committees as forums for change and development and should consider surveying pupils' views on the potential value of regular 'House Meetings' on each house	31/7/05
24	BS13	Prefects should receive written guidance on matters which they should 'pass up' to the Deputy Head Pastoral	31/10/04
25	BS13	Boarders should be provided with clear guidance about how they can report perceived overstepping of powers by prefects or House Captains. This guidance should be clear also to prefects and House Captains	31/10/04
26	BS13	The responsibilities of House Captains and prefects, in relation to boarders who are sick during the night, should be clarified to all parties and the policy recorded	31/8/04
27	BS14	The School should continue to look at ways of integrating the roles of Chaplain and Counsellor more effectively into the pastoral system and should consider how best to co-ordinate the pastoral system to ensure a cohesive approach	31/10/04
28	BS15	A routine system of providing information regarding boarders' health needs on a 'need to know' basis, should be devised and put into operation	31/10/04
29	BS15	All prescribed medication should be organised by individual service used and not by brand	31/8/04
30	BS15	All external preparations should be stored on a separate shelf from the internal products	31/8/04
31	BS15	All Homely Remedies should be clearly identified and stored together	31/8/04
32	BS15	A Homely Remedies protocol should be produced and authorised by the pupils' GP. A form to specifically record the administration of such remedies should also be devised	31/10/04
33	BS15	All cupboards storing medication should be locked	31/8/04

34	BS15	No medication, left by previous boarders, should be held for use for any other pupil	31/8/04
35	BS15	Any medication that does not have a dispensing label attached to its container should be returned to the community pharmacist for disposal. The school should ensure that parents are aware that incorrectly labelled medication cannot be administered through the school	30/9/04
36	BS15	All aspects of self-administration of medication should be assessed for each pupil wishing to do this and these assessments should be recorded	31/10/04
37	BS15	Arrangements for the safe and secure storage of medication should be confirmed	31/8/04
38	BS16	The procedure relating to boarders who feel ill at night should be clarified to staff and pupils to ensure that House Captains do not take undue responsibilities	31/8/04
39	BS17	The School should develop a system of recording 'welfare plans' for those pupils who need emotional, physical or behavioural support. Actions taken in line with these plans should be recorded and the plans should be monitored and revised if necessary.	31/1/05
40	BS18	The school should adopt an equal opportunities policy and make this available to parents, boarders and staff in accessible forms	31/10/04
41	BS19	The privacy of payphones on houses should be checked, particularly on St John's	31/8/04
42	BS19	A telephone number for the Commission for Social Care Inspection should be displayed on all boarding houses	31/8/04
43	BS20	Door chains should be removed from rooms in St Oswald's	31/8/04
44	BS20	Locks and keys should be provided for boarders' rooms on St Cuthbert's and St Patrick's	31/10/04
45	BS21	The school should produce a Boarders' Handbook which includes reference to 'joining' arrangements	31/10/04
46	BS23	There should be a system to record the monitoring of records to establish issues requiring action or to identify trends and patterns	31/10/04
47	BS24	The school should continue with efforts to put in place a catering system which help to reduce the variability in the standard of meals provided and which will provide a wider choice for boarders	31/1/05

48	BS29	The system of risk assessment of high-risk activities needs to continue to develop and it needs to be confirmed and recorded that all centres used for such activities are licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations	31/10/04
49	BS31	The school should re-assess the levels of supervision of boarders outside teaching times, to ensure that there is adequate access to members of staff with boarding responsibilities at all times by pupils, parents and visitors	31/10/04
50	BS33	The School should review the 'two over three' rule at week-ends on the boys' Middle and Upper School houses, given the distance between houses in the Main School building	31/8/04
51	BS34	That all staff including non-teaching staff receive full induction training which is recorded to indicate that they have received and understood the training	31/1/05
52	BS34	A system of supervision for all staff with pastoral responsibilities should be put in place	31/1/05
53	BS34	A consistent system of induction training should be made available to staff with boarding duties and a written programme produced	31/1/05
54	BS35	The staff disciplinary procedure should be amended to include arrangements for the guidance and support of any staff member who is suspended as a neutral act, pending investigation of an allegation	31/10/04
55	BS36	Professional boundaries should be discussed and recorded on a regular basis	31/10/04
56	BS38	There should be evidence of references for all staff including non-teaching staff, at least one of which should be from the most recent employer	31/1/05
57	BS38	CRB check certificates should be held separately from individual staff files	31/8/04
58	BS38	Proof of qualifications should be held on individual staff files	31/1/05
59	BS38	Boarding duties should be clearly defined, separately from teaching duties, and should be supported by a new job description	31/1/05
60	BS38	A checklist should be created for staff files, against which the contents can be marked off	31/10/04
61	BS38	The school should ensure that CRB checks are undertaken on all staff appointed prior to April 2002, including ancillary staff	31/1/05

62	BS38	Staff files for all staff, including ancillary staff, should be maintained in line with points detailed in standard 38.2	31/1/05
63	BS39	The school should enhance the signing in system for visitors and should put in place a system which covers times when the reception office is not open. The potential vulnerability of the main school building should be considered as part of the review of these systems.	31/10/04
64	BS39	The school should ensure that it has contracts with adult members of staff households, regarding the terms of their accommodation and that there is a clear system for ensuring that the guests of gap students are aware of the terms on which they are visiting the school	31/10/04
65	BS40	The programme to refurbish St Cuthbert's should proceed and efforts should continue to increase the homely feel of other houses which also equalises the standard of provision for boys and girls	31/10/04
66	BS40	The use of accommodation in St John's should be reviewed to provide more 'homely' surroundings	31/10/04
67	BS40	The temperature in bedrooms in the winter should be monitored and appropriate means of reducing heat loss installed where necessary	31/1/05
68	BS42	The showers in the gap students accommodation should be repaired	31/8/04
69	BS43	Diffusers should be fitted on all fluorescent lighting in study areas, including bedrooms	31/10/04
70	BS44	Shower curtains and separating screens, where they exist across all houses, should be replaced to provide privacy	31/10/04
71	BS44	The temperature in all showers should be adjusted to safe and comfortable levels and the timing control should allow sufficient water for a shower	31/8/04
72	BS44	The number of toilets available to boarders should meet minimum standards on each floor of each house	31/7/05
73	BS44	Handbasins should be provided in each toilet area	31/7/05
74	BS45	The temperature of the water in the showers in St Aidan's changing room should be controlled safely and the showers repainted. These showers should remain out of use until this work has been completed	31/10/04

75	BS46	Systems should be put in place to ensure that pupils' necessary access to staff accommodation is 'safe' for both staff and pupils	31/10/04
76	BS47	A risk assessment should be made of the entrance to the car park within the square of the main building	31/8/04
77	BS48	A handbasin should be provided in the isolation room in the sick bay	31/8/04

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	BS14	The School should continue to look at ways of integrating the roles of Chaplain and Counsellor more effectively into the pastoral system and should consider how best to co-ordinate the pastoral system to ensure that the contributions all members of boarding staff, including House Mothers and nursing staff, are included
2	BS15	The receipt and transfer of all medication should be recorded so that an accurate audit trail can be maintained. Other forms of recording administration of medication could be investigated to assess effectiveness. The maximum and minimum temperatures of the fridge should be recorded on a daily basis to ensure that the fridge is maintained at a temperature between 2 and 8 degrees C
3	BS17	Consideration should be given to providing training on recognition of, and approaches to, depression and anxiety in young people for pastoral care staff
4	BS21	The school should produce a Boarders' Handbook which includes reference to 'joining' arrangements
5	BS41	The school should consider advising staff to increase their awareness of the possibility of intruders while building works are in progress and to feel comfortable about challenging people they do not recognise
6	BS42	Consideration should be given to providing additional shelving or drawer space for items other than clothing, where this is requested by pupils
7	BS43	Where pupils have not provided themselves with desk lamps, it would be appropriate to check with them that the lighting available at their desks is sufficient for close work

8	BS44	Consideration should be given to providing additional toilets and handbasins where there is a considerable distance between existing facilities and bedrooms, for example in the Sick Bay and on St Aidan's
9	BS44	Consideration should be given to providing baths on each boarding house
10	BS49	It would be appropriate to discuss the level of inconvenience caused to those weekly boarders whose 'laundry day' is a Monday, with both boarders concerned and their respective House Mothers.

*Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix. E.g. BS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following Inspection Methods have been 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 and Individuals	YES
• Social Services	YES
• Fire Service	YES
• Environmental Health	YES
• DfES	YES
• School Doctor	YES
• Independent Person or Counsellor	YES
• Chair of Governors	YES
'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements	YES
Group discussion with boarders	YES
Group interviews with House staff teams	YES
Group discussion with ancillary staff	YES
Group discussion with Gap students	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Boarders' survey	YES
Meals taken with pupils	YES
Early morning and late evening visits	YES
Invitation to parents to comment	YES
Inspection of policy / practice documents	YES
Inspection of Records	YES
Visit to Sanatorium	YES
Visits to lodgings	NO
Individual interviews with pupil(s)	NO
Date of Inspection	04/05/04
Time of Inspection	10.00
Duration of Inspection (hrs.)	86
Number of Inspector Days spent on site	12

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

SCHOOL INFORMATION:**AGE RANGE OF BOARDING
PUPILS****FRO
M**

10

TO

19

NUMBER OF BOARDERS (FULL TIME + WEEKLY) AT TIME OF INSPECTION:**Boys**

140

Girls

42

Total

182

Number of separate Boarding Houses

6

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which standards have been met. The following 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) |

"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.

WELFARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.
- Boarders are protected from bullying.
- Boarders are protected from abuse.
- Use of discipline with boarders is fair and appropriate.
- Boarders' complaints are appropriately responded to.
- Boarders' health is promoted.
- Safeguarding and promoting boarders' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records.

Standard 1 (1.1 – 1.4)

A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice should be available to parents, boarders and staff.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

Although Ellesmere College has yet to produce a statement of the school's boarding principles and practice, a fact which was acknowledged prior to the inspection, the required information exists in separate documents and can be 'pulled together' in appropriate forms and styles relatively simply.

The School has clear policies regarding, for example, admission criteria. As in other areas of recording, the School could usefully produce evidence of its good practice in written documentation.

Standard 2 (2.1 – 2.6) The school should have an effective policy on countering bullying, which is known to parents, boarders and staff and which is implemented successfully in practice.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Ellesmere College have policies and procedures in place to protect pupils from bullying. There is a clear policy which indicates that bullying is not acceptable in the school and, in general, pupils reported that they were aware that the school will not tolerate bullying. Pupils also reported that they would feel able to go and talk to someone, if they were being bullied, for example their House Master or Mistress.</p> <p>Those staff who responded to enquiries about bullying, indicated that they were aware of the policy and felt that the 'open' atmosphere in the school mitigated against an environment in which bullying would thrive. The Deputy Head Pastoral indicated that he had dealt with some incidents of bullying through meetings with pupils involved.</p> <p>There were some reports that pupils felt they were bullied on occasions and some indication that not all bullying was being reported to house staff or being dealt with in a co-ordinated way within the pastoral system. Most reports referred to teasing or verbal abuse.</p> <p>Training on the signs and symptoms of bullying, and how to deal with it, is available to staff, although it was acknowledged that, because of the cyclical nature of the training, there is a need to check that all staff have received such training.</p> <p>It was reported that pupils are going to be involved in workshops on bullying and through PHSE this term.</p>		
PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS REPORTING NEVER OR HARDLY EVER BEING BULLIED	65	%

Standard 3 (3.1 – 3.9)

The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child protection and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with local Area Child Protection Committee procedures, and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility.

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

The School has an appropriate policy on child protection and responses to allegations of abuse, although there are some elements which need amendment. The policy also needs to be submitted to the Local Area Child Protection Committee for comment. The school has taken action and co-operated with the Local Social Services Department, in the past. On one occasion where a child protection matter was not referred quickly, the school responded appropriately once a referral had been made and supported the process.

Recent, updated, child protection training has been provided to some, though not all, staff. The nursing staff and the House Mothers were not involved in this programme, and ancillary staff reported that they had not received training in child protection. It is understood that negotiations are underway for additional training to be provided to those staff who were not included in the recent event.

It was evident from responses that staff were aware of the role of the Deputy Head Pastoral as the individual with designated responsibility for child protection policy. It was also evident that the recent training had been well-received by those staff who had been involved in it.

Some responses from staff indicated that there was less clarity surrounding the process where an allegation or concern could not be taken to the Child Protection Officer.

The process for ensuring that all information which might be appropriately used to support pupils, is made available to staff caring for them, was not clear to all staff. There was some evidence that information was not always being followed up.

Although there is a procedure for searching for, and if necessary reporting, any boarder missing from the school, this is not currently documented and no log of 'missing' boarders is kept at present.

Standard 4 (4.1 - 4.7)

The school should have, and follow, a fair and appropriate policy on behaviour, discipline and use of punishments, known to boarders, staff and parents.

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

The school has a written policy on discipline, punishments and rewards for good behaviour and pupils were found to be aware of the policy in practise. In general, they reported that punishments were seen to be fair, although there were perceived to be variations in the 'strictness' of applying them. For example, Lower and Middle School girls felt that the rules, particularly regarding time-keeping, were more strictly adhered to on their house than on those in which the boys were living. Staff on the girls' house confirmed that they adhered strictly to rules regarding time-keeping. It was felt that a discussion of whether there was an assumption that girls require more 'protection' than boys could prove valuable in addressing the girls perception.

Comment was received that the 'house point' system works better with the younger pupils than with the older ones.

No evidence was found of any 'excessive or idiosyncratic punishments' or of any inappropriate punishments as detailed in the National Minimum Boarding Standards. Disciplinary powers of prefects and House Captains are clearly defined.

'Serious' punishments are recorded in a central log, which is held by the Deputy Head Pastoral. This record is not currently 'signed off' to indicate that the log is being monitored for trends or patterns in the imposition of punishments. Although no log of serious punishments administered is held on individual houses, correspondence on pupils' records act as cross-references to the central log.

There is a policy describing the circumstances in which 'reasonable force' can be used, and which clearly indicates that any such incidents must be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Deputy Head Pastoral.

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.7) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on responding to complaints from boarders and parents.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The school has a policy on responding to complaints from parents and boarders. This policy does not yet refer to the Commission for Social Care Inspection. It was reported that the policy is talked through with pupils who might, initially, struggle to read it and it is understood that some translated versions are available for foreign students.</p> <p>Written complaints from parents are held on individual pupils' records. The cross-referencing of such complaints to a central log would assist in the monitoring of complaints.</p> <p>It was noted that the conclusions reached by one complaint investigation did not indicate which elements of the complaint had been upheld, which had been partially upheld and which elements had not been upheld.</p> <p>The Deputy Head Pastoral holds a book for Pupil Complaints, although none were recorded as having been received.</p> <p>Those pupils who spoke to the Inspectors about 'complaints' said that there was a system for monitoring complaints about the food, in place in the dining hall, and that they were able to 'complain' through their Student Council about other matters. No direct references were made to the complaints policy by pupils.</p>		
Number of complaints, if any, received by CSCI about the school during last 12 months:		0

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.3) The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on countering major risks to health, including substance abuse.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Boarders' health is promoted through clear and appropriate policies on countering major risks, including substance abuse. Policies on smoking, alcohol and drug abuse and misuse are clear, are published on houses as well as through PHSE, and are known by pupils.</p> <p>Pupils are also involved in workshops that explore these issues, amongst others, and the PHSE course is currently being developed to include further advice on protection.</p> <p>Inspectors would suggest that the further integration of the Counsellor into the pastoral care system at Ellesmere College, or the provision of other such independent counselling and advice, should ensure that pupils are able to receive such help and guidance if they require it.</p>		

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.5)

Adequate records should be kept in relation to individual boarders' health and welfare needs and issues.

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

Medical Forms, which are completed by parents and which record details of childhood illnesses/allergies, any known sensitivities to drugs and prescribed medication, are held separately from NHS records in the Medical Centre.

Although the school has 'chased' some forms which have not been returned by parents, not all forms have been received. It has been recommended the school pursue this matter, as it dangerous for medical treatment to be administered to pupils without adequate knowledge of their medical histories.

A Day Book is held in the surgery, logging every pupil who attends for treatment or advice.

While all medical information is kept confidential, some 'need to know' information was not held on houses and there is no clear system for such information to be made available to all staff with pastoral care responsibilities on each house.

Information about welfare needs and any special provision to be made for individual boarders is referred to House Parents, but there is no system of meetings at which information can be discussed and action co-ordinated.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- There is clear leadership of boarding in the school.
- Crises affecting boarders' welfare are effectively managed.
- The school's organisation of boarding contributes to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders have access to a range and choice of activities.
- Boarders are enabled to contribute to the operation of boarding in the school.
- The operation of any prefect system safeguards and promotes boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive personal support from staff.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.3)

There should be clear management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

There is a clear system of management and leadership of the practice and development of boarding in the school through the role of the Deputy Head Pastoral. The practice and development are monitored through weekly meetings between the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Head Master and through weekly Senior Management Team Meetings. A termly report is presented, formally, to the Governors of the school, which includes reporting on welfare matters.

Staff with boarding responsibilities do receive training, and many have considerable experience. Not all Houseparents have received such training, although they have received guidance from longer serving, more experienced staff.

While there is an extensive system of meetings of staff with boarding responsibilities, it was not clear that House Mothers, the Chaplain, the nursing staff and the Counsellor are fully integrated into this system of meetings yet. It is felt that such meetings could promote the integration of all staff with boarding responsibilities, and enable supervision of practice to be monitored across the team.

There is a staff disciplinary procedure which includes provision for the precautionary suspension of staff following allegations or concerns. It was confirmed that advice would be sought from the Local Authority Social Services Department regarding any such situation. It was confirmed that plans would be put in place, where any such suspension proved necessary, to ensure that the suspended member of staff did not remain on the school site. It was also confirmed that plans would be put in place to provide appropriate support to any member of staff who was subject to such a suspension. This issue is noted under standard 35.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.3)

The school should be capable of satisfactorily managing crises affecting boarders' welfare

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

The school does not have written, planned responses to a range of foreseeable major incidents or crises, although it was indicated that successful policies and procedures had already been put into place and effect in such circumstances. It was reported that the School had acted promptly to put policies and procedures in place during the SARS outbreak.

The Head Master and the Deputy Head Pastoral also gave a clear account of how they would respond to, for instance, an outbreak of fire which necessitated finding alternative accommodation for boarders at short notice. This account promoted the safeguarding and welfare of pupils.

There is a document regarding emergencies in college, although this does not cover planned responses to major incidents as detailed in this standard.

Although it is accepted that the School have dealt with crises in the past and have a clear idea of how they would approach crises in the future, it is felt that written plans would provide a clear record of past good practice and future good intention.

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.5)

The organisation of boarding houses or units should operate satisfactorily and provide appropriate protection and separation of boarders by age and gender.

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

The organisation of the boarding houses was changed at the beginning of this academic year from the previous 'vertical' system to the current 'horizontal' one. While this system is not yet familiar to the pupils, responses regarding the change were generally positive. There are four boarding houses for boys and two for girls, with some individual rooms in 'Nanki' block for older pupils. The positive results of the changed system include the creation of a house for Lower School Boys and the separation of boarders into narrower age bands.

Negative comments received related to the unfamiliarity of the new system for the Middle School Boys and their adaptation to the new responsibilities for year 11 pupils. However, it is agreed that, as year 10 boys gradually adapt to taking on the responsibilities of the year 11's and when the system has run for the three years, the system should have 'bedded in'.

The quality of boarding provision for girls was found to be, generally, superior to that provided for boys and this has been noted elsewhere. In part, this is due to the sixth form girls having the benefit of a more modern building.

On the other hand, the Lower School girls, because of their small number, were found to be somewhat disadvantaged by the lack of separate provision; they share the accommodation of the Middle School girls.

As has been acknowledged elsewhere, it is known that refurbishment of St Cuthbert's is to be undertaken in the summer.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.6)

There should be an appropriate range and choice of activities for boarders outside teaching time.

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

Boarders are provided with an appropriate range and choice of activities outside teaching time. Pupils reported that many sporting activities are available as well as photography, cookery and paint-balling, for example.

It was also reported that fashions shows are held in the auditorium, as well as visiting plays and discos and that the end of year Ball was an important event in the school calendar.

The field trip to Ecuador, which takes place biennially, and for which pupils fund-raise, was reported to be an exciting and valuable experience.

There is Internet access in the Library, although many young people also have access to the Internet on their laptops.

On Thursday afternoons, there are no lessons for senior pupils, most of whom attend CCF. On Wednesday afternoons, Lower School pupils attend 'Survive and Thrive', which provides experience of practical skills such as cooking and camping, together with drama, art and cultural pursuits.

Pupils can also pay for some external activities, including Judo, fencing and golf.

There are also numerous extra curricular sports clubs and 'competitive house' matches, all of which are overseen by the Director of Activities who monitors all non-academic activities and who is responsible for organising resources.

At week-ends, pupils up to year 10 have a compulsory activity on Saturdays, which may be either 'paid or unpaid'.

Comments were received from several quarters regarding activities at the week-end. Some of these comments were from pupils who would have preferred to have a rest on Saturday morning and undertake an activity in the afternoon. Other comments indicated that there was a perceived lack of choice of activities and that pupils were obliged to take one of the two activities on offer. Some comments indicated that more activities, and more supervision when organised activities were not taking place, were needed.

It is clear that the school seeks pupils' views regarding activities, and that attempts are made to ensure that there is a balance of 'free' and 'activity' time at week-ends. In view of the range of views expressed during the inspection, it is felt that continued surveying of views would be beneficial.

It is understood that safeguards exist to counter risks of pupils accessing inappropriate material. DVDs are said to be checked as age appropriate and access to the Internet through the school is 'fire-walled'.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.2)		
Boarders have opportunity to contribute views to the operation of boarding provision.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Pupils have the opportunity to contribute their views to the operation of boarding provision in a number of ways. The School has a Student Council and a Food Committee and surveys of boarders' views are undertaken.</p> <p>Some comments received from pupils indicated that they were not sure that their contributions to these Committees effected change and development. It is not clear, for instance, that pupils are generally aware of proposals to develop and improve the provision of meals.</p> <p>In some houses, pupils indicated that they did not have 'House Meetings' at which they could contribute views about the organisation and development of their own houses. At least one house, St Johns, a regular weekly meeting takes place.</p>		

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.7)

Any prefect system (or equivalent) should give prefects (or equivalent) appropriate specific duties and responsibilities, with adequate staff supervision and measures to counter possible abuses of the role.

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

There are systems in place for the prefect system to safeguard and promote boarders' welfare. The Head Girl and Head Boy have received training in child protection and it was indicated that they had disseminated this information to other prefects. It was reported that prefects are given guidance on matters that they should 'pass up' to the Deputy Head Pastoral, although it is felt that these could be formalised in written guidance.

Prefects receive a one-day induction training course, and there is a Handbook of Duties for their use. Weekly meetings are held by the Deputy Head Pastoral, at which the coming week is planned and at which prefects can be relieved of duties if their studies might be affected by completing them.

Some comments were received regarding perceived fairness of use of powers, both by prefects and by House Captains. It was reported that any overstepping of powers would be reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral, although it was not clear that there was any formal process by which this would be done.

Prefect duties appear to be clearly defined, and reasonable. Comment was received that the change in the house system, from vertical to horizontal, had affected the perceived standing of the prefects, particularly in relation to younger pupils who had no experience of the vertical system.

In the Middle School houses, House Captains have some responsibilities for monitoring 'prep' and bedtimes. They are also responsible for contacting the responsible adult on the house, during the night, if a boarder reports to the House Captain that they are feeling ill. It is acknowledged that some younger pupils might wish to go to another boarder, in the first instance, rather than approach an adult directly. However, although it was indicated that the policy and procedure in relation to this matter were clear, that House Captains were not to take any other responsibility than to refer immediately to the House Master or Mistress on the house, there was some indication that this was not always happening, or that the policy was completely clear to all. It is felt that this issue should be clarified with all concerned, to ensure that House Captains do not find themselves in a position of being made responsible for any decisions regarding sick boarders.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.6)

Each boarder should have one or more members of staff to whom he or she can turn for personal guidance or with a personal problem.

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

Boarders can, and do, receive personal support from staff. Boarders reported that they could talk to their House Mistresses and House Masters about personal matters. While the tutor system is mainly concerned with academic matters, it was reported that tutors would feed back, as appropriate, to the pastoral staff within houses, in order to ensure that there was continuity of care for pupils.

House Mothers also provide support to boarders and are, by the nature of their 'maternal' roles, in a key position to be aware of pupils' welfare needs. It was reported that the experience, knowledge and skills of House Mothers were not always felt to be fully utilised and that communication to and from this group of staff did not always happen through formal channels. The integration of this group of staff into a system of Pastoral Meetings would be considered beneficial.

The posts of School Chaplain and Independent Counsellor also exist to provide support to boarders. However, there was evidence that both roles were not fully integrated into the pastoral system and that lines of responsibility, supervision and input into the pastoral system were not always clear.

It is understood that the School is currently considering these issues. Comments supportive of both posts being more clearly integrated into the pastoral system were received. This seems to be an area where the School could usefully develop the welfare support available to boarders.

Similarly, while there are many different people to whom boarders can turn, and to whom they referred during the inspection, the pastoral system appears to work in a somewhat fragmented way. The integration of pastoral care through a system of House and Pastoral Meetings, with a Co-ordinator role, might make the system both more cohesive and at the same time devolve some of the responsibility from the Deputy Head Pastoral role, which appears to be a heavy one.

WELFARE SUPPORT TO BOARDERS

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders receive first aid and health care as necessary.
- Boarders are adequately supervised and looked after when ill.
- Boarders are supported in relation to any health or personal problems.
- Boarders do not experience inappropriate discrimination.
- Boarders can maintain private contact with their parents and families.
- Boarders' possessions and money are protected.
- New boarders are introduced to the school's procedures and operation, and are enabled to settle in.
- Boarders' welfare is protected in any appointment of educational guardians by the school.
- Risk assessment and school record keeping contribute to boarders' welfare.
- Boarders receive good quality catering provision.
- Boarders have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals.
- Boarders are protected from the risk of fire.
- Boarders' welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands.
- The welfare of any children other than the school's pupils is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated by the school.
- Boarders' safety and welfare are protected during high-risk activities.
- Boarders have appropriate access to information and facilities outside the school.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.14)

Appropriate first aid and minor illness treatment are available to boarders at all times, with access to medical, dental and optical services as required.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

First aid and health care are provided to boarders through the 24 hour nursing presence on site and through regular GP surgeries at the school. All three nurses hold a First Aid qualification and all are registered nurses. There are both female and male GPs working in the local practice and one of the surgeries at the school is taken by a female GP. Where it is appropriate, appointments will be made at the GP practice to ensure a pupil can see a female doctor if this is preferred.

NHS dental treatment has proved difficult to find, but UK boarders usually keep their current dentist near home, while treatment is provided for overseas boarders by a dentist in Wrexham. Emergency treatment is available in Shrewsbury.

The school have similar procedures for optical checks.

It is understood that policies relating to medical issues have been devised by the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Nursing Sister. It is unclear whether these policies have been disseminated to all pastoral staff.

Boarders who are under 16, and who need to go to hospital, are accompanied by a member of staff, but there appears to be a period, between 5 and 7pm, when it is not always easy for nursing staff to secure such assistance. Where sensitive confidential matters are involved, a

nurse accompanies the pupil.

No 'household' medication is provided by the school. Paracetamol and other 'household' remedies are provided through the nursing staff. Recommendations have been made regarding the improved storage of medication, both 'homely remedies' and prescribed medication, and regarding a protocol for the administration of homely remedies.

A small number of inhalers, left by previous pupils, were being held for emergency use. This practice will not continue.

Some medications, provided by parents, was not correctly labelled and there is currently no system for ensuring that correctly labelled medications are requested.

Although pupils who wish to self-administer medication are assessed as capable of doing so, no formal system exists to record these assessments. While it was thought that pupils had safe storage for medication, this could not be confirmed.

As there are a number of students who bring Chinese medicines with them, staff always ask if they have taken any such medication before administering any homely remedy, sending them to the GP for treatment if they have done so. It was felt that knowledge about Chinese medicines could be expanded, particularly with regard to any possible dangers associated with them or their interaction with other medications.

Separate school records are kept of all medication, treatment and first aid administered to boarders. Although a list of pupils suffering from allergies has, in the past, been posted in the Common Room, there is no other routine system for passing on such information on a 'need to know' basis to house or other staff.

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.3)

Boarders who are ill should be regularly checked and adequately looked after by a member of staff, and be able to summon staff assistance readily and rapidly when necessary.

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

24 hour nursing cover, together with the attendance of a nursing assistant during the day, ensure that boarders who are ill are regularly checked and adequately looked after. Boarders are able to report directly to the sick bay, or to be sent to sick bay by a teacher if they are ill during lessons.

At night, boarders who feel ill may report this, in the first instance, to their House Captain. Although the policy is that House Captains should then immediately refer to their House Master or Mistress, this system had not worked effectively on one occasion. It was reported that a prefect had referred a sick boarder to the Sick Bay but that this boarders had been refused access, for a significant period of time, by a nurse who was unaware of the protocol. It was felt that this indicated that there was the potential for undue responsibility to fall on the shoulders of pupils and that the system of referring immediately to a House Master or Mistress was not, or could not, always be followed, due to the 'two over three' rule referred to in standard 33.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.8)

Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders should be identified and managed appropriately.

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

Significant health and personal problems of individual boarders, when identified, are managed in the same way as other pastoral care matters. Communication is made between those staff with involvement with a pupil and through 'Communications' in the staff room, but there is little recording, on individual houses, of these processes.

Boarders who are undergoing other types of personal stress are similarly supported and 'Communications' is used also to convey essential information. As has been previously observed, it is felt that a more formal system of meetings would promote an integrated response to any boarders requiring additional support. Specific training on, for example, depression and anxiety, could be provided for key staff and cascaded down through the pastoral care system.

Pupils who are homesick are supported through the House system and it was reported that fellow students will often alert staff to friends who are experiencing homesickness.

Pupils have tutors identified, to whom they can turn for support. These tutors mainly deal with academic issues, although they can also be approached with pastoral concerns. Those boarders who spoke to the inspectors reported that they felt supported and that they were able to approach staff.

The school specialises in providing education for pupils who are dyslexic and for a smaller number of pupils with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or Asperger's Syndrome.

There is a dedicated team of teaching staff who have specialist training in and knowledge of dyslexia and some staff have received training in behaviour management. It is felt that additional training for pastoral care staff, in relation to the needs of pupils with ADHD and Asperger's syndrome, would ensure that such pupils are provided with the same level of expertise as is available to dyslexic pupils currently.

Ellesmere College indicates that it has a non-competitive admissions policy. Assessments prior to admission are said to focus on whether the school can provide what an individual child needs to reach their maximum potential.

Assessments of pupils' needs, both prior to their admission to the school and during their time there, were seen. It is not clear that these have been used, on all occasions, to formulate individual 'welfare' plans, where a pupil has special needs, and it is felt that the school is not demonstrating the good work it is doing with some pupils through recording of plans, actions taken and outcomes achieved or revised.

Such recording, available to all staff involved with a pupil, would assist them to identify, clearly, what the plan of action is and to act accordingly and to record evidence of whether the plan was working, or needed amending.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.6)

Within the school, there is no inappropriate discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, sexual orientation, or academic or sporting ability. These factors are taken into account in the care of boarders, so that care is sensitive to different needs.

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

Although the draft equal opportunities policy, which is before the Senior Management Team has yet to be ratified, there is evidence that Ellesmere College is sensitive to the different needs of different pupils. This draft policy was not reviewed at this inspection but it is assumed that it will address potential areas of discrimination as detailed in this National Minimum Boarding Standard.

Ellesmere College does not select pupils on an academic basis and its stated aim is to enable each pupil to maximise their potential. The school provides education and care for pupils with various learning difficulties.

In service training is available to staff working with pupils with dyslexia and with pupils for whom English is a second language and there are examples of an awareness amongst staff of the potential welfare issues associated with specific learning difficulties.

The School's Christian ethos and foundation does not prevent pupils from different faiths practising and celebrating their own religions.

The school promotes experience of different cultures through, for example, the Chinese 'theme' night on Saturday evenings in the dining hall. Food from other countries is also highlighted on occasions. A vegetarian option is regularly provided at mealtimes.

It was noted that although the school has a number of students from overseas. Although no members of the boarding staff were from overseas, there are two members of the teaching staff who are able to support those boarders from China and Germany.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.6) Boarders are enabled to contact their parents and families in private.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Boarders are able to contact their parents and families. There are payphones on each house and many boarders have mobile phones. Although the payphones were said to be locked during the day, it was apparent that pupils could ask for them to be unlocked if required.</p> <p>In some houses the payphones are not private and comments were received from boarders regarding this.</p> <p>E mail and internet facilities are available in the Library. Evidence of contact between staff and parents, regarding welfare issues, was found on record.</p> <p>Appropriate helpline and outside contact numbers were seen to be available to boarders. No indication has yet been made to boarders that they can contact the Commission for Social Care Inspection if they wish to discuss a complaint about boarding standards, and no number has yet been provided.</p>		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.3) Reasonable protection is provided for boarders' personal possessions and for any boarders' money or valuables looked after by the school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>The majority of boarders have keys to their rooms, and a new locking system is to be provided on the boys Middle School houses during the pending refurbishment. Boarders also have a lockable drawer or a lock on the wardrobe in their bedrooms.</p> <p>The school is considering other methods of protection boarders' personal possessions on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>There are clear recorded systems, on boarding houses, for distributing pocket money.</p> <p>Some rooms on St Oswald's are fitted with door chains. As these can only be used from inside the room, they do not provide security for personal possessions and are felt to be an inappropriate means of making the occupant of the room feel personally secure. In the event of a fire, these chains would prevent immediate access to rooms and it was agreed that these fittings would be removed.</p>		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.3) There is an appropriate process of induction and guidance for new boarders.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Boarders reported that they felt comfortable when they joined the school. They said that they were shown round by older boarders, sometimes had knowledge of the school through older siblings, and that there was a 'buddy' system, which was helpful.</p> <p>There is an induction process which starts with a 'new pupils' tea' on the Sunday before term, at which the Head Master, the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Chaplain are involved in welcoming new pupils.</p> <p>There are set routines during the first week for new boarders and they are provided with instructions for joining the school.</p> <p>Boarders are provided with written information about boarding routines and rules. This information is not yet produced in the form of a Boarders' Handbook.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.4) Any guardians appointed by the school should be subject to the same recruitment checks as staff, and their care of pupils should be monitored.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This standard does not apply to Ellesmere College		

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.4) The Head, or a senior member of the school's staff, regularly monitors the school's records of risk assessments, punishments, complaints and accidents, to identify any issues requiring action.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Monitoring of records, in order to identify any issues requiring action or any trends or patterns, is undertaken by the Deputy Head Pastoral. Information regarding, for example, medical issues is available to the Deputy Head through other members of staff with relevant responsibilities.</p> <p>There is a lack of recording of this monitoring which would make it difficult for the system to be picked up and continued in the absence of the Deputy Head Pastoral.</p> <p>Some records, for example complaints from parents, are not currently monitored through this process.</p>		

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

Meals should be provided to boarders, which are adequate in quantity, quality and choice, and provision is made for special dietary, medical or religious needs.

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

Boarders have a choice of main dish at main meals, including a vegetarian option. A main hot meal is provided and there are pasta and salad bars. Crockery and cutlery and dining facilities were seen to be sufficient in quantity.

The dining hall and its furnishings are suitable and of sufficient size for the numbers and ages of boarders dining. Younger pupils are catered for first and queues did not appear to be unreasonably long or slow.

The quality of the catering provision was, however, reported to be variable by many pupils and by some parents. Although there has been a Food Committee, this has not been rescheduled due to lack of attendance by pupils, following the last meeting in March. Mixed reports were received from boarders regarding responses to complaints about food. Some felt that their complaints were 'taken on board', others did not.

During the inspection, the meals which were sampled by the Inspection Team were found to be of reasonable quality and quantity. It is acknowledged, however, that a three day period is not a long time in which to judge the quality of this provision and it did appear that the choice of meals might become monotonous after a while. Not all crockery and cutlery was found to be as clean as it might have been and, on occasion, was still wet when put out..

It is understood that plans are in hand to consider the introduction of a 'food island' system and it is felt that such a system may help to address the varied concerns expressed by boarders. There are also understood to be plans in outline to completely redesign the kitchen which could result in the ability to offer more dining space and a wider range of foods.

The recommendations made in the September 2003 report of the inspection by the Environmental Health Service were stated to have been completed and the next inspection is due shortly.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.5) Boarders have access to drinking water in both boarding and teaching areas, and to food or the means of preparing food at reasonable times in addition to main meals.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Boarders have access to drinking water and snacks on boarding houses during breaks, lunchtimes and after school. House kitchens are provided with microwaves and fridges and older pupils prepare their own snacks, while younger ones have snacks provided by House Mothers.</p> <p>There are vending machines available in the school buildings and no reports were received that pupils could not access either snacks or drinks throughout the day.</p>		

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5) Boarders and boarding staff should be aware of emergency evacuation procedures from boarding accommodation. The school should comply with recommendations of the Fire Service, and should regularly carry out and record risk assessments in relation to fire, together with fire drills and any routine tests recommended by the Fire Service.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Those boarders who were spoken to indicated that they were aware of fire drill procedures and reported that fire drills take place. Pupils confirmed that the drills were not always at the same times and indicated that there had been at least one early morning drill. More than one fire drill is undertaken each term and some of these drills take place at night.</p> <p>Records of drills and evacuations are kept in the reception office. The record of drills were up-to-date, taking place at least half-termly and at irregular times. The Fire Safety Officer last visited on 20.03.02. and it was reported that all matters raised in the report from this visit had been addressed. The Fire Officer is due to visit again in the near future. The responsibility for fire safety rests with the Clerk of Works, who ensures that all checks are carried out on a regular basis, including emergency lighting and fire-fighting equipment. Servicing of equipment was recorded appropriately.</p>		

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

Schools where there are unusual or especially onerous demands on boarders ensure that these are appropriate to the boarders concerned and do not unacceptably affect boarders' welfare.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The demands on the current Year 11 pupils have been unusual this year, as this has been the first year of the new 'horizontal' house system. Year 11's have found themselves with new responsibilities and it has taken time for them to become familiar with the expectations placed on them. However, it does not appear that these demands are, in themselves, onerous. They are said to consist, mainly, of doing checklists to assist monitoring by house staff. It has been noted that the Year 10 pupils, who are taking over responsibilities in the run up to the examination period, have a model from which to work, as will the Year 9 pupils at the same time next year. The responsibilities will, by then, have ceased to be unusual.

It has been acknowledged that the involvement of House Captains with boarders who feel ill at night is not intended to be unusual, onerous or inappropriate and this issue has been commented on under standard 33.

The prefects, who spoke to the Inspectors, reported that they could seek to change their duties if they found they were affecting their studies.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.2)

The welfare of any children accommodated at the school, other than pupils, is protected.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

9

This standard does not apply to Ellesmere College

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.6)

Identifiably high-risk activities provided for boarders should be competently supervised and accompanied by adequate and appropriate safety measures.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

It is understood that there is a risk assessment system for high-risk activities and that this system is still developing. There are generic risk assessments in place for CCF activities and safety equipment is provided.

Staff have received two sessions of training in relation to risk assessment and ongoing training will take place to streamline, monitor and review risk assessments and ensure staff awareness of relevant issues. The Director of Activities has had inset training on risk assessment at the beginning of this term.

Low risk activities are not risk assessed, but are supervised by staff.

CCF activities are held at military bases and other centres that are used are thought to be licensed.

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.5)

Boarders have access to information about events in the world outside the school, and access to local facilities, which is appropriate to their age.

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

Boarders are able to access information about events in the world outside school in several ways. Each house has a television and house newspapers are provided. Many pupils have laptop computers and mobile phones. It was noted that current issues of topical magazines were held in the Library.

Boarders can go out to Ellesmere on Saturday afternoons, the younger ones being accompanied by older pupils.

Pupils attending off-site activities are accompanied by staff and the activities are assessed for age appropriateness.

STAFFING

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are adequately supervised by staff.
- Staff exercise appropriate supervision of boarders leaving the school site.
- Boarders are adequately supervised at night.
- Boarders are looked after by staff with specific boarding duties, with adequate induction and continued training.
- Boarders are looked after by staff following clear boarding policies and practice.
- There are sound relationships between staff and boarders.
- Boarders' personal privacy is respected.
- There is vigorous selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with boarders.
- Boarders are protected from unsupervised contact at school with adults who have not been subject to the school's complete recruitment checking procedures and there is supervision of all unchecked visitors to the boarding premises.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.7)

The staff supervising boarders outside teaching time should be sufficient in number and deployment for the age, number and needs of boarders, and the locations and activities involved.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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Teaching and boarding staff are involved in supervising boarders outside teaching time. In the evenings at least one member of staff is on duty on each house until 11pm. During the night, there is at least one member of staff sleeping on each house, except on the Middle School and Upper School boys' houses, where it is understood that a 'two out of three' rule applies at times.

A number of reports, responses and observations appeared to indicate that rotas did not allow sufficient cover at various times and for various activities. It was felt that more support during 'prep' time, such as a homework club involving staff from the Learning Support department, would be valuable. Comment was made regarding the lack of staff 'around' at the week-ends.

There was also a feeling expressed that the 'two out of three' rule meant that a House Captain from one house had to go quite a distance, at night, to summon assistance from a House Master on a different house.

It has been noted elsewhere that it is said to be difficult for the nursing staff to access support from teachers with boarding duties during the 5-7pm period and examples were provided of times at week-ends and during late evenings when there appeared to be gaps in the availability of boarding staff cover.

It was reported to the Inspection Team that teaching and boarding staff, regularly and willingly exceed their duties to provide care and support to boarders, and the above findings are not intended to infer any lack of commitment on the part of staff. It is felt that the cover

provided, at times, needs to be re-assessed and increased as appropriate.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.5)

Boarders temporarily away from the school site remain under the overall responsibility of a duty member of staff, and are able to contact a member of staff in an emergency.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Boarders who go into Ellesmere are under the overall responsibility of the member of staff on duty on their house and they can make contact with them in an emergency.

Boarders are required to sign out and sign back in when they go out of the school grounds and permission is required from a House Master or Mistress before any trip is made. It is not clear that this 'rule' is adhered to across the board.

The school has policies in place regarding the safety and supervision of boarders during journeys and policies regarding the use of their own vehicles by pupils.

There is no expectation that gap students will be left alone in charge of boarders without a supervising member of staff contactable on site or accompanying them when away from the school. There is also a ruling that gap students' rooms are out of bounds to boarders. Although the gap students spoken to understood this rule, they had initially found it difficult to distance themselves from older boarders.

Standard 33 (33.1 - 33.5)

Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night.

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

There is a staff presence on each house, at night, during the week. Staff flats are situated within the boarding houses or, in the case of St Oswald's the staff house is attached to it. At week-ends, two out of the three staff across the three boys' boarding houses are required to sleep in.

On St Aidan's two members of staff live in flats on the house, which caters for Middle and Lower School girls.

Boarders indicated that they knew how to contact staff at night although, as has been noted elsewhere, it is felt that the 'two over three' rule at week-ends leaves House Captains with the responsibility of making themselves aware of which members of staff are sleeping in, via the lists posted in houses, and of possibly having to go onto another house to summon assistance. While the houses are in the same building, they are on separate floors.

House staff take a roll call in the morning and evening, in order to have an up-to-date list of boarders who are on the house. The member of staff sleeping in on any house is responsible for checking the roll call in the event of a fire drill.

While the boys' houses are adjacent to one another, they cover quite a large floor area and are located on different floors of the main building of the school. It is presumed that the boarders living in Nanki block would report to the House Master on St Bede's if they were feeling unwell, although this was not established during the inspection. Nanki block is not sited within the main building.

Standard 34 (34.1 - 34.7)

All staff with boarding duties have job descriptions reflecting those duties, receive induction training in boarding when newly appointed, and receive regular review of their boarding practice, with opportunities for continuing training in boarding.

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

Positive responses were received from pupils regarding the care they received from staff with pastoral care duties and discussions with house staff indicated a commitment to the pupils' welfare.

The provision of induction training for boarding staff was found to be inconsistent. Some staff have received training, for example a three day course run by the Boarding Schools' Association, but other members of staff have received their training from staff with previous experience in working with boarders. No written induction programme was seen during the inspection. Pastoral care training does not currently extend to staff who are second or third in line of responsibility on boarding houses.

There is no formal system of supervision of staff boarding practice, either for boarding, ancillary or gap staff. There is no system of meetings for all boarding staff, although there is a weekly meeting involving the Deputy Head Pastoral and all House Masters and Mistresses.

The introduction of a system of supervision and a system of meetings for boarding staff would assist in identifying training needs and in identifying untapped resources within the staff group with pastoral responsibilities.

While some staff have recently received updated child protection training, such training is still being negotiated for other staff members, as has been noted elsewhere. Gap students are amongst those who have not yet received such training.

It is understood that the appraisal system for teaching staff is being revised and that a similar system will then be put in place for staff with pastoral responsibilities.

The role of spouses and partners of staff within boarding houses was clearly understood. Although staff families are involved in social events and fundraising activities, they do not go onto boarding houses at any time.

Standard 35 (35.1 - 35.4)

All staff with boarding duties are provided with up to date written guidance on the school's boarding policies and practice.

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

Staff are provided with a handbook which includes policies relating to the school's boarding practice. The handbook is not up-to-date and some policies are held separately on houses. Guidance in the handbook includes anti-bullying.

Some policies have yet to be produced and it is intended that staff will be required to sign to indicate that they have received these policies as they are provided.

It is understood that the National Minimum Boarding Standards have been issued to all boarding houses. Although staff were aware of their existence and had received information regarding the purpose of the current inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, not all houses were able to produce copies of the standards and refer to them confidently.

A staff disciplinary procedure, which includes the provision for precautionary suspension of staff, is in place. The policy is to be amended to include the provision for appropriate guidance and support to staff during any such suspension.

Standard 36 (36.1 - 36.4)

There are sound staff/boarder relationships.

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

Reports received from boarders indicated that relationships with boarding staff are generally sound. Observations indicated that boarders related easily to the staff caring for them on boarding houses. Those pupils who spoke with Inspectors did so in an open and friendly manner, which was taken as an indication that they did not feel inhibited from doing so.

There were reports from staff on boarding houses that they felt they knew the children in their care well and that they worked as a team to provide a happy environment. These reports were confirmed by observations.

In a close-knit community, such as a school, there are likely to be occasions on which professional boundaries can become, unwittingly, blurred. It is felt that expectations of all staff in this respect should be re-enforced periodically.

Standard 37 (37.1 - 37.2)

Staff supervision of boarders should avoid intruding unnecessarily on boarders' privacy.

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

Staff supervision of boarders did not appear to intrude unnecessarily on boarders' privacy and no reports were received that there was any perceived intrusion. On those boarding houses which were visited during one evening of the inspection, it was evident that boarders considered their bedrooms to be their private space. House Mistresses and House Masters were seen to be supervising, available, but not intruding at inappropriate moments.

Some boarders reported that staff would knock on their bedroom doors before entering, but it was not clear that this was a consistent policy across all staff and all houses.

Standard 38 (38.1 - 38.10)

Recruitment of all staff (including ancillary staff and those on a contractual/sessional basis) and volunteers who work with boarders (as defined in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000) includes checks through the Criminal Records Bureau checking system (enhanced as appropriate), with a satisfactory outcome. There is a satisfactory recruitment process recorded in writing.

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

Inspection of files indicates that the process for selecting and vetting staff has improved considerably recently, with more evidence of appropriate checks being undertaken. Records for academic staff, appointed since 2002, include Criminal Records Bureau Checks, photographs, proof of identity, at least two references and a record of interview.

Ancillary staff records also show an improvement over time, although the checks carried out are not yet as comprehensive on these files as on academic staff files. It was reported that some staff who have been employed at the school for some time, have not yet been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau system, although some of these people have been internally promoted since the Bureau was created.

It was reported that the spouses of house parents, who live on site, have been checked through the CRB at the standard level, although these records were not reviewed at the inspection.

It is understood that gap students are recruited from the same school, but no other checks had been carried out, nor was there a 'certificate of good conduct' on any of the relevant files.

It is acknowledged that most academic staff are now in possession of enhanced level CRB checks. There are, however, a few longer standing academic staff who have not yet been through the checking process. Similarly, there are long-standing members of the ancillary staff who have not yet been required to apply for a CRB check at the appropriate level.

Some of the points listed in standard 38.2 of the National Minimum Boarding Standards could not be evidenced from the files. In some cases, identity checks against official documents had been started, but had not been completed. In some cases, there was no record that referees had been contacted. Some interviews were being recorded, but none of the staff files reviewed contained proof of qualifications.

Recommendations have been made regarding issues which still need to be addressed in relation to staff files.

Standard 39 (39.1 - 39.4)

The school does not allow any member of staff (including ancillary staff, sessional/contract staff and volunteers) to work unsupervised with boarders unless that member of staff has been satisfactorily checked with the Criminal Records Bureau.

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

The school has a signing in system for visitors, which includes the provision of a 'Visitor' badge. The system does not, however, include the request to provide identification, or to sign out and hand the badge back at the end of the visit.

Responses were received which indicated that visitors are able to access the school without going through the signing in system, on occasions. While there are keypads on house doors, the main school building is not secured in this way.

The signing in system does identify people who are wearing badges as visitors. Proof of identity is requested as is the need to sign out and to hand back the badge at the end of the visit. The badges do not show the name of the visitor, nor the date of the visit. It is felt that, for the safety of boarders, staff and visitors, the signing in system should be enhanced and that a system should be in place during times when the reception office is not open.

Contracts with adult members of staff households, regarding the terms of their accommodation were not seen during this inspection.

It is understood that any friends of gap students would be checked through school contacts in their home country but, again, it is not known whether gap students are provided with clear guidance as to their responsibilities in relation to having guests on site.

PREMISES

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- Boarders are provided with satisfactory accommodation.
- Boarders have their own accommodation, secure from public intrusion.
- Boarders have satisfactory sleeping accommodation.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision to study.
- Boarders have adequate private toilet and washing facilities.
- Boarders have satisfactory provision for changing by day.
- Boarders have access to a range of safe recreational areas.
- Boarders are protected from safety hazards.
- Boarders are suitably accommodated when ill.
- Boarders' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered.
- Boarders can obtain personal requisites while accommodated at school.
- The welfare of boarders placed in lodgings is safeguarded and promoted.
- The welfare of boarders is safeguarded and promoted while accommodated away from the school site on short-term visits.

Standard 40 (40.1 - 40.8)

Boarding Houses (including dormitories and living areas) and other accommodation provided for boarders should be appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, suitably furnished, accessible to any boarders with disabilities, and adequately maintained.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The standard of accommodation across the boarding houses is generally satisfactory, although there are variations in provision which make some houses more 'homely' than others.

All houses have a communal area, a kitchen and a television room. Although the lack of homeliness was not an issue that was widely reported by pupils, these areas were not felt to be particularly homely or welcoming. The kitchen and lounge on St Oswald's did feel more 'informal', as did the lounge and quiet room on St Aidan's.

Provision for girls appears to be more homely than for boys. Indeed, there were reports from girl boarders that changes made to their boarding houses have been positive, that they are warmer and more homely than they were and that they are encouraged, with permission from housemothers, to introduce homely touches.

The least 'homely' house, in terms of the accommodation provided, was found to be the lower school boys' house, St John's. The entrance to the house is not welcoming and it is agreed that carpeting the stairs and 'softening' the entrance hall, would improve the appearance of this area. In two of the bedrooms, the space available for each boarder was very slightly below the National Minimum Standards. One z-bed was seen to be in use for an occasional boarder.

There were some reports that some houses were cold in winter and that double glazing of the large windows might help to retain the heat.

There were no reports of a lack of ventilation on any of the houses and this was not noted as

a problem during the inspection. Artificial lighting on houses is largely fluorescent and diffusers have not yet been provided.

All houses were seen to be clean during the inspection and there were no reports that this was not generally the case. It is understood that pupils are rotad to undertake house kitchen duties in order to encourage a sense of responsibility.

The furnishing of communal areas is adequate but, again, not particularly homely. The furnishings are adequate but somewhat 'tired'.

The 'quiet room' project on St Aidan's is commended for having produced the most 'homely' room in the school.

It was noted that bedrooms have been 'personalised' by most pupils, by the addition of their own bedlinen, posters and personal items. Older pupils had personalised their rooms to a greater degree than younger ones.

Some minor maintenance works are needed and there were reports that these sometimes take a while to be completed. The type of works outstanding included damage to a handbasin on St Cuthbert's and towel rails and coat hooks needing attention on St John's.

It is understood that St Cuthbert's is to be refurbished during the summer and certainly this house appears more 'tired' than others in terms of its decoration and provision. The space available for each boarder in two of the bedrooms on St Cuthbert's was slightly less than that indicated in the National Minimum Standards.

Reports were received that houses could be noisy at night, when pupils were talking and keeping others awake, but there was no indication the nature of the buildings or the layout of the accommodation was contributing to a 'noisy' atmosphere on any house.

None of the houses are designed in such a way that boarders with physical disabilities could be appropriately provided for without major adaptations being made.

Standard 41 (41.1 - 41.8)

Boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and protected by access by the public.

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

The boarding accommodation is reserved for the use of those boarders designated to use it, and there are procedures for 'visiting' others' boarding areas. These procedures were known to pupils who spoke with the Inspectors.

Measures are in place to prevent unauthorised access to the school premises and boarders by people from outside the school. Increased security is being planned, in light of a recent breach of security.

Keypads are used on Boarding House 'front doors', although not yet on all, and it was confirmed that the security numbers are changed each term. There are alarms on fire and interlinking doors between houses.

Window restrictors are used on vulnerable windows.

Comments were received regarding the alarm system, which suggested that there was some concern regarding the speed of reaction to the alarm and its efficacy. There is no central control point when alarms sound on individual houses.

Although not all pupils have keys to their bedrooms, it is understood that these will be provided in the near future as part of ongoing upgrading works.

No CCTV or other surveillance equipment is currently used in the school grounds, or in the school buildings, although the introduction of cameras outside the building is being considered.

The school grounds are extensive. The current building works mean that there are people on site who are not known to school staff, and there was some indication that this would reduce the likelihood of someone, not recognised by staff, being challenged about their authority to be in the school grounds.

The school has a signing in and out procedure for Visitors, which has been referred to under Standard 39.

Standard 42 (42.1 - 42.14)

Sleeping accommodation is suitably furnished and of sufficient size for the number, needs and ages of boarders accommodated, with appropriate separation between genders, age groups and from accommodation for adults.

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

Boarders either have their own bedroom, or share with others. The bedrooms are suitably separated from adult accommodation and girls and boys are accommodated on different houses.

It is understood that requests to move bedrooms can be, and are, accommodated, certainly after the first term in which a boarder enters the school and after which they have had time to decide whether they are settled.

While there is a house exclusively accommodating Lower School boys, St John's, there are only four Lower School Girl boarders at present and they live in the same house as the Middle School girls. Restrictions are in place to provide separation of ages, but these are difficult for the younger girls to understand, in some cases, as they are friends with girls from higher years.

The bedroom doors in St John's have glass panels in them and not all of these panels have been screened to provide privacy. Similarly, the bedrooms, which accommodate up to five children, have not been organised to promote the maximum privacy possible.

All bedrooms appeared to receive adequate natural light and were carpeted and curtained.

Most were found to have been decorated with personal items such as photographs, posters and pictures, as well as with cushions, toys, games and musical equipment. A large proportion of the boarders have brought their own laptops and CD players to school with them.

Single beds are provided in bedrooms, some of which are cabin beds providing a desk space below the sleeping section. The quality of the mattresses, the length and size of the beds and their general condition were commented on by many boarders across all houses. In particular the beds on St Cuthbert's and St Patrick's were reported to have poor mattresses and to be too short for some of the taller boys. Some pupils had used their initiative and invented ingenious ways of providing themselves with extra width to their beds, but this is not felt to be the most appropriate way of dealing with the problem.

Some comments were also received about the lumpiness of the pillows.

It is acknowledged that St Cuthbert's is to be refurbished and that the comments made during feedback from the inspection were noted by the School.

In some bedrooms, there appeared to be a shortage of shelving for books or drawers for personal items other than clothing.

It was noted that the gap students who are accommodated on the top floor of one of the boarding houses are using the pupils' showers as their own were not working.

Standard 43 (43.1 - 43.2)**Suitable facilities for both organised and private study are available to boarders.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

With the exception of St John's, where the Lower School boys have two 'prep' areas, desks are provided for private study in boarders' bedrooms. In addition, St Aidan's has a 'quiet room' in which girls can use the computer; St Patrick's has a library, with computers installed, as does St Cuthbert's. It was reported that there was usually at least one computer which was not working at any one time. Sixth form study facilities, in addition to desks in rooms, are available in a separate area.

Where fluorescent lighting is installed in boarders' bedrooms, it was noted that diffusers had not been fitted.

Some pupils were using their own desk lamps, but not all had chosen to provide themselves with one. Given the height of most of the bedroom ceilings and the provision of cabin desks in some places, a check that pupils' desks are adequately lit for study or close work would be advisable.

It is understood that the Internet is being rolled out to Boarding Houses although, for technical reasons, Broadband access will not be available. As both these matters were raised by pupils, it is suggested that information is provided, generally, to clarify the situation.

Standard 44 (44.1 - 44.10)

Adequate toilet and washing facilities are readily accessible to boarders, with appropriate privacy.

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

The toilet and washing facilities on boarding houses were found, in general, to be clean and well aired during the inspection. The changing room showers in St Aidan's were an exception to this finding and it is understood that they are not currently in use. In some bathrooms, the grouting around the showers was dirty.

The facilities across the houses are not shared by boarders of widely differing ages or of different genders.

Boarding staff have their own toilet and washing facilities and there are Visitors toilets available.

Although no reports were made to the Inspectors of queues to use the facilities on houses at busy periods, there were areas where the number of toilets do not meet the minimum standards. The bathroom on the top floor of St Cuthbert's, in which there is one toilet and one shower, serves 10 boys. While the ratio of showers is 1 to every 10 boarders, the ratio required for toilets is 1 for every 5 boarders. On the lower floor the one toilet and shower in the bathroom serve 6 boys.

In some areas, there was some distance from bedrooms to bathrooms, on St Aidan's the length of the corridor on both floors.

There was no handbasin in either of these bathrooms, although there was one in each of the bedrooms. The number of handbasins does not meet minimum standards of 1 for every three boarders.

Handbasins are not provided in all the bathrooms in St Oswald's. It is felt that there should be a handbasin in every bathroom across all the houses.

Baths are not provided in every house but are appreciated by those pupils who have access to them.

One of the most common responses of pupils concerned the lack of privacy in bathrooms. The lack of privacy afforded by shower curtains was commented on frequently, as was the lack of privacy afforded by frosted screens between showers.

There were holes in the door of one toilet on St Patrick's which removed privacy and which had been, ineffectively, blocked with tissue paper.

One urinal on St Cuthbert's was situated next to a window. Although on an upper floor, the lack of privacy was evident. It is acknowledged that, when this problem was brought to the attention of the school, a positive response was received.

Pupils also reported concern regarding the temperature of the water in showers, this being either too hot or too cold on occasions. There were also reports that timed water flow was insufficient to allow for a full shower. It is understood that these are matters which can be dealt with by alteration of controls.

Standard 45 (45.1 - 45.3) Suitable changing provision is provided for use by day.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>Changing rooms are available for use on all Boarding Houses and toilets, showers and handbasins are provided. These facilities are of sufficient size and are not shared by pupils of different genders or widely differing ages. They are not shared by staff, adults or visitors. The provision is satisfactory in these respects.</p> <p>However, the lack of privacy afforded by the curtaining of the showers, both in changing rooms and bathrooms, was commented on by pupils both before and during the inspection.</p> <p>Inspectors noted that the changing room on St Aidan's needs repainting and that the grouting around showers needed attention in several of the changing rooms.</p> <p>It was reported that the showers in St Aidan's changing room are not currently being used as the water is said to be 'scalding' hot.</p>		

Standard 46 (46.1 - 46.6) Boarders have access to a range and choice of safe recreational areas, both indoors and outdoors.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
<p>All boarding houses have a common room, although those pupils living on Nanki block share the common room on St Bedes. There are television rooms on all houses and other rooms in which boarders can relax and undertake quiet activities. The boys' common rooms have pool tables.</p> <p>Should a boarder wish to be alone, there are areas within the school buildings and grounds where they could find a quiet space. The chapel provides a light, quiet and calm space which is easily accessible from the main corridor.</p> <p>Outdoor activities, within the school grounds, include cricket, golf, tennis and hockey, amongst others and a new sports arena is being built which will replace the current sports hall.</p> <p>With the exception of St John's, all houses can be accessed during breaks in the school day. Indeed, housemothers provide drinks and biscuits for the boarders in their care at such times. Snacks are available for the Lower School boys from the vending machines in the school building.</p> <p>Pupils have access to staff accommodation in St Oswald's, and when visiting the Chaplain. It is suggested that, without reducing the availability of support to pupils, systems are put in place to ensure that such arrangements are seen to be 'safe' for both staff and pupils.</p>		

Standard 47 (47.1 - 47.9)

Indoor and outdoor areas used by, or accessible to, boarders should be free from reasonably avoidable safety hazards.

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

The school has a comprehensive list of health and safety risk assessments, which have recently been updated. Significant hazards are noted and brought to the attention of the Bursar and the Clerk of Works and action taken to reduce any associated risks. There is a system of meetings, usually weekly, at which Heads of Department report to the Bursar and these meetings are recorded. The Bursar meets on an individual basis with Heads of Department on a monthly basis.

Most windows have been fitted with suitable restrictors and others are in the process of being attended to. Some glass windows and panels have recently been protected. The standard to which protection has been afforded is being checked.

It was indicated that key pad systems are changed after lettings and that keys are computerised. CCTV cameras are to be fitted in locations which will cover entrances to the school.

It was observed that the notice at the entrance to the car park, which is through a narrow space between two buildings, is rather old and faded and does not indicate a speed limit. Pupils and vehicles both use this entrance to the car park.

Standard 48 (48.1 - 48.4)

Suitable accommodation should be available for the separate care of boarders who are ill.

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

Boarders who are ill are accommodated in the Sick Bay, which is separate from the Boarding Houses. There are beds available for 7 boys and 4 girls, in separate rooms and there is one room available as an isolation area. There is a kitchen, which also serves as an area where the Nursing Assistant can provide care and support to ill pupils.

The Sick Bay is at the end of a corridor which also houses the Medical Centre. A waiting room leads onto a consulting room and an office, providing privacy for those pupils who are seeing the GP or one of the nurses.

While there is a bathroom leading off from the girls room, the boys bathroom is at the end of the corridor. It was indicated that this has not proved to be a problem in the past.

The accommodation provided for sick boarders is suitable, with the exception of the lack of provision of a handbasin in the isolation room. It is felt that one should be provided, for use by sick boarders and anyone nursing them, to lessen the risk of the spread of infection.

Standard 49 (49.1 - 49.3) Adequate laundry provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Adequate provision is made for boarders' clothing and bedding to be laundered. The laundry from each house is collected on a different day of the week and is returned the following day. This ensures that any 'unlabelled' clothing is returned to the house from which it came, which makes it easier for items to be returned to their owners.</p> <p>There are washing machines in the Boarding Houses, which are used by the House Mothers to wash delicate or 'designer' clothing.</p> <p>The older girls are said to prefer to wash their own clothing and are assisted to do so by the House Mother.</p> <p>The only adverse comment received regarding the laundry system was that, for weekly boarders', the allocation of Monday as a 'laundry' day did not make a great deal of sense, as they were unlikely to have very much dirty linen. It is felt that some discussion with weekly boarders in this position and their Housemothers, would establish the significance of the comments received.</p>		

Standard 50 (50.1 - 50.2) Boarders are able to obtain minor necessary personal and stationery items while accommodated at school.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>There is a school shop which sells minor personal toiletries and stationery, as well as 'tuck'. Different opening times are allocated to different year groups. Although there were some representations from pupils in the Lower School that the timings were not favourable, the school felt that they provided the required service, without encouraging an overuse of the 'tuck' facility.</p> <p>The school is meeting the outcome for this standard, although other comments received from pupils in the Lower School indicated that there was a perceived lack of choice in the shop, as other older pupils had first pick of items on offer. There was also a call for the shop to be open at the week-end.</p> <p>Such observations from pupils could form the basis of weekly house meetings, enabling pupils to express their opinions and the school to respond to them swiftly.</p>		

Standard 51 (51.1 - 51.11) Any lodgings arranged by the school to accommodate pupils provide satisfactory accommodation and supervision, are checked by the school before use, and are monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This standard does not apply at Ellesmere College		

Standard 52 (52.1 - 52.8) Any off-site short-stay accommodation arranged by the school for any of its boarders provides satisfactory accommodation and supervision, is checked by the school before use (although this may not be feasible when accommodation is in private households), and is monitored by the school during use.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
This standard does not apply at Ellesmere College		

PART C**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY****(where applicable)**

Not applicable.

Lay Assessor

Signature

Date

PART D**HEAD'S RESPONSE****D.1 Head's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.**

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 3rd May 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the Head

NO

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

Head's comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Head both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

Status of the Head's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

NO

Action plan covers all the recommended actions in a timely fashion

Action plan did not cover all the recommended actions and required further discussion

Head has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

D.3 HEAD'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

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

--

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

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

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